

'Economic recovery foreign policy's biggest test'

Speakers tell BIPSS programme

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Reviving the economy and ensuring access to jobs, food and energy will be the biggest test of Bangladesh's foreign policy in the coming years, Zohra Adib Chowdhury, chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said yesterday.

She said Bangladesh was going through a transition and the next five years would be crucial in turning its geographical advantages and the changing geopolitical landscape into economic prosperity.

Zohra made the remarks at a discussion titled "Bangladesh Foreign Policy in a Changing World", organised by the Bangladesh Institute

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PHOTO: STAR

A grieving relative breaks down beside the coffin of one of seven Bangladeshis killed in a fire at a sofa manufacturing factory in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as their bodies arrive at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka yesterday. The August 9 fire claimed the lives of 16 workers. The bodies of nine victims were brought home on August 27, while the remaining seven, identified through DNA tests, were first transported by road to Jeddah for repatriation as flights from Riyadh have remained suspended since October 10.

HSC RESULTS

Alim, technical pass rates hit 2-decade lows

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Pass rates in this year's Alim and higher secondary technical examinations fell to their lowest in more than two decades, with nearly 87,000 students failing under the two education boards.

The decline was also reflected in institutional performance, with 112 institutions recording zero percent pass rates, up from just 25 last year.

According to results published yesterday, the Madrasa Education Board recorded a pass rate of 61.07 percent, down from 75.61 percent last year, while the Technical Education Board posted 49.43 percent, compared with 62.67 percent in 2025.

An analysis of data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) shows that the Alim pass rate was the lowest since 2004, when it stood at 40.64 percent. The technical pass rate was the lowest since 2002, when it was 44.12 percent.

Together, the boards recorded 86,832 unsuccessful candidates, up by 27,207 from last year, accounting for nearly a third of the additional failures nationwide.

In 2023, the pass rates under the Madrasa and

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'Obstruction of freedom fighter's burial a criminal offence'

28 noted citizens demand probe, legal action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-eight prominent citizens have condemned the obstruction of the burial and state guard of honour of freedom fighter Manik Posari allegedly by local Jamaat-e-Islami leaders and activists in Pirojpur, terming the incident a violation of fundamental human rights and a criminal offence.

In a joint statement, they demanded a fair investigation and strict legal action against those responsible.

"Such a situation surrounding the final farewell of a valiant freedom fighter 55 years after independence raises questions and deep concerns about our state, society, and political culture," the citizens said.

They said the right to a proper burial was a fundamental human right that no individual, group or even the state could violate. They stressed that only the state had the authority to determine or verify the status of a state-recognised freedom fighter.

"A party that opposed independence can at no stage decide who is a freedom fighter and who is not," the statement said.

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Dhaka: from community to commodity

Unplanned growth, profit-driven development eroded capital's liveability, say speakers at Star Itihas Adda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unplanned development, profit motives and policy failures have turned Dhaka from a community-oriented capital into an increasingly unliveable city, urban planners and experts said yesterday.

They said the city's worsening traffic congestion, chaotic transport system and loss of open spaces were consequences of decades of unplanned growth, short-term measures and institutional inaction.

Restoring liveability requires curbing land commodification, protecting ecological zones and ensuring people-centred urban governance, they added.

The remarks came at the 35th edition of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, titled "Mohanagar Dhaka: Itihas and Rupantor", held at The Daily Star Centre.



Participants at the 35th edition of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, titled "Mohanagar Dhaka: Itihas and Rupantor", held at The Daily Star Centre.

PHOTO: STAR

Prof Shayer Ghafur, of the Department of Architecture at BUET, traced the evolution of Dhaka's housing policies from the pre-colonial to post-colonial periods.

He said Mughal rulers encouraged craftsmen and professionals to settle in Dhaka by granting tax-free land, helping develop its economy and civic life.

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Notre Dame outdoes 5 education boards in GPA-5 tally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Notre Dame College in Dhaka has produced more GPA-5 achievers than five of the country's 11 education boards individually in this year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent examinations.

An analysis of results published yesterday shows that 2,229 students from the college secured GPA-5, surpassing the total number of top-grade achievers under four general education boards and the Technical Education Board.

Mymensingh Education Board recorded 2,137 GPA-5 achievers, followed by Cumilla with 1,313, Sylhet with 1,204, and Barishal with 950. The Technical Education Board recorded just 886.

In fact, Cumilla and Barishal boards together produced 2,263 GPA-5 achievers, only 34 more than Notre Dame College alone, found an analysis by this newspaper.

The college's tally accounted for 6.2 percent of the 35,948 GPA-5 achievers under the nine general education boards. It also represented 13.3 percent of the 16,714 students who secured the highest grade under Dhaka Education Board.

According to the college's result sheet issued by Dhaka Education Board, 3,272 students were registered for the exams. Of them, 3,256 appeared

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