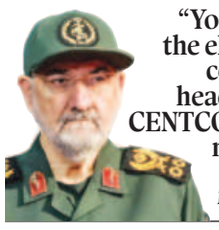
DHAKA MONDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2026



"You lost the war and the election. Vance has conceded, Rubio is heading for the exit... CENTCOM commander is now a podcaster!"

Top Iranian security official **MOHSEN REZAEI** warns US

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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As world leaders gather in Antalya, Turkey, today to chart the next course in the fight against global warming, residents of Shyamnagar in Satkhira, one of the world's climate frontlines, are focused on a more immediate challenge: survival.

Trapped between salinity and debt



PHOTO: **PINAKI ROY**

Farmland that generations of villagers cultivated in Shyamnagar upazila, Satkhira, has gradually been converted into shrimp and crab farms, allowing salinity to spread further inland. The photo was taken recently at Datinakhali village.

PINAKI ROY

Burdened with mounting debt, thousands of people in Satkhira's Shyamnagar upazila, one of Bangladesh's worst climate-hit areas, are struggling to sustain their traditional livelihoods as rising salinity continues to transform the coastal landscape.

Over the decades, sea-level rise, recurrent cyclone surges, and the expansion of brackish-water shrimp and crab farming have steadily pushed up salinity across the region, contaminating groundwater and rendering once-fertile farmland barren.

By 2024, salinity intrusion degraded two-thirds of the 17.03 lakh hectares of cultivable land in 18 southern districts, affecting an area nearly six times the size of Faridpur, shows the Soil Salinity Map of Bangladesh 2024 prepared by the Soil Resources Development Institute (SRDI).

SRDI officials said that in some affected areas, salinity levels reached up to eight times the tolerable limit of two deciSiemens (dS/m), a scientific unit used to measure soil salinity, indicating the amount of dissolved salt present in the moisture surrounding plant roots.

An estimated 50 lakh people have been internally displaced in Bangladesh, with natural disasters and climate impacts serving as the primary drivers, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre report 2026.

For many in Shyamnagar, migration has emerged as a last resort in the face of dwindling livelihood opportunities. Their journey from their ancestral home often begins with mounting debt or loss of land due to erosion. And in most cases, it ends in an urban slum.

One of them is Reshma Begum. She moved from Hajrakhali village to Itagachha Purbapara slum in Satkhira town after her home was lost to erosion along the Kabadak River following Cyclone Amphan in 2020.

Her husband, Ariful Islam, who once relied on agriculture and fishing for a living, now works as a day labourer.

Like Reshma, Rupa Begum and her husband Abu Musa had to move from Shyamnagar's Henchi village to Satkhira to make a living as their land became unsuitable for growing crops.

"My husband now sells seasonal fruits on a rickshaw van," said Rupa who lives in

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

COP31 climate summit begins in Turkey today

AGENCIES

The 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change begins today in Turkey's Mediterranean resort city of Antalya, bringing together heads of state, senior officials, academics, and civil society representatives from around the world.

First held in Berlin in 1995, the annual summit provides a platform for countries party to the convention to assess progress in combating climate change, develop common solutions, and make decisions shaping global climate policies.

Turkey will preside over this year's conference, which runs on November 9-20 and addresses key decisions on sustainable development and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

- Salinity affected 11.56 lakh hectares of cultivable land in 18 dists by 2024
- 50 lakh people internally displaced in Bangladesh
- In some areas, salinity levels reached eight times the tolerable limit
- The figure was 10.56 lakh hectares in 2009



BANGLADESHI WOMEN IN SAUDI ARABIA

Back home dead or scarred

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Nargis Begum travelled to Saudi Arabia hoping to repay debts and secure a better future for her children. Instead, she says, she spent months surviving on two handfuls of coarse rice and boiled potatoes in each meal while working as a house help.

The woman from Savar left in May 2022 after she had to borrow money for her daughter's wedding. With her husband ill, she had been struggling to support her two sons and daughter.

Nargis alleged that she was denied adequate food and medical treatment despite her deteriorating health in Saudi Arabia. She recalled becoming dizzy and falling on a staircase, injuring her back.

"I am a human being. I need strength to work. How can I work without food?" she said. She also alleged that an employer filed a theft complaint against her, resulting in detention for a day and a night.

She returned with the help of the Bangladesh embassy in October 2023. BRAC later provided medical assistance and Tk 80,000 in reintegration support, which she used to open a grocery shop.

Her ordeal reflects longstanding concerns over the safety of Bangladeshi women working in homes abroad, particularly in Saudi Arabia, where allegations of abuse and questions surrounding migrant deaths have persisted for years.

A 2023 study by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), based on Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) records, found that labour-receiving countries repatriated 705 bodies of Bangladeshi women migrant workers between 2017 and 2022.

Of them, 110 deaths were recorded as suicide, including 68 in Saudi Arabia. Overall,



32 percent of the deaths were classified as unnatural, including accidents, murders and suicides. Among 100 bereaved families interviewed, 48 questioned the causes recorded on death certificates, while 11 sought second post-mortem examinations but were told these were not possible.

WEWB documents obtained by The Daily Star show that 101 women's bodies were repatriated in 2023 and 88 in 2025. Of them, 20 deaths were recorded as suicide in 2023 and 14 in 2025, including 13 from Saudi Arabia in each year.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



IMPEACHMENT THREAT

Trump orders DOJ probe of Democrats

Offers UFC boss press secretary post

AFP, *Washington*

US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that he was ordering the Department of Justice (DOJ) to examine Democratic threats to impeach members of his administration and was offering his friend and "violent fighter" Dana White the job of White House press secretary.

White is a loyal supporter and head of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), a mixed martial arts organisation.

Trump faces a radically transformed and hostile political landscape after Democrats seized both the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Buses burn, crude bombs go off in city again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals yesterday exploded crude bombs in several areas in Dhaka, including inside Dhaka University and the Criminal Investigation Department headquarters, and torched a school bus in Bhatara and two buses in Dhamrai and Savar.

No casualties were reported.

Witnesses and police said a series of explosions rocked at least six different parts of Dhaka University in the evening.

Police detained Rezaul Karim, 42, of Natore; Sohel Rana, 33, of Rajshahi; and Nazmus Saad, 33, of Gopalganj in this connection.

Shahriar Mostak Didar, a witness, said students caught the three in the TSC area.

Miscreants hurled a crude bomb into the compound of the CID headquarters in the Malibagh area from the adjacent Moghbazar-Mouchak Flyover around 7:30pm, said Ariful Alam, officer-in-charge of Paltan Model Police Station.

The bomb exploded near a vehicle belonging to the Special Branch (SB) that was parked inside the compound, he said.

Another crude bomb went off near a car in front of Sony Cinema Hall in the Mirpur-1 area around 8:35pm yesterday, said Mizanur Rahman, inspector (operation) of Mirpur Model Police Station.

The incidents follow a series of crude bomb blasts and attacks on public transport in Dhaka the day before, which the Dhaka Metropolitan Police said were aimed at creating panic among the public.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

FIXING HEALTH SERVICES

Family planning dept to be carved out for primary healthcare

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government has decided to create a new department for primary healthcare and formed a seven-member committee to work out its organisational structure, staffing, career plans, and responsibilities.

The department will be established by restructuring the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), another major body under the health ministry.

The decisions were made at a ministry meeting on October 6, following a proposal to bring primary healthcare services under a unified administrative structure, according to the meeting minutes.

The proposed department will be named the Department of Primary Healthcare (DPHC).

The workforce will operate through proposed health and wellbeing centres at union and ward levels.

It will bring together the health assistants (HAs) under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), community health care providers (CHCPs) under the Community Clinic Health Assistance Trust, and family welfare assistants (FWAs) and family planning inspectors (FPIs) under the DGFP.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Iran executes three men linked to anti-govt protests

AFP, *Tehran*

Iranian authorities yesterday executed three men after convicting them of carrying out operations on behalf of Israel and the United States during anti-government protests in January, the judiciary said.

The death sentences against Hassan Divband, Hamid Kazemi and Reza Zanganeh "were carried out this morning after being upheld by the Supreme Court", the judiciary's Mizan Online website reported.

It said they were found guilty of "participating in operational activities on behalf of the Israeli Zionist regime, the United States and hostile groups" during the protests.

Mizan said the men threw Molotov cocktails and grenades, used bladed weapons and firearms and set fire to public facilities in the city of Karaj, west of Tehran.



Protesters from the Surabaya Bergerak and Srikandi Bergerak alliances hold posters and raise three fingers during a demonstration demanding a government review of several issues, including lower prices of basic commodities, military involvement in civilian affairs, the free meal programme, and forest and land fires in Surabaya, Indonesia, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

COP31 climate summit begins in Turkey today

FROM PAGE 1

climate policies.

A 1.1-million-square-metre venue has been prepared in Antalya for COP31, which will be held under the theme "COP of the Future – COP of Implementation" and built around three pillars: dialogue, consensus and action.

The conference aims to strengthen trust and cooperation among countries, promote shared responsibility, and translate climate commitments into concrete, measurable actions, reports Anadolu Ajansı.

Activities will take place in two designated areas, the Blue Zone and the Green Zone.

Official negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, high-level meetings, and diplomatic talks will be held in the Blue Zone, where access will be controlled under UN accreditation rules.

The zone will also host side events, including panels on climate adaptation, clean energy, zero waste, sustainable cities, climate finance, technology, health, and green transformation.

The Blue Zone includes plenary halls, delegation offices, pavilions, a press and media centre, and restaurants. A five-petal structure called the "Time Tunnel," covering 10,000 square metres will serve as the Zero Waste Museum.

The Green Zone, designed to encourage public participation, will feature thematic centres where government agencies, businesses, academics, civil society organisations, and young people can share climate solutions, technologies, and best practices through exhibitions, concerts, panels, workshops, and interactive activities.

The area includes the Turkey Pavilion, Science Centre, Green Industrialisation, Resilient Cities, Energy and Transportation, Culture and Civilization, COPArt, and Start-up Zone facilities.

As part of the Zero Waste Movement, which has expanded globally, the COP31 venue will feature a Zero Waste Hub, a Zero Waste Practice and Workshop Centre, the Seven Regions, Seven Homes Zero Waste Kitchen, the Zero Waste Museum, and a Zero Waste Temporary Storage and Composting Centre.

The Green Zone will also include an "Antalya House" reflecting traditional Yoruk culture and a turtle pavilion built using zero-waste materials.

Trapped between salinity and debt

FROM PAGE 1

a slum in Satkhira town.

Local civil society leaders said the influx of people with similar experiences is reshaping Satkhira's urban landscape.

A total of 47 slums have developed in Satkhira town over the years, said Ali Noor Khan Babul, joint secretary of Satkhira Nagarik Committee.

"The first one in Itagachha area had around 500 people in 1994. Now, nearly 4,500 people live here," he said.

"Most of them are from Shyamnagar, Ashashuni and other vulnerable coastal regions."

According to the Population and Housing Census 2022, Shyamnagar upazila, with an area of 1968 square kilometres, has the lowest population density in Satkhira district at 186 people per square kilometre, compared with the national average of 1,119.

BURDENED WITH DEBT

Obaidul Hossain Gain, a resident of Datinakhali village, was sitting idle at home when this correspondent met him last week.

His wife, Afroza Begum, said, "Nothing grows here because of high salinity. We have only one option: buying food from the market."

She said the family now carries loans worth Tk 70,000 from two non-governmental organisations.

"They come to collect instalments almost every day. They came today too, but we couldn't pay. Now we don't have money to buy even vegetables."

Afroza said the family is surviving on rice and boiled keora fruit collected from trees along riverbanks in the Sundarbans.

Their situation is far from unique.

People borrow money to prepare for fishing trips, buy food during lean periods or repay existing debts. One loan often finances another.

A recent survey by Caritas Bangladesh, an NGO, across six unions of Shyamnagar found that nearly 90 percent of surveyed households had taken loans from NGOs or local moneylenders.

"Our findings show that the average family debt is Tk 58,782," said Caritas Research Coordinator Golam Mainuddin who led the study.

The survey, conducted among 270 households in Gabura, Burigoalini, Kaikhali, Munshiganj, Padmapukur and Ramjan Nagar unions in July 2025, found that about 75 percent of borrowing came from NGOs and the rest from local moneylenders.

Mainuddin said many families have remained trapped in debt for years, and debt is often a symptom of a deeper problem: the disappearance of livelihoods.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE

For generations, agriculture sustained communities across Shyamnagar. But this began to change as salinity spread and agricultural land was gradually converted into shrimp and crab farms, said rights activists and researchers.

"Loss of livelihoods has reached an alarming level," said Shahin Islam, regional coordinator of Bangladesh Resource Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK).

Several decades ago, agricultural productivity was high and people did not have to leave the area in search of work, he said.

"The livelihood crisis started when shrimp farming was promoted. Agricultural land was gradually converted into shrimp farms. Later, crab farming was also expanded."

The shift dramatically reduced labour demand.

Giving an example, he said that an agricultural plot of three acres requires many workers, but only one person is needed to guard a shrimp farm.

For many who lost their livelihoods in the coastal belt, the Sundarbans became the last refuge for earning a living through fishing and honey collection. But even that refuge is now under threat from forest bandits.

The Forest Department recently reopened the seasonal window for mud crab collection after a three-month closure that began in September. However, many fishermen are staying away from the forest out of fear of bandits.

In Munshiganj and Burigoalini unions, families, already burdened with NGO loans and debts to local moneylenders, said trips into the forest could end in kidnapping and ransom demands they cannot meet.

"My cousin's family had to pay Tk 1.5 lakh to a group of bandits last week to secure his release. He, along with two other fishermen, entered the forest to catch crabs. Bandits abducted and held them for five days until the ransom was paid," said Upolul Press Club President Abdul Halim while accompanying this correspondent in Burigoalini.

Halim said his cousin's family had to borrow the money to secure his release.

Local fishermen said several other groups of bandits are also active in the two areas.

Abiar Rahman, a resident of Datinakhali, who has depended on the Sundarbans for his livelihood for over four decades, chose to sit idle this year rather than risking abduction by bandits in the forest.

"It has now become extremely dangerous to venture into the forest. If bandits kidnap me, my family cannot afford to pay a ransom," said the 64-year-old.

When contacted, Safiul Islam Patwary, officer-in-charge of Shyamnagar Police Station, said that fishermen are sometimes abducted by forest bandits, but their families and relatives do not want to inform law enforcers out of fear.

Even when police contact them after receiving information, they refuse to speak. Usually, moneylenders secure the release of the abducted fishermen through negotiations with the bandits, he said.

"The River Police, Coast Guard and forest guards patrol the rivers winding through the Sundarbans. However, abductions usually occur deep inside the forest. Dismantling the bandit networks will require a coordinated effort by all these forces."

WHAT EXPERTS SAY

M Asaduzzaman, former research director of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, said the National Adaptation Plan, Bangladesh (2023-2050) was updated a few years ago, but there has been no visible move to implement it.

"The government needs to do more than planting trees to tackle climate change."

The NAP has identified 113 major interventions for implementation in 11 climate-stressed regions across Bangladesh. More than $230 billion will be needed for these interventions, and almost three-quarters of this amount will be required by 2040.

The interventions include integrated management of coastal polders, and the construction of sea dikes and shelters against tropical cyclones, sea-level rise and storm surges.

Our Satkhira Correspondent contributed this report.

Back home dead or scarred

FROM PAGE 1

A burial-cost claims register for 2024 contained 95 entries, including 15 suicides, 12 of them in Saudi Arabia. These are cases when assistance was provided by WEWB, not a complete count of repatriated bodies.

Tasneem Siddiqui, migration expert and founding chair of RMMRU, said some women might die by suicide because they could no longer endure their working conditions, while others might die following abuse.

She questioned the reliance on death certificates issued abroad without independent forensic examinations in Bangladesh. "We proposed introducing a system at the airport to examine bodies for visible signs of injury," she told The Daily Star.

She called for qualified medical personnel and storage facilities to preserve bodies and forensic evidence for proper post-mortem examinations.

If findings contradicted certificates issued abroad, Bangladesh could seek investigations from the countries concerned, she said. "But we have not made the necessary preparations to reach that stage."

Women who return alive often face serious physical and psychological difficulties.

Nanjiba Kabir, case management officer at BRAC's Migration Welfare Centre in Dhaka, estimated that nearly 90 percent of the returning female house helps whose cases she had encountered experienced physical or psychological abuse.

Some also reported sexual abuse, food deprivation, excessive workloads, restrictions on communicating with their families, and confiscation of their phones and passports.

"They were completely isolated and controlled," she said, adding that many returnees showed symptoms of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). She estimated that around 350 female returnees had received assistance through BRAC programmes this year alone.

She cited the case of Rajia Begum, who returned from Saudi Arabia on February 12 this year after losing contact with her family for years.

Rajia had travelled through the prescribed migration process but informed her family in 2021 that she was being beaten and threatened with death. Her daughters approached police seeking help, but the family did not receive the assistance they sought, Nanjiba said.

When Rajia returned, she was frightened of people, struggled to communicate and initially appeared unable to recognise her children. BRAC staff traced her identity through fingerprint verification and reunited her with her family from Barlekha, Moulvibazar, on February 24.

When there is no investigation, and the perpetrators face no punishment, one woman returns home, and another goes to the same place only to face similar abuse.

Md Shariful Islam Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration Programme and Youth Platform

Nanjiba also described another case involving a woman who returned five months pregnant after reportedly being transferred between four households while working abroad.

RMMRU's latest 2025 migration report noted that Bangladesh still lacks comprehensive data on returning workers, despite maintaining records of departing migrants since 1976.

Md Shariful Islam Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration Programme and Youth Platform, said Bangladesh began sending women house helps to Saudi Arabia in February 2015 without adequate protection mechanisms.

He alleged that complaints of abuse were often not pursued with Saudi authorities, allowing perpetrators to escape accountability.

"When there is no investigation, and the perpetrators face no punishment, one woman returns home, and another goes to the same place only to face similar abuse," he told The Daily Star.

Such concerns are longstanding.

A study by the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, submitted to a parliamentary standing committee in August 2019, found that among 110 female house helps who returned from Saudi Arabia, 35 percent reported physical and sexual abuse, while 44 percent said they had not received wages regularly.

There have been instances of legal accountability.

In 2021, a Riyadh court sentenced a member of an employer's household to death over the 2019 murder of Bangladeshi house help Abiron Begum.

State Minister for Expatriates' Welfare Md Nurul Haque told parliament on September 3 that the government had signed agreements with 22 law firms in 13 countries to assist migrants and maintained two safe homes in Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi women's overseas employment fell 40.9 percent, from 1,05,466 in 2022 to 62,317 in 2025, according to the RMMRU report.

Women accounted for only 5.5 percent of migrants in 2025, compared with around 16 percent in 2016. Saudi Arabia remained their largest destination, receiving 44,832 women last year.

The report identified unsafe working conditions and violence inside employers' homes among factors discouraging women from seeking overseas employment.

Tasneem Siddiqui urged more shelter facilities, regular embassy-supervised contact with women workers and comprehensive protection measures. "Piecemeal efforts will not work anymore."

At a parliamentary caucus discussion on November 4, Deputy Speaker Barrister Kayser Kamal called for reviewing Bangladesh's 2015 agreement with Saudi Arabia on female house helps.

He stressed the need to ensure their safety, dignity, adequate rest, proper accommodation, and opportunities to communicate with their families.

KSA downs two Houthi missiles aimed at Riyadh

Aramco Tower building damaged by falling debris

AGENCIES

An administrative building belonging to state oil giant Saudi Aramco in Riyadh was damaged by falling debris following an attempted attack yesterday, with no injuries or fatalities reported, the kingdom's energy ministry said.

A Reuters witness saw blown-out windows across several floors of the Aramco Tower, one of the tallest buildings in the capital's King Abdullah Financial District.

The incident, which the ministry said caused limited damage, came after the Saudi-led coalition said it had intercepted two missiles fired by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis towards Riyadh.

Multiple loud booms were heard in Riyadh earlier yesterday, a Reuters witness said, shortly after Saudi Civil Defense issued an early-warning alert of a potential threat in the region. Authorities later announced that the danger had passed.

The Saudi-led coalition that has been fighting the Houthis subsequently said it had intercepted and destroyed two cruise missiles in Riyadh and the kingdom's southern region.

In a separate development, three oil tankers caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz after hitting mines, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said yesterday, according to state news agency IRNA.

Since the outbreak of the Iran war in late February, Tehran has severely restricted traffic through the strategic waterway, insisting vessels use routes authorised by the Islamic republic.

An American military aircraft fired on and disabled a commercial vessel that tried to break the US blockade of Iran later on Saturday, US Central Command has claimed, according to Reuters.

Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said: "With regard to Iran, the mission is still not complete. Iran is trying to renew its efforts to obtain nuclear weapons -- alongside other grave efforts that place the State of Israel in real danger."

US Vice President Vance has spent the past two weeks personally involved in indirect talks with Iran aimed at reaching a new ceasefire and resuming nuclear negotiations, Axios reports, citing two "sources with knowledge of the matter".

Vance has been "speaking almost daily" to key figures from mediating countries Pakistan, Qatar and others.

Most Gulf stock markets started yesterday on the back foot as investors awaited indications on whether President Trump will order fresh attacks on Iran.

Family planning

FROM PAGE 1

The move follows a cabinet committee recommendation to bring three categories of field-level healthcare workers under a unified system to avoid duplication and improve coordination and integration, rather than having them work separately under different programmes and departments.

Following the proposal, the government has planned to recruit nearly 1 lakh health workers over the next three years.

It envisages a workforce of around 1.50 lakh combining the new recruits with more than 40,000 existing health assistants, family welfare assistants, family planning inspectors, and community health care providers.

The workforce will operate through proposed health and wellbeing centres at the union level in the rural areas and at the ward level in the city corporation areas. They will be designated as health and wellbeing assistants.

Health ministry officials said the plan aims to ensure that health workers visit every household at regular intervals, at least once every two months, to conduct basic health checkups and provide health advice while continuing to carry out their existing responsibilities, including vaccination and the distribution of contraceptives and medicines.

At the October 6 meeting, SM Ziauddin Hyder, PM's special assistant on health affairs, said DGFP should be restructured to form a new directorate named DPHC, according to the meeting minutes.

Three-and-a-half-storey primary healthcare centres would be established in every union under the new department, he added.

Subsequently, the meeting formed a seven-member committee, led by the additional secretary (administration) of Health Services Division. The body will have representatives from DGHS, DGFP, and Community Clinic Trust.

The body has been asked to submit its report within 20 working days.

Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director of disease control at the DGHS, said the proposal to create DPHC needed further discussion and assessment, warning that restructuring the existing directorates without proper planning could create administrative complications.

He said primary healthcare services were being provided through upazila health complexes and their subordinate facilities under the DGHS, while family planning services were being delivered through union-level health and family welfare centres under the DGFP.

"If primary healthcare is brought under a new directorate, the role of upazila health complexes and their doctors and nurses will also need to be considered, as they are already an important part of primary healthcare," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said that integrating health and family planning services under a unified administrative structure had long been a demand, rather than maintaining separate directorates and administrative arrangements.

The health expert expressed doubts about how much could be achieved by creating another directorate without addressing the existing administrative and workforce arrangements.

"I think more work, discussions, workshops, and assessments are needed before taking such a decision. Once a separate structure is set up, it may be difficult to reverse it later, as has been the case with family planning over the past 50 years or more."

Speaking to this correspondent, ANM Bazlur Rashid, secretary of Health Services Division, said the initial thinking is to re-organise the existing DGFP into a new department.

"A committee has been formed to examine the proposal further and may recommend how it should be implemented.

"The idea is to make healthcare services closer to people, particularly in the rural areas .... The idea is to unite everyone under one umbrella so that services can be streamlined."

Addressing concerns about the possible impact of the restructuring on family planning services, he said the committee would examine the issue, adding that the government wanted to prioritise family planning while integrating it into the broader primary healthcare system.

Responding to another question, he said representatives of all relevant stakeholders, including the DGHS and DGFP, were involved in the process.

"The initiative is at a very preliminary stage. Everyone is involved in the discussions, and the objective is to ensure that services are delivered under a unified system and streamlined," the secretary said.

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3 ordinances to be tabled as JS reconvenes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The fourth session of the 13th parliament is set to begin today and is expected to be prorogued on November 18.

On the first day of the session, three ordinances issued between the third and fourth sessions -- the Public Procurement (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, the Value Added Tax and Supplementary Duty (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, and the Special Solar Power Installation Ordinance, 2026 -- will be placed before the House.

The session is commencing 60 days after the last session ended on September 10.

On October 14, President Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir summoned the session, exercising the powers vested in him.

The Parliament Secretariat issued a statement after a meeting of the Business

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2



Locals, including students, cross a canal separating the capital's Banasree and Aftabnagar areas using a makeshift bamboo footbridge yesterday, as construction of a permanent bridge remains incomplete. Many continue to use the route as a shortcut despite the risk of accidents.

PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

IN FOCUS

Serve people, do not harass them

PM urges new BCS officers

UNB, *Dhaka*



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday urged newly recruited civil servants to serve people with honesty, efficiency and humanity, ensuring that no citizen faces harassment while seeking government services.

"Regardless of a citizen's age, you must ensure that they do not face any kind of harassment when they come to your offices seeking assistance," he said.

The PM was addressing the closing ceremony of the 81st Foundation Training Course for newly recruited BCS officers at the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre in Savar.

Congratulating the officers on completing the four-month course, Tarique said an efficient, honest and humane administration was essential for any government's success.

He reminded them that, regardless of their cadres or postings, their primary identity was that of public servants.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Intellectual corruption hurt judiciary more

Says law minister at workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Md Asaduzzaman yesterday said intellectual corruption within the judiciary has caused far greater damage to Bangladesh than financial corruption.

"Look back over the past several years. How often did the Supreme Court stand by the people or stand up to the government during times of crisis? Issuing general orders every day is one thing, but what about judgements such as the one on the 13th Amendment, which scrapped the caretaker government system?

"That judgement undermined Bangladesh's democratic progress and set the country on a path towards authoritarianism. The process began with the Supreme Court itself. I would not call this a by-product of financial corruption but rather a product of intellectual corruption," he said.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a three-day workshop for judges at a hotel in Dhaka. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), in collaboration with the UNDP, organised the workshop titled "Integrity in Judicial Proceedings" with 25 judges from subordinate courts.

The law minister urged TIB to broaden its definition of corruption beyond financial misconduct.

"TIB should also identify and speak out against those who are intellectually biased and whose actions and judgements have undermined the credibility and integrity of our Supreme Court," he said.

Look back over the past several years. How often did the Supreme Court stand by the people or stand up to the govt during times of crisis? What about judgements such as the one on the 13th Amendment?

Regarding allegations of financial misconduct against judges, he said only a handful might be involved.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

300 families wiped out in road crashes since 2020

Says RSF report; experts blame lax enforcement, regulatory failures

1,728 killed in 525 crashes involving family members | Auto-rickshaw crashes claim highest toll | 386 spouses killed in 193 motorcycle crashes | 318 fathers and children killed in 159 crashes | 708 family members killed in microbus crashes

SHAMIMA RITA

Morshed Alam, his wife Ikrama, and their infant daughter Rifa were killed in a road crash in Jamalpur's Melandah upazila on November 7.

In the blink of an eye, the entire family was wiped out, leaving no one behind to perform their final rites.

A similar tragedy occurred on May 25, when Monir Hossain, his wife, and their only child were returning home to celebrate Eid. Their motorcycle collided head-on with a rice-laden pickup van in Kishoreganj.

Around 300 families are estimated to have been wiped out in road crashes across Bangladesh between January 2020 and October 2026, according to a report released yesterday by the Road Safety Foundation (RSF). The report drew on nine national newspapers, 17 online news portals, electronic media outlets and the foundation's own records.

Auto-rickshaw crashes accounted for the highest number of fatalities involving multiple members of the same family, the report found.

A total of 1,728 people were killed in 525 such crashes. Five members of the same family died in 53 incidents, six in 38 and seven in 13.

On October 17, a paddy-laden truck rammed into a battery-run auto-rickshaw in Kurigram's Roumari upazila, killing five people.

The victims included Lipi Begum, 32, her son Rishad Islam, 12, daughter Tuba Akter, 7, and sister Sharifa Begum, 42. The auto-rickshaw driver also died.

Motorcycle crashes also claimed hundreds of lives within families. Husbands and wives were killed together in 193 crashes, claiming 386 lives, while 318 fathers and children died in 159 incidents, according to the report.

Meanwhile, 708 members of the same families died in 186 microbus crashes. Four incidents killed 11 family members each, while another claimed 14 lives.

The foundation also recorded 352 deaths in 108 private car crashes, 162 in 45 ambulance crashes and 85 in 32 bus crashes involving multiple members of the same family.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

JS body to probe graft in textbook printing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on the education ministry has decided to form a probe panel to investigate allegations of corruption and irregularities in textbook printing under the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB).

The committee also directed the authorities to ensure that textbooks for the 2027 academic year reach students by December.

The committee took the decisions at its second meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday, according to a Parliament Secretariat press release.

After the meeting, committee Chairman Md Selim Bhuiyan told reporters that the committee would investigate allegations of irregularities and corruption involving various departments, directorates and agencies under the education ministry.

He said the committee could form more than one probe panel if needed, with committee members dividing responsibilities.

The NCTB would also come under scrutiny, and the committee would submit its findings to the prime minister and recommendations to the speaker of Parliament, Selim said.

He said the investigation should not create panic or disrupt textbook distribution for the coming academic year.

'Zero means zero'

BOESL says Malaysia-bound workers will pay nothing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Malaysian companies recruiting Bangladeshi workers through a zero-cost initiative will bear all migration expenses, including medical fees and airfares.

"Zero means zero," Mohammad Rashedul Hasan, managing director of the state-run Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL), told The Daily Star when asked whether workers would have to bear any expenses under the initiative.

"The company will bear all costs," he said.

His assurance came as BOESL introduced its first digital lottery system to shortlist 300 candidates from 4,039 applicants for 112 jobs at DHL Supply Chain Malaysia, as operations assistants and technical staff, with a monthly basic salary of 1,700 ringgit.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

NEW GINI HOUSING PROJECT

7-katha land dispute sparks fresh attack

TOUSIF KAIUM

A group of 100-150 people stormed the New Gini Properties housing project in Dhaka's ECB Chattar area on Saturday, vandalising property and assaulting security guards and workers.

The attack stemmed from a land dispute involving a seven-katha plot worth Tk 2.60 crore between the company's chairman Nazim Uddin Bhuiyan and landowner Nur Ahmed, police said.

At least three people were seriously injured, while police detained 14 people, including four women, from both sides.

A similar attack was made on September 26 when some 200-250 people allegedly stormed the compound, fired gunshots, vandalised several structures, and assaulted workers.

However, police and project workers said the two attacks were linked to separate land disputes.

Sazzad Hossain, additional deputy commissioner of DMP's Cantonment Zone, said Nazim had agreed to purchase the seven-katha plot from Nur for Tk 2.60 crore in 2023.

Nazim initially paid Tk 30 lakh in cash and issued a Tk 20 lakh cheque as booking money. After the cheque was dishonoured, it triggered a dispute over payment, he added. The two sides, however, gave conflicting accounts of the transaction.

Nazim claimed he had paid Tk 50 lakh in cash and issued another Tk 20 lakh cheque. He said he later discovered inconsistencies in the ownership documents and asked Nur either to resolve the complications and complete registration or refund his money.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



Heaps of household waste and garbage collectors' overloaded carts occupy a footpath in the capital's Pirerbag area of Mirpur yesterday, with rubbish spilling onto the road. The makeshift dumping spot forces pedestrians onto the busy road, while the foul smell and accumulated waste cause suffering for residents and commuters.

PHOTO: **STAR**

Nine rescued from traffickers in Teknaf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Cox's Bazar*

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel rescued nine people while they were being trafficked to Malaysia by sea in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar.

The incident took place in the South Lombori Ghat area on Saturday evening, Lt Col Mohammad Tajul Islam Chowdhury, commanding officer (CO) of Teknaf Battalion (2 BGB), said yesterday.

On information, a special BGB patrol team took position in the area around 6:30pm and spotted a group of 20-25 people at the ghat.

Sensing the presence of BGB members, some 10-15 suspected traffickers quickly boarded a boat and fled towards the sea.

BGB members later rescued the nine people left stranded at the ghat, who later said they were being trafficked to Malaysia.

Among them are two teenage boys and a teenage girl.

Some of them are residents of Rohingya camps, while the others are from Cox's Bazar Sadar, Chakaria, Maheshkhali and Ukhiya upazilas.

The process of handing them over to police was underway.

40 lakh fake cigarette tax stamps, cosmetics seized at Ctg port

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

A container imported under the declaration of printing machines was found to contain cosmetics and more than 40 lakh fake cigarette tax stamps at Chattogram Port.

The consignment, imported by China Mart, at Jamuna Future Park in Dhaka, arrived at the port on August 9 this year.

A joint team of the National Board of Revenue's Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) and the Audit, Investigation and Research (AIR) branch of Chattogram Customs House inspected the container on Thursday, according to a press release issued by NBR yesterday.

The officials found a large quantity of undeclared cosmetics and fake cigarette tax stamps instead of any of the declared printing machines.

According to the release, a 20-stick packet of low-segment cigarettes has a retail price of Tk 130, of which the government is entitled to Tk 106.60 in revenue. As such, the use of the fake stamps for illegal cigarette production and marketing could have caused an estimated revenue loss of Tk 43.50 crore to the government, while the undeclared cosmetics could involve another Tk 2.50 crore in revenue evasion.

Legal proceedings against those involved were underway, it added.

29 held in Noakhali anti-gang drives

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Noakhali*

Police detained 29 people during special anti-gang operations across Noakhali district. They were later released into the custody of their families upon signing bonds.

Confirming the information yesterday, Abu Tayeb Md Arif Hossain, additional superintendent of police (Administration and Finance) in Noakhali, said the drives were conducted in different areas of the district between 8:00am on Saturday and 8:00am yesterday.

Among the detainees, four were held in Companiganj and Kabirhat each, one in Begumganj, two in Senbagh, Sonaimuri and Chatkhil each, three in Char Jabbar, and 11 in Hatiya.

According to district police sources, regular drives are being conducted under the overall guidance of Noakhali Superintendent of Police NM Nasiruddin to prevent the activities of juvenile gangs, curb teenagers' involvement in crimes, and ensure public safety.



Despite being constructed in 2022, the new 10-storey, 250-bed facility at Bandarban Sadar Hospital remains non-operational due to lack of administrative approval and necessary manpower. PHOTO: STAR

BANDARBAN SADAR HOSPITAL

New building lies unused for four years

MONG SING HAI MARMA, *Bandarban*

A newly constructed 10-storey building at Bandarban Sadar Hospital, equipped with 250 beds and modern medical facilities, has remained unused since its completion in 2022 due to a lack of administrative approval and required manpower.

Meanwhile, the hospital's existing 100-bed building is struggling to accommodate the growing number of patients, forcing many to receive treatment on the floor.

The new building has an intensive care unit (ICU), coronary care unit (CCU), isolation wards, a surgery unit and a gynaecology ward, among other facilities.

However, patients still cannot access these facilities, and many must travel elsewhere for advanced treatment.

Established with 50 beds in 1989, Bandarban Sadar Hospital serves thousands of residents across the district's seven upazilas.

On average, 400-500 patients visit its outpatient department daily, while another 90-100 are admitted.

The existing building lacks ICU and CCU facilities, forcing critically ill patients to seek treatment elsewhere at higher costs, particularly burdening low-income families from remote hill communities.

To address the shortage, the government undertook a Tk 36.48 crore project in 2019 to upgrade the hospital from 100 to 250 beds.

Although construction was completed in 2022, the new building has yet to become operational.

Patients and local residents have urged the authorities to open the facility without further delay.

Mohammad Alamgir, a patient, said he had been receiving treatment on the hospital floor for several days because no bed was available.

"If the new building were operational, perhaps I could have been provided a bed and better treatment facilities," he said.

Shaimaching Marma, a resident of remote Thanchi upazila, said patients had to undergo many diagnostic tests at private facilities at much higher costs.

"Besides, critical patients have to be taken to Chattogram since ICU and CCU facilities are also unavailable. It is difficult for poor people from remote areas to travel there and afford treatment. The new hospital building could solve these issues if it were operational," she said.

Contacted, Bandarban Civil Surgeon Dr Mohammad Shaheen Hossain Chowdhury said all infrastructure-related work on the new building had been completed.

"We have sent a letter to the higher authorities regarding administrative approval for opening the facility and recruitment of required manpower," he said.

Jubo Dal leader found dead in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bandarban*

Police recovered the body of a local leader of Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, youth wing of ruling BNP, from a hilly stream in the Kasai Para area of Bandarban town yesterday morning.

The deceased, Md Sharif, 33, was joint convener of the Talukdar Para block under Ward-9 of the Bandarban municipality unit of Jubo Dal.

The body was recovered around 10:00am from the stream located beside the Bandarban-Chattogram road, near the Bandarban bus terminal.

Locals said some women spotted the body floating in the stream when they were collecting water from it in the morning. On information, police and fire service personnel went to the spot and recovered the body.

Mohammad Arif, president of Bandarban municipality Jubo Dal unit, said they identified Sharif after the body was recovered.

Masud Parvez, officer-in-charge of Bandarban Sadar Police Station, said there were injury marks on Sharif's hands, legs and head, alongside bleeding from nose and mouth.

Whether Sharif fell on his own or was pushed down the hill would be known after investigation, he added.

PRAYER TIMING
NOVEMBER 09

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	5-00	12-45	3-45	5-25	7-00
JAMAAT	5-35	1-15	4-00	5-30	7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Locals block rail, road links over proposed upazila

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Brahmanbaria*

Local residents blocked rail and road links for around four hours yesterday morning, demanding the restoration of six villages to Basudeb union in Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila and the scrapping of a proposal to divide the upazila to create a new one.

The protesters blocked the rail track at the Kodda rail-cabin area in Basudeb around 7:30am, halting train services on the Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Chattogram routes. They also blocked the Akhaura-Agartala road, disrupting the movement of passenger and goods-carrying vehicles.

The blockade was withdrawn around 11:30am and it was postponed for three days upon assurance from Brahmanbaria Deputy Commissioner Md Abu Sayeed, said Khairul Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station.

The blockade left four trains -- the Cox's Bazar-bound Parjatak Express, the Sylhet-bound Parabat Express, the Chattogram-bound Sonar Bangla Express, and the Dhaka-bound Upakul Express -- stranded at different stations, said Md Rafiqul Islam, station master on duty at Brahmanbaria Railway Station.

Local sources said six villages -- Kodda, Baishnabpur, Shyamnagar, Korabari, Chandi and Barishol -- were separated from Basudeb union in May this year to form a new union named Barishol under Akhaura upazila. A gazette notification formalising the decision was published on June 4.

Residents of Basudeb union have been protesting against the move since it was announced.

The latest controversy centres on a proposal to form a new upazila, also named Barishol, by merging Basudeb, Sultanpur and Ramrail unions of Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila with the newly formed Barishol union under Akhaura upazila.

KARNAPHULI RIVERBANKS

HC gives authorities two more weeks for survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday gave the authorities concerned two more weeks to survey the southern and eastern banks of the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram and submit a report identifying illegal encroachers.

The bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Aziz Ahmed Bhuiyan passed the order during a hearing on a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) seeking necessary directives.

Following the same petition, the HC on November 14, 2023, issued a rule, directing the authorities to survey the riverbanks, identify illegal occupants and submit a report in three months. It also issued several directives for protecting the river based on the survey findings.

However, the authorities have yet to submit the report, prompting HRPB to seek further court intervention.

হারিয়েছে

আমার স্বামী মৃত আজিজুল ইসলাম চৌধুরীর নামে পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি. এর প্রতিটি ১০০/- টাকা মূল্যমানের ১০০ টি শেয়ারের একটি শেয়ার সার্টিফিকেট নং- ৮৩৪০ ডিসটিংটিভ নং- ১২৩৩১৩-১২৩৪১২ ফোলিও নং- A-505 হারিয়েছে। এয়ারপোর্ট থানা, এসএমপি, সিলেট জি.ডি. নং- ১২২ তারিখঃ ০৩/০৫/২০২৬
সকল ওয়ারিশগণের পক্ষে
আকিকুনেছা চৌধুরী

Bank Asia

Bank Asia Tower, 32 & 34, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215

Notice for Extension of Tender Document Collection & Submission Deadline

Tender Reference: Appointment of a Consultancy Firm for End-to-End Procurement of a Core Banking System (CBS) and Middleware Solution

With reference to the Tender Notice published on November 2, 2026, in Daily Prothom Alo and November 3, 2026, in Daily Star and Financial Express regarding the above-mentioned tender, the deadline for submission of tenders has been extended up to November 26, 2026, at 2:30 PM instead of November 11, 2026. BID Schedule will be available up to November 16, 2026, and Pre-bid meeting will be held on November 19, 2026, at 11:00 AM.

All other terms and conditions of the original Tender Notice shall remain unchanged.

Head of Procurement
Logistics & Support Services Division (LSSD)
Corporate Office (1st Floor)
Tel: 09617001100 (Ext. 611)

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)
Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 Web: www.powergrid.gov.bd
স্মারক নং-২৭.২১.০০০০.১০১.৪৩.০০০.২৬.৪৯০০ তারিখঃ ০৮ নভেম্বর ২০২৬

মূল্য সংবেদনশীল তথ্য

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি (পাওয়ার গ্রিড) এর পরিচালক পর্ষদ ০৮ নভেম্বর ২০২৬, রবিবার অনুষ্ঠিত ৬৪৪/২০২৬ নং বোর্ড সভায় নিম্নোক্ত সিদ্ধান্তসমূহ গ্রহণ করেছেঃ

১) পরিচালক পর্ষদ কর্তৃক বিগত ৩০ জুন ২০২৬ তারিখ সমাপ্ত হওয়া অর্থবছরের জন্য প্রতিটি টাকা ১০/- মূল্যের শেয়ারের বিপরীতে ০৫ (পাঁচ) % নগদ ডিভিডেন্ড প্রদানের সুপারিশ করেছে যা আসন্ন ৩০তম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভায় শেয়ারহোল্ডারগণের অনুমোদনের ভিত্তিতে নিশ্চিত করা হবে।

২) বিএসইসি'র নোটিফিকেশন নং- BSEC/CMRRCD/2009-193/08 Dated: March 10, 2021 অনুযায়ী ৩০তম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা আগামী ০৬ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৭, শনিবার, সকাল ১০:০০টায় পাওয়ার গ্রিডের প্রধান কার্যালয় প্রাঙ্গনে, এভিনিউ-৩, জহুরুল ইসলাম সিটি, আফতাবনগর, বাড্ডা, ঢাকা-১২১২; হাইব্রিড মডেলে (ফিজিক্যাল ও ভার্চুয়াল প্ল্যাটফর্মের সমন্বয়ে) অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

৩) উক্ত সভার জন্য রেকর্ড ডেট নির্ধারণ করা হয়েছে ১০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৬ তারিখ, বৃহস্পতিবার। রেকর্ড ডেট-এ সিডিবিএল সহ শেয়ারহোল্ডার রেজিস্টারে যেসব শেয়ারহোল্ডারগণের নাম থাকবে তাঁরাই ৩০তম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন এবং যদি অনুমোদিত হয়, লভ্যাংশ পাবেন।

৪) বিগত ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থবছর এবং ২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরের শেয়ার প্রতি নিট সম্পদ মূল্য (NAVPS), শেয়ার প্রতি নিট অপারেটিং ক্যাশ ফ্লো (NOCFPS) এবং শেয়ার প্রতি আয় (EPS) এর তুলনামূলক বিবরণী নীচের সারণীতে দেখানো হলোঃ

ক্রমিক নং	খাতের নাম	অর্থবছর ২০২৫-২০২৬	অর্থবছর ২০২৪-২০২৫
১.	শেয়ার প্রতি নিট সম্পদ মূল্য (NAVPS)	টাকা=১৪৭.২৯	টাকা= ১৩১.৯৭ (Restated)
২.	শেয়ার প্রতি নিট অপারেটিং ক্যাশ ফ্লো (NOCFPS)	টাকা=১৯.৫২	টাকা= ১৬.৪৯
৩.	শেয়ার প্রতি আয় (EPS)	টাকা=৩.৮৬	টাকা= (৫.৪৭) (Restated)

২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরের বিস্তারিত নিরীক্ষিত হিসাব বিবরণী পাওয়ার গ্রিডের ওয়েবসাইটে www.powergrid.gov.bd পাওয়া যাবে।

পরিচালনা পর্ষদের নির্দেশক্রমে,
মোঃ জাহাঙ্গীর আজাদ
কোম্পানি সচিব

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Jail Super
Lalmonirhat District jail
https://prison.lalmonirhat.gov.bd
Memo no 44.07.5200.162.03.003.2026- ৩৭০১ Date: 08.11.2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement for following works:

Tender ID No	Description for Work	Publication Date and Time	Tender closing/ Opening Date and Time
1367421	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-K, Package-01 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367422	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-K, Package-2 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367423	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-K, Package-3 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367424	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-K, Package-4 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367427	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Kha, Package-1 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367441	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Kha, Package-2 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367442	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Kha, Package-3 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367443	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Ga, Package-1 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367448	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Ga, Package-2 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367460	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Ga, Package-3 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367462	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Ga, Package-4 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367463	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Ga, Package-5 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00
1367464	Procurement of Dietary Articles of Catagory-3, Schedule-Ga, Package-6 for the period of 01 January'2027 to 31 June'2027	08 November'2026 22:00	26 November'2026 12:00

This is an Online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration is required in the National e-GP System portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd)
The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online though any registered Bank Branches.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP Help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd.) and also from Lalmonirhat District jail, Lalmonirhat Office.

Abu Nur Mohd Reza
BJ-02780400357
Jail Super
Lalmonirhat District jail

GD-2703

HEAT Project Management Office (PIN-13220)
Department of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
University of Chittagong, Chattogram-4331

Date: 09/11/2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal by the Department of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, University of Chittagong for the procurement of the following package (Physical Services):

S/N	Tender ID, Reference No.	Package Description	Type of Tender	Tender Notice Publication Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time
1	**1248806,** CU/PIN13220/ NCS-1/2025-26	Selection of Service Provider for Whole-Exome Sequencing of Human Blood gDNA and Sanger Sequencing of PCR Amplicons.	NCT, OTM	05-Nov-2026 11:00	23-Nov-2026 11:00
2	**1249257,** CU/PIN13220/ NCS-2/2025-26	Selection of Service Provider for Gut Microbiome Analysis using 16S rRNA Gene Sequencing and Shotgun Metagenomics.	NCT, OTM	08-Nov-2026 11:00	24-Nov-2026 11:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal, and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

The fees for selling/downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank. The e-Tenders will be accepted within the specified date and time. Accepted e-Tenders will be opened as per the date and time displayed online. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

09/11/2026
(Professor Dr. S. M. Rafiqul Islam)
SPM, HEAT Project (PIN-13220)
Dept. of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
University of Chittagong

(5x3")
GD-2702

COP31 MESSAGE

Electrify, recycle, don't mention coal

AFP, *Istanbul*

As the COP31 climate summit opens in Antalya today, host Turkey is putting electrification at the heart of its climate message, highlighting its renewable energy expansion and Zero Waste agenda while presenting both as tools to cut emissions.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Turkey has rapidly expanded its renewable infrastructure in recent years. Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar this week unveiled a $500-billion roadmap to electrify the economy and increase installed wind and solar capacity fourfold to 175 gigawatts.

Environmental groups, however, argue that Turkey's climate ambitions are undermined by its continued dependence on coal, which still generates around one-third of the country's electricity. Ankara has not set a timetable for phasing out coal and is planning to expand two existing coal-fired power plants.

Greenpeace Turkey campaigner Emel Turker Alpay said electrification would only help tackle climate change if the additional power came from clean energy sources.

'WEAK' CLIMATE TARGETS

Climate Action Tracker recently described Turkey's climate targets as "critically insufficient", arguing that Ankara's interim goals lack the ambition required to cut emissions significantly.

Campaigners say Turkey's pledge to reduce projected emissions by 41 percent by 2035 would still allow actual greenhouse gas emissions to rise from current levels.

PLASTIC WASTE

Turkey is also promoting its Zero Waste Initiative and efforts to reduce methane emissions from waste.

Critics, however, say the focus remains on waste management rather than waste prevention.

They also note that Turkey continues to import plastic waste from Europe and has yet to endorse the Global Methane Pledge.



Demonstrators occupy the Eternal Struggle sculpture during a protest titled "Government vs. People" against Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa and his government in Quito, Ecuador, on Saturday. PHOTO: REUTERS

MIGRANT CRISIS

21 killed as boat sinks off Senegal

AFP, *Dakar*

A small boat carrying migrants sank off northwestern Senegal killing at least 21 people in the latest tragedy along the dangerous Atlantic Ocean route from Africa to Europe, authorities said.

The Senegalese interior ministry said in a statement that only one person had been rescued in addition to the 21 bodies recovered, that added to the thousands who have died in recent years trying to reach Spain's Canary islands from West Africa.

The ministry said the death toll was "provisional" as of late Saturday and that the search was still going on and the families of victims were being helped.

Media reports said the pirogue-type flat-bottom boat capsized on Saturday off the Loumpoul dunes in Kebemer department, between Dakar and the northern city of Saint-Louis.

Le Soleil newspaper said that most of the victims were from the Leona and Thieppe districts in the same department.

Thousands of people from west Africa try each year to reach Europe on the perilous Atlantic route.

Senegalese authorities also said they had intercepted 142 migrants on Friday who were on a similar small boat aiming to reach Spain.

The group included 23 women, two babies and two other children, and were from Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Nigeria, according to police.

The Senegalese government on Saturday stressed "its determination to combat people smuggling networks, notably through strengthened cooperation with neighbouring countries," the interior ministry said in a statement.

US forms task force to block Iran land routes

IRGC says Washington's latest bid 'will fail'

AFP, *Washington*

The US military has announced it will create a 20-member task force to find ways to disrupt land routes into Iran that it says are used for shipments of advanced weapons and other sanctioned materials.

The restrictions would expand on a US naval blockade of Iranian ports during the two countries' eight-month war, in which Tehran has also restricted passage through the critical Strait of Hormuz trade route, choking global energy supplies.

The task force's work "will further constrain Iran's ability to finance terrorism, rebuild weapons factories, and replenish their military," US Central Command chief Brad Cooper said in a statement posted on X on Saturday.

The team of both civilian and military personnel based in Florida would coordinate with US government agencies on "preventing the movement of advanced weapons systems, dual-use technologies, sanctioned materials, and illegal revenue streams across Iran's land borders and the Caspian Sea," the statement added.

A 20-member task force aims to crack down on Tehran's movement of advanced weapons and other sanctioned materials

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said Washington's latest bid "will fail" and will not bring about economic collapse in the Islamic republic.

"The United States will never be able to impose the economic blockade it is pursuing and proposing under various names and through different plans," Guards spokesman Hossein Mohebi said, according to Fars news agency.

"The Americans will not achieve their objective of exerting extreme economic pressure to bring about the collapse and disintegration of Iran's economy."

Mohebi added that the United States would be "powerless to block" communication channels between Iran and neighbouring countries.

CENTCOM said that the naval blockade on Iranian ports had "prevented Iran from exporting more than $25 billion in crude oil."

In August, Washington announced what it called an "economic asphyxiation" campaign on Iran aimed at strangling its already battered economy.

Those measures were in response to Tehran's blockade of the Hormuz strait, where Iranian forces have regularly targeted vessels that attempted to cross without authorisation.

UKRAINE ENERGY SITES

Russian strikes cut power to 850,000

Container ship carrying weapons to Kyiv hit near Odesa

AFP, *Kyiv*



Russian strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure cut power to hundreds of thousands of homes yesterday, authorities said, while a new drone hit a village humanitarian aid centre attacked this week where rescuers are still digging out bodies.

Ukraine is bracing for a harsh new winter of war as Russia ramps up daily aerial barrages, raining down drones and missiles on the power network.

In the central Dnipropetrovsk region, "more than 600,000 residents of the region have been left without power," power company DTEK said on Telegram after a "night attack has damaged important energy facilities".

It said the company was working to restore electricity but the task was "complicated by repeated attacks".

In another strike, a Russian drone hit "a critical infrastructure facility" in the northeastern Kharkiv region, the mayor of Zlatopil city, Mykola Baksheyev, said on social media.

"Nearly 250,000 customers in the Kharkiv region were left without power," Baksheyev said. Repair works were underway but "the exact time for restoring power supply is still unknown," he added.

A container ship delivering weapons and military equipment to Ukraine south-west of the Black Sea port city of Odesa was also hit in the strike.

IN BRIEF



Poland mourns victims of Krakow mass shooting

Calls it a 'terrorist' attack

AFP, *Kraków*

Poland yesterday launched a terrorism probe as mourners brought candles and flowers to Krakow's Main Market Square in tribute to six people killed by a gunman who authorities said was "fascinated by far-right ideologies".

The 24-year-old Polish man opened fire at random Saturday in the historic centre of the country's second city, in what Prime Minister Donald Tusk called an act of "terrorism".

A British national was among the dead, according to police. Among the 15 wounded were nationals from Austria, Britain, Germany, Portugal and Russia, an interior ministry spokeswoman said. Three more bodies were found at the suspect's home in Ostrowiec Swietokrzyski, around 150 kilometres northeast of Krakow. Police said they were his parents and a sister.

The gunman was wounded in a shootout with police and is in critical condition in hospital.

KNIFE-EDGE POLLS

New Zealand set for weeks of political wrangling

AFP, *Auckland*

New Zealand yesterday faced the prospect of weeks of political wrangling after a knife-edge election that produced no clear winner but saw record gains for minor parties.

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon declared his right-wing coalition had a mandate to form the country's next government -- while conceding results remained too close to call definitively.

National Party leads preliminary results, securing a two-seat majority with NZ First and ACT coalition partners

Preliminary results have his National Party winning the most seats, giving them a very slim majority of just two if combined with their coalition partners, the populist NZ First and the libertarian ACT.

"New Zealanders have given us the biggest seats in parliament, 42 seats as it stands today, and a pathway to form a government," Luxon told journalists yesterday.

"There's no doubt about it. We've got a mandate," he added.



Heavy rains leave thousands without shelter in Gaza

AFP, *Gaza City*

Heavy rain on Saturday flooded tens of thousands of displaced people's tents in war-devastated Gaza, Palestinian authorities said, leaving them without shelter.

In a statement, the Hamas-run government media office said that about "70,000 tents sheltering tens of thousands of displaced people were flooded on the first day" of rains.

It also noted the "collapse of dozens of cracked walls and roofs, which caused injuries", some critical, in various areas of the tiny territory.

Since early Saturday, hundreds of displaced families have been seen fleeing camps in parts of Gaza City and in the central and northern areas of the territory after they were inundated by rainwater.

Civil defence spokesman Mahmoud Bassal told AFP his teams had received more than 1,500 calls during the night from residents requesting urgent assistance after their tents were flooded, explaining that the agency "is operating without any equipment or capabilities".

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন

সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ

স্মারক নং-৪৬.১০.০০০০.০১৩.৯৯.২৬-৬২৪ তারিখ ঃ ০৮/১১/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশনের পরিচালনাধীন (১)বনানী, (২) মিরপুর শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী, (৩) উত্তরা ১৪ নং সেক্টর, (৪) উত্তরা ১২ নং সেক্টর, (৫) উত্তরা ৪ নং সেক্টর (৬) রায়ের বাজার বধ্যভূমি স্মৃতিসৌধ সংলগ্ন ও (৭) চামুরখান গণ কবরস্থানে লাশ দাফনকারী ব্যক্তির নিকট সর্বনিম্ন দরে বাঁশ, চাটাই সরবরাহ এবং কবর খনন কাজ করার জন্য প্রকৃত সেবাদানকারী সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণকারীগণ নিম্নবর্ণিত দপ্তরসমূহ হতে চালানের মাধ্যমে সিডিউল ক্রয় করতে পারবেন। দরপত্রের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী সিডিউলে উল্লেখ রয়েছে।

১	সংস্থা ও বিভাগের নাম	সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ, ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন
২	সরবরাহকৃত মালামালের স্থান	(১) বনানী, (২) মিরপুর শহীদ বুদ্ধিজীবী, (৩) উত্তরা ১৪ নং সেক্টর, (৪) উত্তরা ১২ নং সেক্টর, (৫) উত্তরা ৪ নং সেক্টর (৬) রায়ের বাজার বধ্যভূমি স্মৃতিসৌধ সংলগ্ন ও (৭) চামুরখান গণ কবরস্থান।
৩	সরবরাহকৃত মালামালের সরবরাহের সময়কাল	কার্যাদেশ পাওয়ার তারিখ হতে পরবর্তী ১ (এক) বৎসর পর্যন্ত
৪	সরবরাহের অর্থ যোগান/পরিশোধ পদ্ধতি	বর্ণিত স্ব-স্ব কবরস্থানে লাশ দাফনকারী ব্যক্তির নিকট হতে জনস্বার্থ অক্ষুন্ন রেখে কার্যাদেশে উল্লেখিত সর্বনিম্ন দরে বাঁশ ও চাটাই সরবরাহ এবং কবর খনন কাজের মাধ্যমে অর্থ আদায়।
৫	দরপত্র আহ্বানের তারিখ	০৮/১১/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ
৬	দরপত্র তফসিল জমা দেয়ার তারিখ ও সময়	৩০/১১/২০২৬খ্রিঃ সকাল-৯.০০ হতে ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।
৭	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	৩০/১১/২০২৬খ্রিঃ বিকাল-৩.০০ টা।
৮	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তির স্থান	সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ, (নগর ভবন, গুলশান সেন্টার পয়েন্ট, লেভেল- ০৬, প্লট নং- ২৩-২৬, রোড নং-৪৬, গুলশান-২) ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন ।
৯	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৯/১১/২০২৬খ্রিঃ। বিকাল-৩.০০ টা।
১০	দরপত্র জমা দেয়া ও খোলার স্থান	সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ, (নগর ভবন, গুলশান সেন্টার পয়েন্ট, লেভেল- ০৬, প্লট নং- ২৩-২৬, রোড নং-৪৬, গুলশান-২) ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন ।
১১	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	খোলা দরপত্রের মাধ্যমে

মালামাল সরবরাহের বিবরণ ঃ

সরবরাহকৃত মালামালের বিবরণ	সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	জামানতের পরিমাণ
১ (এক) বছরের জন্য বর্ণিত স্ব-স্ব কবরস্থানে সর্বনিম্ন দরপ্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক প্রাপ্ত কবরস্থানে লাশ দাফনকারী ব্যক্তির নিকট সর্বনিম্ন দরে বাঁশ ও চাটাই সরবরাহ এবং কবর খনন কাজ করা।	৩,০০০/- (তিন হাজার) টাকা (চালানের মাধ্যমে জমাকৃত এবং অফেরতযোগ্য।	২,০০,০০০/- (দুই লক্ষ) টাকা (যা কার্যাদেশের সময়কাল অতিবাহিত হওয়ার পর ফেরতযোগ্য)।

১২। ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন কর্তৃক কালো তালিকাভুক্ত কোন প্রতিষ্ঠান বা কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন/বিলুপ্ত ঢাকা সিটি কর্পোরেশন এর বকেয়া পাওনা থাকলে সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠানের দরপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

১৩। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন/সকল দরপত্র বাতিল বা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

১৪। দরপত্রে দেয়া দর বর্তমান বাজার দরের সাথে সামঞ্জস্যপূর্ণ থাকতে হবে। নতুবা দরপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য করা হবে।

১৫। কবরের চারপাশে বাঁশের বেড়া ও খুঁটি দেয়া যাবে না।

১৬। কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্ত দরের অতিরিক্ত কোন অর্থ গ্রহণ করা যাবে না।

০৮.১১.২০২৬

(মোহাম্মদ মামুন-উল-হাসান)
প্রধান সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন কর্মকর্তা
ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন।
ফোন নম্বরঃ ০২- ২২২২৮৪৮৪৬
ইমেইলঃ-cswsdo@dncc.gov.bd

GD-2705

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

LPG market needs urgent disciplining

Enforce set rates to protect consumers, fix pricing issues

It is unacceptable that households across the country are having to pay exorbitant prices for LPG despite the government fixing the rates. On November 2, the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) set the price of a 12kg LPG cylinder at Tk 2,060. But consumers in Dhaka are having to pay Tk 2,300-2,500, or Tk 300-440 more than the official rate. Outside the capital, cylinders are reportedly selling for Tk 40-240 above the fixed price. BERC has reportedly increased commissions for importers, distributors, and retailers. Why, then, are consumers still being denied this essential cooking gas at the regulated price? Reports of sellers withholding cylinders, refusing to sell to unfamiliar customers, and charging excessive prices suggest that weak oversight is allowing some market players to exploit the supply uncertainty.

Since February, the official retail price of LPG in the country has risen by nearly 52 percent, from Tk 113 to Tk 171.68 per kg. Over the same period, the increase was around 34 percent in Pakistan, 12 percent in Sri Lanka and 7 percent in India, while Nepal's latest available rate was about 6 percent higher than its February price. So, consumers in Bangladesh are paying much more than the published retail prices in those countries. This raises questions about our pricing structure and procurement arrangements. Understandably, disruptions to international supplies caused by the US-Israel war on Iran have contributed to the situation. Bangladesh has had to shift much of its sourcing from the Middle East to the United States, with US-based firms accounting for 85 percent of imports in September, compared with 27.4 percent a year earlier. This has increased shipping distances, freight, and insurance costs, as well as the premiums importers have to pay to secure cargoes. These are genuine pressures.

Why is BERC continuing to use Saudi Aramco's Contract Price as its principal benchmark even as importers increasingly source LPG from the US and other markets? BERC must therefore review its methodology and ensure that price adjustments are based on transparent and verifiable cost information rather than a benchmark that may no longer reflect the market.

But the question is, why is BERC continuing to use Saudi Aramco's Contract Price as its principal benchmark even as importers increasingly source LPG from the US and other markets? BERC must therefore review its methodology and ensure that price adjustments are based on transparent and verifiable cost information rather than a benchmark that may no longer reflect the market. Our dependence on a small group of importers also makes the market vulnerable. Although around 35 companies hold licences, only 10-12 are active importers. This, combined with heavy reliance on spot-market purchases and limited alternative sources, leaves the country exposed to supply disruptions and price volatility.

The government must encourage more competition, help importers secure diversified and reliable long-term supply arrangements, and develop adequate storage infrastructure to reduce dependence on costly spot purchases. It must also expedite BPC's long-delayed plan to import LPG and reduce our dependence on private suppliers. The government must also stop overcharging in the domestic market. The BERC and the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection must monitor the entire supply chain, find out where the additional costs arise and take action against companies, distributors and retailers found to be violating regulations.

Address the anaemia crisis among women

Child marriage, malnutrition, and poor healthcare remain major concerns

A recent study published in the Health Science Reports has revealed an alarming disparity in anaemia prevalence between women and men in rural Chattogram. Among 459 adults seeking healthcare, 77.9 percent of women were found to be anaemic, compared with 39.7 percent of men. Women were also disproportionately affected by moderate and severe anaemia. Although the study was based on data collected between 2016 and 2017 in just four unions, its findings raise serious concerns about a longstanding public health problem that continues to affect women across Bangladesh.

Malnutrition from adolescence, excessive menstrual bleeding, early marriage, repeated pregnancies, and inadequate access to nutritious food all increase women's vulnerability to anaemia. The persistence of child marriage is particularly worrying. According to the Bangladesh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2025, 47.2 percent of women aged 20–24 were married before turning 18, while 13.4 percent were married before 15. Although child marriage has declined over the years, these figures show how far we remain from protecting girls from its consequences. Inadequate healthcare, on top of early pregnancies, places additional demands on bodies that may already be nutritionally depleted.

Troublingly, the same national survey found that 53.1 percent of pregnant women were anaemic. This reinforces concerns that anaemia remains a widespread problem. It not only undermines women's health and wellbeing but can also increase pregnancy-related risks and affect the health of their children. Yet, poverty, rising food prices, and unequal access to food within households often mean that women's nutritional needs are neglected.

The study findings on rural women in Chattogram, as well as the national data on anaemia among pregnant women, expose a critical gap in our understanding of the crisis. We urgently need comprehensive, nationally representative studies covering women and men across age groups, regions, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Such research must investigate the underlying causes, including deficiencies in iron and other nutrients, infections, and inherited blood disorders.

Meanwhile, the government must strengthen routine haemoglobin screening, particularly for adolescent girls and women of reproductive age, and ensure affordable diagnosis, appropriate treatment, and nutritional support through primary healthcare facilities. It must also launch sustained awareness campaigns through television, schools, community centres, and other platforms to educate people about anaemia, its causes and prevention. Above all, anaemia must be recognised not merely as an individual health problem but as a reflection of wider inequalities that compromise women's health.

What should the minimum wage be for garment workers?



Kallol Mustafa is an engineer and writer who focuses on power, energy, environment, and development economics. He can be reached at kallol_mustafa@yahoo.com.

■ **KALLOL MUSTAFA**

Following widespread protests by garment workers, the government recently formed a wage board that has pledged to finalise a new minimum wage by December. Under the amended Bangladesh Labour Act, it should have formed the board several months earlier to comply with the requirement to revise minimum wages every three years. Its failure to act on time, coupled with the still-limited presence of trade unions in the sector, left workers with little choice but to take to the streets, where they faced attacks and arrests. One worker, Toufiq Hossain, even lost his life in an attack during the protests.

The question now is what criteria the wage board will use to determine the new minimum wage. Will it follow a transparent and credible methodology, or will employers once again use their influence to impose an unjust wage on workers?

ILO Convention № 131 stipulates that minimum wages should be determined by considering workers' and their families' needs, the cost of living, social security benefits, productivity and employment levels, among other factors. Section 141 of Bangladesh's labour law similarly requires consideration of living costs and standards, production costs, productivity, inflation, the nature and risks of work, employers' capacity to pay, and the country's socioeconomic conditions.

Yet Bangladesh has no transparent, widely accepted formula for translating these criteria into a minimum wage. As a result, wage revisions across the garment and other private-sector industries remain opaque, heavily influenced by the bargaining power of business interests.

The government, however, takes a different approach when determining salaries for public-sector employees. Before preparing recommendations for the ninth pay scale, the National Pay Commission engaged the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to conduct a living standards survey in September 2025, covering 3,000 households across rural, urban and city corporation areas. It showed average monthly household expenditure of Tk 46,778 in city corporation areas, Tk 37,344 in other urban areas, and Tk 32,532 in rural areas. Based on the findings, the newly fixed minimum monthly salary for a Grade 20 government employee is Tk 33,250 at the district and upazila levels, and Tk 36,250 in Dhaka.

In the absence of a comparable formula for the private sector, the minimum government salary offers a reasonable benchmark for garment workers' wages. Both groups buy food and other essentials in the same markets. Government employees also receive pensions and other benefits, while garment manufacturers enjoy tax concessions and other state support that workers do not. Therefore, there is little justification for setting the garment sector's minimum wage below the lowest public-sector salary.

On this basis, 35 workers' federations belonging to four alliances have demanded a minimum monthly wage of Tk 37,125 ($300) for garment workers.

Can the industry afford higher wages?

The industry's capacity to pay should be considered when determining how far wages can rise above the minimum needed for a decent life. It cannot, however, justify paying workers less than that minimum. Factory owners must pay for the inputs required to produce goods. Labour is no less essential than other inputs. Why, then, should its price be pushed below its cost simply because employers claim they cannot afford more?

The cost of reproducing labour power depends on what workers and their families need to survive and maintain their ability to work. When wages fall short, they are forced to compromise on nutritious food, education, healthcare, recreation, etc. Their health and well-being deteriorate. No industry can remain sustainable by condemning its workforce to such conditions. Employers' capacity to pay cannot be a legitimate excuse for denying workers and their families a decent standard of living.

Besides, wages account for only 10-13 percent of garment production costs. So even if wages were increased in line with workers' demands, the overall cost of production would not rise to a level that would undermine the industry's viability. Moreover, when the government sets minimum salaries for public employees, does it first limit them to what existing revenue can afford, or does it assess their living costs and then find ways to finance the salaries? Why should the same principle not apply to workers in garment and other industries?

Bangladesh versus Vietnam

To assess whether the garment industry can afford the proposed wages, we need to compare Bangladesh's minimum wage with those of competing countries in the international market. Vietnam, one of Bangladesh's principal competitors, provides a useful comparison.

Bangladesh's garment-sector minimum wage is Tk 12,500 a month, or approximately $101. In Vietnam's capital and other major urban areas (Region I), the minimum wage is currently approximately $202 and is scheduled to rise to $221 in January 2027.



Workers at a garment factory in Gazipur return to work following disruptions caused by protests over a new minimum wage on November 5, 2026. PHOTO: **MEHEDI HASAN**

Bangladeshi manufacturers often justify low wages by arguing that local workers are less productive. One industry estimate puts Vietnamese workers' productivity 10-15 percent above that of their Bangladeshi counterparts. But productivity depends heavily on employers' investment in technology, factory conditions, and worker training. It is unreasonable to place the responsibility for low productivity on workers while overlooking these factors.

Even accepting the industry's productivity estimate, the wage gap is far greater than the productivity gap. If Bangladeshi workers are 10-15 percent less productive, that cannot explain why their minimum wage is roughly half that of Vietnam. Moreover, low wages can themselves undermine productivity. Better-paid workers can afford more nutritious food and enjoy better living conditions, which can improve their health and performance. Efficiency wage theory also suggests that higher wages can motivate workers and increase productivity.

The comparison with Vietnam thus offers no compelling reason to believe that a substantial increase in garment workers' wages would undermine Bangladesh's international competitiveness. Investment in workers' nutrition, living standards, and skills could instead strengthen the industry's productivity and competitive position.

Therefore, the wage board's responsibility is not simply to determine how much garment manufacturers can afford to pay, but to establish what workers and their families need to earn to live with dignity. It is this need that should guide factory owners in finding ways to strengthen the industry's capacity and improve productivity.

A permanent solution to minimum-wage disputes

To address the recurring disputes over minimum wages, the government should establish a permanent National Minimum Wage Commission, as recommended by the Labour Reform Commission under the interim government. It should include experts in economics and wage policy, alongside elected representatives of workers and employers.

The commission should develop a transparent formula that accounts for monthly household food expenditure, non-food costs such as housing, healthcare, education and recreation, and a minimum level of savings. Based on these calculations, it should establish a national minimum wage for a household with a single income earner and reassess it every three years, taking inflation and changes in living standards into account.

This national minimum should serve as the floor for sector-specific minimum wages. Wages in individual industries may be set higher depending on their productivity and capacity, but never below the national minimum.

Finally, the commission must publish the rationale, calculation methods, and supporting data behind its recommendations. A transparent and evidence-based approach to setting minimum wages is essential to protecting workers' livelihoods, preventing recurring labour unrest and industrial disputes, and building a more productive and sustainable industrial sector.

Transparent agricultural data can help tackle our fertiliser crisis



Afrina Momotaj is a climate-smart agriculturist based in Bangladesh, working on soil health, environment, and agricultural data frameworks. She can be reached at momotajafrina@gmail.com.

■ **AFRINA MOMOTAJ**

Global fertiliser prices have surged by 70 to 80 percent following the US-Israel military offensive against Iran, leading to shipping bottlenecks at the main international trading routes. Because Bangladesh imports over 85 percent of its fertiliser, the shock has hit our domestic supply chain hard. While policymakers in Dhaka focus on foreign exchange reserves and emergency import tenders, they are missing a fundamental truth: the fertiliser crisis is largely a result of agronomic inefficiency and structural data blindness.

To understand how we got here, look at the fiscal engine driving our agricultural policy. Input subsidies now absorb nearly 80 percent of the Ministry of Agriculture's annual budget. This money is meant to shield farmers from global price shocks. But the reality on the ground is stark. In rural markets, smallholders are paying Tk 1,600 to Tk 1,800 for a 50-kg bag of DAP, far above the official price of Tk 1,050. Weak oversight and paper-based tracking allow for localised shortages and predatory hoarding.

Even worse, the subsidy model is fundamentally inequitable. Because benefits are tied to the volume of fertiliser purchased, the largest 20 percent of farm holdings capture nearly half of all subsidy expenditures. The smallest 40 percent of farmers, the ones who need the most help, receive only 13 percent.

We are also paying a heavy environmental price. National data shows that only 5 percent of Bangladeshi farmers apply a scientifically balanced nutrient mix. For decades, artificially cheap urea has encouraged the over-application of nitrogen.

When nitrogen is applied without balance, it negatively impacts the atmosphere since nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas, is approximately 270 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Moreover, our floodplains are experiencing organic matter depletion, and our soils are becoming acidic. In other words, we are subsidising the degradation of our own land.

How do we break free from this cycle? The answer lies in transforming how we view data. The agriculture sector needs transparent, verifiable records.

Continuing to channel public capital into blanket chemical subsidies without field-level accountability is no longer viable. The global disruptions of 2026 carry a clear message. Our food security cannot remain hostage to international commodity shocks and unmonitored farm practices.

Right now, policymakers do not possess real-time visibility into which agro-ecological zones have specific nutrient deficits, who is actually buying the subsidised fertiliser, or whether fertiliser is being applied efficiently.

That's why we must build the digital infrastructure to capture data directly at the farm gate. By using digital tools to connect soil testing, crop quality grading, and input purchasing into a unified ecosystem, we can pioneer three major shifts. First, we can provide precision support through digital verification, which will allow subsidies to bypass predatory middlemen and reach the actual cultivator, whether they own the land or sharecrop it.

Second, site-specific nutrient management can be achieved by utilising real-time soil data. This will help farmers move away from regional guesswork. Tailoring nutrient applications to exact soil deficits can reduce fertiliser waste by up to 30 percent. Third, we can financially reward best practices among farmers for adopting Integrated Plant Nutrition Systems, which combine balanced minerals with organic matter to regenerate living topsoil.

Continuing to channel public capital into blanket chemical subsidies without field-level accountability is no longer viable. The global disruptions of 2026 carry a clear message. Our food security cannot remain hostage to international commodity shocks and unmonitored farm practices.

The road ahead requires our policymakers, scientists, and financial institutions to treat agricultural data as a foundational resource. It is as essential to farming as seed, sunlight, and water. Initiatives are already emerging to build these digital farm-gate frameworks. To truly transform our food systems, we must illuminate the farm gate with transparent data infrastructure. Only then can Bangladesh lead the Global South in moving away from high-cost input dependency toward intelligent, climate-smart agronomy.

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ROHINGYA JUSTICE, PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION

Rohingyas' last hope rests on the ICJ verdict



Kamal Ahmed is consulting editor at The Daily Star. He led the Media Reform Commission under the interim government. His X handle is @ahmedka1.

■ KAMAL AHMED

The long-awaited judgment in The Gambia's case against Myanmar under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide is now scheduled to be delivered on November 19. The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) announcement of the date has rekindled hopes of justice among the Rohingyas, one of the world's most persecuted ethnic communities. Bangladesh continues to host more than a million Rohingya refugees, having provided them with shelter for long.

The ICJ judgment comes at a time when the Rohingyas are increasingly losing hope, as the world appears to have forgotten their plight and is seemingly preparing to move on. Recent developments in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond concerning Myanmar suggest a significant shift towards normalising relations with the country's long-isolated military leadership. The junta stands accused of grave human rights violations against its own people, including mass killings, the overthrow of an elected government, and the imprisonment of thousands of political activists.

Even before the February 2021 military coup, Myanmar's military, with the complicity of its civilian government led by now-imprisoned leader Aung San Suu Kyi, had carried out systematic persecution and ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya Muslim minority. These atrocities forced nearly a million Rohingyas to flee to Bangladesh and neighbouring countries. The United Nations has repeatedly condemned Myanmar's military leadership through various resolutions, while the United States and the European Union have imposed sanctions on the country and its military leaders. Only a handful of countries, including China, Russia, and India, have continued to engage with the junta, arguing that a political solution is necessary.

Some recent developments, however, point in a troublingly different direction, particularly since junta chief Min Aung Hlaing staged a widely criticised election and assumed the role of civilian president. He subsequently renewed his diplomatic outreach, visiting several ASEAN member states, including Malaysia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia. It is worth recalling that, at their 2025 summit in Kuala Lumpur, ASEAN countries decided against sending an official election observation mission, citing the absence of conditions necessary for free, fair, and inclusive participation.

Hlaing's visit to Malaysia, however, carried particular significance. One apparent focus of the engagement was the repatriation of approximately 200,000 Rohingyas currently living in Malaysia as refugees. Despite objections from the United Nations and several humanitarian organisations to forced repatriation amid continuing insecurity and the absence of a credible rehabilitation plan in Myanmar, Malaysia sent 1,476 Myanmar nationals back by sea in late September, ahead of Hlaing's visit. Malaysia subsequently rolled out the red carpet for Min Aung Hlaing, welcoming him with a guard of honour on October 7, 2026.



The warming of relations between ASEAN leaders and Myanmar's junta chief, Min Aung Hlaing, appears troubling in the context of justice for the Rohingya genocide. FILE PHOTO: AFP

Some Western governments appear increasingly inclined to downplay or obscure the role played by Suu Kyi and her civilian administration in the persecution of the Rohingyas. The ICJ proceedings and the forthcoming judgment offer an opportunity to establish greater legal clarity and ensure that responsibility for the atrocities is not obscured by subsequent political developments.

Washington's attitude towards Myanmar also appears to be taking a new turn. In September, US Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research Michael Vance visited Myanmar's capital, Naypyidaw, and met Min Aung Hlaing. It was reportedly the first high-level meeting of its kind since the military seized power. Vance is also said to have held two other meetings with Myanmar officials in Tokyo, one before and another after his visit to Naypyidaw.

According to the BBC, the first indications of a shift in US policy towards Myanmar emerged during President Donald Trump's tariff offensive. After Hlaing received a letter from Trump threatening an additional 40 percent tariff, the junta chief responded rather differently from leaders of other affected countries. He described the move as an "encouraging invitation to continue participating in the extraordinary Economy of the United States".

In another development, reports emerged in late October that Japan had pushed for Myanmar's removal from the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) blacklist. Japan denied the reports. However, on November 5, a spokesperson for Myanmar's government thanked Japan and a few other countries for "acknowledging Myanmar's current progress", without providing further details.

The latest controversy erupted on October 22, when Mike Waltz, the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations, launched a scathing attack on the ICJ and its ad hoc judge, Navi Pillay, on the social media platform X. He accused Pillay of "tipping the scales on the ICJ's current proceedings on Myanmar, intending to lower the legal threshold for proving genocide so that weakened and false standard can later be weaponised against American and allied soldiers whenever they raise a finger against terrorists that hide behind civilians." He added: "Pillay, we see your agenda and we'll be watching the ICJ's handling of these proceedings very closely. As our actions against the ICC demonstrate, we will not allow globalist, faux-judges to weaponise the law against our troops, undermine our sovereignty, or put American lives at risk."

Presumably, Waltz was reacting to Navi Pillay's comments on Gaza genocide after winning the Nobel Peace Prize. He wrote, "The Nobel Committee has disgraced itself by awarding the Peace Prize to Pillay. What a shameful choice to 'honour' someone who represents an 'international community' with a leftist, globalist, antisemitic agenda."

The recent electoral success of Democrats in the United States, however, offers some grounds for optimism. It is worth remembering that the US State Department was among the first major government institutions to formally determine that Myanmar had committed genocide against the Rohingya. On March 21, 2022, following what it described as a rigorous factual and legal analysis, the then US Secretary of State formally determined that members of the Burmese military had committed genocide and crimes against humanity against the Rohingya. Since the Holocaust, the United States had made only seven other such determinations, making this the eighth. That determination has not, to date, been rescinded or revised.

One would therefore hope that Waltz's public criticism of the ICJ reflects neither a fundamental reversal of Washington's established position on Myanmar nor a rejection of international justice, but rather the Trump administration's broader hostility towards international judicial institutions.

Since the February 2021 military coup, a new dimension has emerged in the question of Myanmar's culpability. The ousted political leadership, including Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters, has itself become a target of military brutality. Against this backdrop, some Western governments appear increasingly inclined to downplay or obscure the role played by Suu Kyi and her civilian administration in the persecution of the Rohingyas. The ICJ proceedings and the forthcoming judgment offer an opportunity to establish greater legal clarity and ensure that responsibility for the atrocities is not obscured by subsequent political developments.

Ultimately, the ICJ judgment should help clarify Myanmar's legal responsibility for the alleged genocide. But the most important question is what it will mean for the Rohingyas themselves. Will it bring them closer to justice, secure their rights, create conditions for safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation, and offer them a future free from persecution? The international community must ensure that the judgment translates into meaningful action and that the Rohingyas are not once again abandoned to the shifting political interests of powerful states.

Rohingya rights cannot remain on hold until repatriation



Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury is a former judge of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, who authored the landmark 16th Amendment judgment. He also served as chairman of the National Human Rights Commission and the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances.

■ MOYEENUL ISLAM CHOWDHURY

Bangladesh is right to insist that Myanmar must resolve the Rohingya crisis. But that proposition cannot answer the question: how should refugees be protected while they remain here? On October 27, Bangladesh again told the United Nations that prolonged displacement cannot become a permanent solution. The warning should also prompt an examination of our own approach—a temporary refuge must not become a place where rights are indefinitely postponed.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's five-point proposal at the UN on September 23 rightly linked repatriation with security, humanitarian assistance, accountability and regional cooperation. These commitments deserve support. Their credibility, however, depends on implementation rather than repetition. With more than 12 lakh Rohingya in Bangladesh, the challenge is no longer simply accommodating an emergency. It is governing prolonged displacement without allowing either refugees or host communities to bear the consequences of international failure.

The first requirement is honesty about return. UNHCR continues to assess conditions in Rakhine State as unsuitable for sustainable repatriation. Bangladesh's October 27 statement itself acknowledged continuing abuses by both Myanmar's military and the Arakan Army. A roadmap must therefore address who can guarantee protection on the ground, not merely who can sign an agreement. Moving people across a border is not a durable solution if they return to violence, exclusion and confinement. The underlying problem is not simply a population on the wrong side of a border; it is a community deprived of secure membership in its own country. Repatriation that restores location without restoring rights risks preparing the ground for another exodus.

This is why protection during displacement and repatriation must be pursued together. Treating education, lawful livelihoods, or legal safeguards as obstacles to eventual return creates a false choice. A person does not become more capable of rebuilding a life in Myanmar by spending years without adequate schooling, skills, or security in Bangladesh. Nor does deprivation turn an unsafe destination into a safe one. Voluntary return cannot credibly be promoted by making refuge unbearable.

Bangladesh's legal position requires equal clarity. The country is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, and UNHCR identifies the absence of national legislation specifically governing refugee and asylum affairs. Yet this is not an absence of legal obligations. Article 31 of our Constitution extends protection of law beyond citizens to other persons within Bangladesh. Article 32 protects life and personal liberty. The government's description of Rohingya as "Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals" cannot erase protections that attach to persons rather than nationality.

The High Court has already demonstrated the practical importance of this distinction. In RMMRU v Government of Bangladesh, decided on May 31, 2017, it examined the continued imprisonment of a Rohingya man after his sentence had expired. The court found his detention unlawful, addressed protection against return to persecution or torture, and ordered his release with arrangements for accommodation through cooperation with UNHCR. The judgment's lesson remains urgent: uncertainty over someone's future does not justify denying lawful protection in the present.

Nevertheless, the Foreigners Act, 1946 remains a central legal instrument. Its concern is regulating foreigners' entry, presence and departure, with extensive executive powers over residence and movement. It is not a comprehensive refugee protection framework. Administrative discretion may facilitate emergency shelter, but it cannot provide the clarity, consistency, and enforceable remedies needed for displacement lasting years. Refugees should not have to depend on exceptional intervention whenever routine administration fails them.



A group of Rohingya refugees walk across a bridge in Chattogram in December 2020. More than a million Rohingyas continue to live in Bangladesh, far from home and uncertain of their future. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Bangladesh should therefore enact a protection framework specifying lawful status, documentation, safeguards against forced return, access to justice, and procedures for reviewing detention and movement restrictions. It should provide effective remedies against abuse and accessible complaints mechanisms. Accession to the refugee and statelessness conventions also warrants serious consideration. But protection cannot wait for those decisions. Recognising enforceable rights during refuge does not, by itself, confer Bangladeshi citizenship or require permanent settlement. That distinction should be explained rather than obscured.

International responsibility must be equally concrete. The UN's revised 2026 appeal sought $710.5 million, 26 percent less than the previous year, to meet minimum lifesaving needs among Rohingya refugees and local host communities. A smaller appeal should not be mistaken for a smaller crisis. When humanitarian priorities are compressed to fit shrinking resources, unmet needs do not vanish. They are transferred to families, aid workers, and the communities sharing already stretched services. Wealthier states cannot praise Bangladesh's generosity while allowing the means of sustaining it to erode.

Predictable funding should support education, healthcare, protection and carefully designed livelihood opportunities. Bangladesh should enable such programmes with safeguards for local workers and consultation with host communities. Donors should finance services and infrastructure that benefit both populations. They should also expand resettlement and other lawful pathways for vulnerable refugees. These efforts distribute the costs of protection more fairly while a durable solution remains unavailable. None of this relieves Myanmar of its responsibilities.

Security concerns require seriousness without collective suspicion. Armed groups, trafficking networks, and extortion must be addressed through targeted policing, credible investigation, and prosecution. Refugees must be able to report threats without exposing themselves to retaliation or arbitrary treatment. Women and children need confidential reporting and effective protection. Host communities deserve safety and responsive public services. Security policy fails when it treats an entire displaced population as the problem while leaving those exploiting its vulnerability beyond accountability.

Repatriation diplomacy, meanwhile, should be judged against verifiable conditions: citizenship rights, freedom of movement, access to homes and livelihoods, humanitarian access, and independent monitoring after return. Rohingya representatives, including women, must participate in defining those conditions. Their consent cannot be reduced to signatures on forms. International accountability remains indispensable, but legal proceedings and diplomatic conferences cannot substitute for protection where people actually live.

The government should translate its international proposals into a public implementation plan, identifying responsibilities, funding commitments, and measurable safeguards. Parliament should address the domestic protection gap. Courts should enforce existing constitutional guarantees without treating statelessness as a reason for administrative indifference. International partners should commit resources over several years rather than repeatedly waiting for services to approach collapse.

Bangladesh cannot restore the citizenship Myanmar has denied the Rohingya. It can, however, ensure that statelessness does not become rightlessness within its own territory. Our strongest demand for justice abroad will be one accompanied by enforceable protection at home. The objective must remain safe and voluntary return. Until that becomes possible, protection on the ground cannot be provisional.

'ANNiE' wins award at Geneva International Film Festival

Nazifa Tushi starrer miniseries ***ANNiE***, directed by Abdullah Mohammad Saad, has won the Future Is Sensible Award at the 32nd Geneva International Film Festival (GIFF) in Switzerland.

The festival's Future Is Sensible section holds special significance for the entire team as it celebrates stories that go beyond entertainment, explore human values, raise questions and encourage audiences to reflect on the world and its future.

Reflecting on her experience of playing the titular character, Tushi described Annie as more than a role, saying the journey of understanding her silences, emotions, vulnerabilities and strengths had changed her in ways she was still discovering.

The series stars Tushi alongside Yash Rohan, Symon Sadik, Sarika Subrin, Farhana Mithu and Nazah.



'Non-duality' explores the fading connection between nature and the living

AISHWARYA RAIHAN

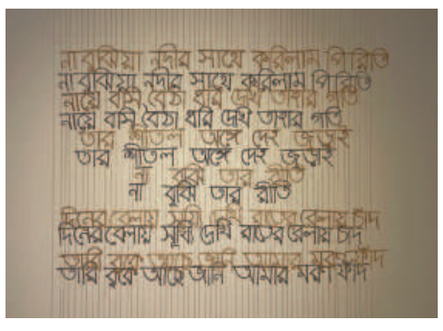
On October 30, artist Moni Majhi's solo exhibition, ***Non-duality***, was inaugurated at La Galerie, Alliance Française de Dhaka (AFD). The opening was attended by art critic Moinuddin Khaled, artist and cartoonist Professor Shishir Bhattacharjee, and AFD Director François Chambraud. The exhibition thoughtfully explores the fading kinship between nature, its natural forces, and living beings, while offering visual possibilities for reconnecting with the environment.

Hailing from Khulna, Majhi draws deep artistic inspiration from the Sundarbans—a region where rivers, forests, tides, saline soil, and wildlife are intricately intertwined with human life. He notes that the animals, myths, and folk beliefs of the coastal belt have long shaped his understanding of existence as an interdependent relationship built on memory and connection. However, contemporary





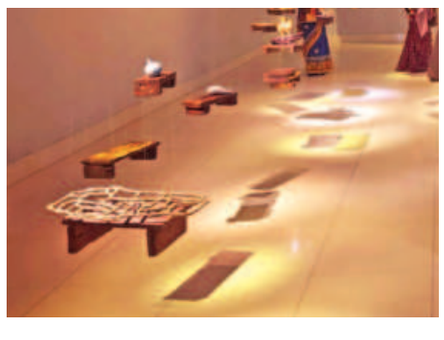
PHOTOS: **ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY**



political and economic systems, unchecked natural resource exploitation, narrow-minded concepts of development, and the worsening climate crisis continually disrupt the fragile structures sustaining this connection. Consequently, rivers alter their course, soil turns saline, wildlife loses habitats, and local communities lose vital fragments of their memories, languages, and cultural identities. Majhi poignantly describes those displaced by these ecological disruptions as "refugees of the green."

Through ***Non-duality***, the artist gives tangible form to his vision of reviving humanity's lost harmony with nature—a vision extending far beyond formal religious doctrines. Upon entering the gallery, visitors are greeted by wooden *piris* (traditional Bengali sitting tools) suspended from the ceiling, almost as if holding sacred offerings. In coastal communities, offering *sinni* or *payesh* (a traditional milk-and-rice dessert) on a *piri* is a ritual intended to calm raging storms and winds attributed to deities like Paban Pir or Paban Thakur. Offering a *piri* to a guest is also an enduring gesture of hospitality.

Drawing on these rich cultural associations, Majhi collected wooden *piris* in distinctive colours from homes across his village to serve as his primary canvas. Carved with folk sayings, poems, and imaginative creatures, key pieces include a woman with a fish's tail and wings—symbolising ecological symbiosis—and a miniature representation of mangrove respiratory roots.



Elsewhere in the gallery, an embroidered work depicts Bonbibi, the guardian mother of the Sundarbans, holding roots on her lap for protection against a stark white backdrop, visually echoing Michelangelo's Pietà. Another map-based artwork highlights the traditional "Ashtamasi" (eight-month) earthen embankment, a temporary local flood-adaptation method that works in harmony with natural rhythms rather than disrupting them. Additional pieces incorporate jute embroidery and wood carvings featuring folk poems about the mythical Badar Gazi and traditional adages on harvesting and natural disasters.

Ultimately, ***Non-duality*** reminds urban dwellers and coastal inhabitants alike that we do not own nature; we are an intrinsic part of it. The exhibition remains open at Alliance Française de Dhaka until November 10, daily from 3 :00pm to 9:00pm.



SAMIRA KHAN MAHI crowned Miss Universe Bangladesh 2026

Renowned actress Samira Khan Mahi has been crowned Miss Universe Bangladesh 2026 at a ceremony held at a hotel in the capital.

Last year's winner, Tangia Zaman Methila, placed the crown on her head. The two embraced before walking across the stage together to applause.

According to the organisers, Mahi will represent Bangladesh at the 75th Miss Universe competition in Puerto Rico, with activities scheduled to begin on November 11.

A familiar face on television, Mahi now adds a national pageant title to her acting career.

Mahi succeeds Methila, who represented Bangladesh at the 74th Miss Universe competition in 2025. She will now follow in her predecessor's footsteps as she prepares to represent Bangladesh on the international stage.

NEWS

Jamaat's old guard retains grip on local leadership

FROM PAGE 12

social responsibilities, when electing ameers.

He said members often preferred experienced leaders and that their re-election reflected the confidence of party members.

Among the new district ameers are Golam Kibria in Joypurhat, Kabirul Islam in Khulna, Mahfuzur Rahman in Barishal, Hasmat Ali in Rajbari, AR Hafizullah in Lakshmipur and Minhajur Rahman in Khagrachhari.

Others are Mohammad Alamgir in Thakurgaon, Enamul Haque in Dinajpur, Enamul Haque in Rangpur, Nazrul Islam in Pabna, Mahfuzur Rahman in Naogaon, Abdul Awal in Jhenaidah, Saeed Ahmad in Magura, A Rob in Pirojpur, Azizul Haque in Kishoreganj, Sefaul Haque in Gazipur, Ibrahim Bhuiyan in Narsingdi, Imtiaz Uddin Ahmad in Faridpur and Shamsuddin in Sunamganj.

The new metropolitan ameers are Abdul Malek in Bogura, Md Jahangir in Rajshahi, Asaduzzaman Sohel in Mymensingh and Khairul Hasan in Gazipur.

Masudur Rahman, appointed acting ameer of Narayanganj district earlier this year, has now been elected to the post.

In Kurigram, Md Azizur Rahman, who served as district ameer from 1996 to 2018, returned to the position in December last year and has been re-elected.

Meanwhile, the ameers of Bogura, Chapainawabganj, Sirajganj, Jhalakathi, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Meherpur, Tangail, Rangamati and Bandarban, each of whom has served for at least 10 years, retained their posts.

Jhalakathi's Hafizur Rahman has served since 2004, completing 22 years in office. Mohammad Abdul Alim of Rangamati and SM Abdus Salam Azad of Bandarban have held their posts for 16 years, while Md Shahinur Alam of Sirajganj has served for 14 years.

The ameers of Natore, Barishal metropolitan unit, Barguna, Narail, Dhaka North and South metropolitan units, and Manikganj were also elected for a fifth term.

However, the party did not announce the names of the new ameers for Cumilla metropolitan and Jamalpur district units.

On October 14, crude bomb explosions and vandalism took place at the Cumilla metropolitan Jamaat office over the formation of the committee.

Two days later, the party dissolved the committee and relieved longtime ameer Kazi Deen Mohammad of his post. No election was held to choose his successor.

In Jamalpur, voting was held, but the result has been withheld pending further review.

Under the Jamaat constitution, district and metropolitan ameers serve two-year terms. Voting for the latest term took place from October 9 to 31 under a five-member central election commission led by Assistant Secretary General ATM Masum.

Abdul Halim said the candidate securing the highest number of votes was elected in accordance with the party constitution, adding that leaders could be replaced if members lost confidence in them.

EC sticks to old laws, key reforms left out

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elections before the national election.

The Local Government Reform Commission proposed amending Article 119(1) of the Constitution to empower the EC to schedule and conduct local elections independently, without waiting for government requests.

Another major proposal was to replace direct elections for mayors and chairmen with a parliamentary-style system, under which voters would elect councillors and members, who would then choose executive office holders.

The commission also recommended bringing all five tiers of local government under a single law and election schedule, with nationwide voting in phases.

Commission members argued that the reforms could reduce the election process to one or two months from the current 225 days and cut costs. The government spent approximately Tk 2,300 crore on local government elections between 2021 and 2024.

The proposed rotational reservation system would allow women to represent their own wards directly, eliminating dual representation.

On MPO-enlisted teachers, Masud said the EC had proposed barring them from contesting local polls.

Zahed Ur Rahman, adviser to the prime minister and a former Electoral Reform Commission member, said proposals requiring legislative changes must first be approved by parliament.

Asked whether the government would consider the recommendations before the UP polls, he said, "Political parties, through the National Consensus Commission, have reached a consensus on many of the recommendations made by the Electoral Reform Commission and the Local Government Reform Commission regarding local government elections, while several others have been met with notes of dissent."

He added, "The BNP government is different. BNP does not agree with all the recommendations of the Local Government Reform Commission. The party will implement only those reforms that are included in its election manifesto."

Former Electoral Reform Commission member Abdul Alim said several important proposals remained unaddressed, particularly constitutional amendments to strengthen the EC's authority over local elections.

"The necessary amendments can be made now," he said, arguing that the current political environment offered an opportunity for reforms unavailable to previous governments.

Former Electoral Reform Commission chief Badiul Alam Majumdar said holding all local government elections on a single day could reduce costs, provided adequate security arrangements were ensured.

He also called for mandatory affidavits for UP candidates, saying voters should be able to examine their assets and backgrounds before voting.

Dhaka University Prof Kazi Maruful Islam, a former Local Government Reform Commission member, said the government had implemented the recommendation to abolish party symbols in local elections but had shown little interest in other structural reforms.

"One of our key recommendations was to abolish party symbols in local government elections, and the government has done that. But it has shown little interest in our other major structural recommendations, and we have seen no initiative to implement them."

He warned that the upcoming polls might produce elected representatives without ensuring the decentralised framework needed to meet public expectations.

Maruful suggested forming an expert committee to review the recommendations of all reform commissions to make local governance more effective, inclusive and citizen-oriented.

Gazprom makes fresh push for Bhola gas

FROM PAGE 12

and could consider Gazprom's proposals in connection with some of those upcoming projects, a senior official of the division told The Daily Star.

"There are several drilling projects coming up. We may consider their proposals for some of those projects."

The meeting would provide an opportunity to discuss how Gazprom could be engaged in future projects.

According to an invitation letter dated November 3, the delegation will include Nikita Belous, head of international cooperation and business development, and Alexey Belebezyev, country director of Gazprom International.

The agenda includes cooperation in oil and gas exploration, geological and geophysical activities, well drilling operations, prospective onshore exploration blocks and related technical collaboration.

The latest move does not represent an entirely new set of project proposals.

In its recent correspondence, Gazprom has asked Bangladesh to proceed with submissions made in earlier years, seeking progress on initiatives that have yet to materialise.

The proposals were brought to the Energy Division through diplomatic channels.

In a note verbale dated May 11, the Russian Embassy in Dhaka referred to meetings between Russian Ambassador Alexander Khozin and Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood on March 30, as well as Foreign Affairs Minister Khalilur Rahman on May 2.

The embassy asked the foreign ministry to advance the company's proposals. The foreign ministry subsequently forwarded them to the Energy Division on June 2.

Gazprom's proposals were submitted in stages from 2023. In October that year, the company expressed interest in setting up a small-scale LNG facility in Bhola, initially proposing a pilot plant with a capacity of up to 11.7 million cubic feet per day.

In February 2024, it proposed a 3D seismic survey covering around 1,930 square kilometres in Bhola, Char Fasson, Hatiya and adjoining areas. The survey could help identify around 30 potential well locations by building on existing 2D seismic data, it said.

Two months later, Gazprom proposed a pipeline from Bhola to Barishal, offering different implementation options, including engineering, procurement and construction, a financing-linked arrangement and a build-operate-transfer model.

It also proposed forming a joint working group involving Petrobangla and the Gas Transmission Company to work on the project.

According to multiple officials from the Energy Division and Petrobangla, the proposals were being considered for implementation under the Awami League government's tenure through the controversial Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act 2010.

Following the July uprising and the subsequent change of government, the interim administration repealed the special law, which had allowed energy sector projects to be awarded without the usual competitive bidding process.

Gazprom subsequently submitted another proposal in March 2025, offering to undertake drilling work at five wells: Shahbazpur North East-1, Bhola North-3, Bhola North-4, Shahbazpur-5 and Shahbazpur-7.

The company offered to provide drilling rigs, crews, supervision, monitoring and materials for the work.

However, the government opted for competitive tendering, and the contract was eventually awarded to China's Sinopec International Petroleum Services Corporation. The government approved the Tk 907.29 crore contract in December 2025.

The notification of award was published in January this year, a senior official of the Energy Division told The Daily Star.

The package covers four appraisal-cum-development wells and one exploratory well; one of the wells has already been completed, he said.

The five wells covered by the Sinopec contract are the same ones Gazprom had offered to drill in its March 2025 proposal. The Russian company therefore did not secure that assignment, as the government proceeded with an international tender.

Gazprom's latest approach, however, seeks to revive its broader proposals and explore the possibility of participating in other projects.

In its latest non-paper, the company referred to the gas potential of Bhola, saying nine existing wells in the area could produce around 200 million cubic feet of gas per day. It also argued that further seismic work could help identify additional drilling prospects.

"We don't know what Gazprom wants to propose actually, as the proposed wells have already been awarded to someone else. Let's see what they offer in tomorrow's [today's] meeting and how we can accommodate them in future projects," a top official of the ministry told The Daily Star.

Gazprom International says it has designed and constructed around 20 appraisal, exploration and production wells in Bangladesh over more than a decade, under contracts with Bapex, Bangladesh Gas Fields Company and Sylhet Gas Fields.

Its work included 10 wells completed in 2014, five more in 2016, two in Bhola in 2017 and three under an agreement signed with Bapex in 2021.

The company also signed a memorandum of understanding with Bapex in 2020 to assess the potential of existing fields and exploration prospects in Bhola.

Eisenkot begins bid to form govt

FROM PAGE 12

on and off for nearly two decades. He has taken the country in a sharply rightward direction and led wars in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran.

Both Eisenkot and Herzog acknowledged Israel's growing isolation under Netanyahu, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court.

"We are in the midst of a devastating diplomatic crisis. Even our closest friends and strategic allies are saying their relationship with Israel must be reassessed," Eisenkot said.

Eisenkot appealed to Netanyahu's Likud Party as well as the far-right party of Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to join -- but only with himself as prime minister.

"My door is open and my hand is extended, wholeheartedly and willingly, to anyone who understands the gravity of this moment," he said.

In consultations last week with Herzog, Eisenkot received recommendations from parties accounting for 67 lawmakers, against 46 for Netanyahu.

But that vote count included Israeli Arabs, whose seat haul surged to a historic high on anger over Netanyahu's government and whom several parties oppose having in government.

Avigdor Liberman, a former Netanyahu aide turned sharp critic who nonetheless shares his hawkish views, has been adamant against any alliance with Arab Israelis, who are descendants of Palestinians who stayed after Israel's creation in 1948.

Taking back one of his signature campaign pledges, Liberman instead voiced an openness to an alliance with ultra-Orthodox Jews, whose almost singular priority is ensuring that they remain exempt from military service.

Trump orders DOJ probe of Democrats

FROM PAGE 1

House of Representatives and the Senate in Tuesday's midterms.

Democrats have vowed investigations into Trump and senior members of his administration, including Attorney General Todd Blanche and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth.

"The Democrats are going around threatening a lot of people," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform. "This is extortion at the highest level, and they should be held accountable," he said, arguing that there had been "no impeachable acts committed."

Univs must not leave HSC retakers behind

FROM PAGE 12

admission procedures. But autonomy should not come at the expense of equal opportunity. Universities exist to serve students, and their interests must remain central to academic decisions. Students who meet the admission requirements should not be denied the chance to compete simply because the examination authorities and universities have failed to align their schedules.

Some universities argue that accommodating supplementary examinees would disrupt their admission schedules and delay the start of the academic year. Such concerns point to a wider failure of coordination.

The government introduced the new system without ensuring that universities would make the necessary adjustments. Universities, for their part, continued with their existing admission calendars without adequately considering the implications for supplementary candidates. Students are now caught between two systems that should have been planned to work together.

Had the decision been announced six months or even a year earlier, universities could have factored it into their admission plans. Consultation with university authorities and proper coordination among the education boards, the government and admission bodies could have prevented the present predicament. A major education policy cannot be implemented in isolation from the institutions directly affected by it.

The crisis also exposes the rigidity of Bangladesh's university admission system.

Public universities generally hold admission tests only once a year, leaving students who miss the admission window with little choice but to wait another year. Private universities, by contrast, usually offer multiple intakes, giving students greater flexibility. Public universities, despite being the preferred choice of many students, have yet to develop comparable arrangements to accommodate candidates facing exceptional circumstances.

The cost of this inflexibility goes beyond a delayed admission. Another year of waiting could add to families' financial burdens, increase students' mental stress and undermine their motivation. Some may even abandon their education altogether. These are consequences that policymakers and university authorities cannot afford to overlook.

There are practical ways to address the problem this year. Universities could allow supplementary candidates to apply provisionally, arrange separate admission tests for those who pass, or make modest adjustments to their admission schedules.

Such measures would not lower academic standards or compromise the merit-based admission process. They would simply ensure that eligible students are not denied a fair opportunity because of circumstances beyond their control.

The government must now work with universities to find an immediate solution.

More importantly, the authorities must establish a system of consultation and coordination so that future policy changes do not leave students in the same predicament.

If the aim is to prevent students from losing an academic year, those who pass the supplementary exams must be given a genuine opportunity to compete for admission.

A second chance in the HSC exams must also mean a second chance at higher education.

7-katha land dispute sparks fresh attack

FROM PAGE 3

According to Nazim, the property belonged to around seven heirs, but only one had transferred it to Nur's side. Other heirs subsequently challenged the ownership, mutation records, and threatened legal action.

He said he had proposed that lawyers from both sides examine the documents, adding that negotiations were underway.

Nur rejected the allegations, saying the land had been purchased from around 10-15 family members and that competing ownership claims could not be substantiated.

He said 34 individuals, including retired military personnel, were involved in the purchase and had authorised him to handle the matter through a power of attorney.

Nur claimed Nazim paid only Tk 30 lakh in cash and issued a Tk 20 lakh cheque that was dishonoured. Despite repeated assurances, Nazim failed to pay the outstanding amount, prompting the owners to serve a legal notice, he said.

Asked about Saturday's incident, Nur acknowledged visiting the project, saying the landowners wanted to take possession of their property. "We went there because he was saying that we had no land there. We wanted to see whether we could take possession. We did not go there to attack anyone," he added, denying any involvement in the assault.

Visiting the project yesterday morning, this correspondent found security guards stationed at a broken entrance gate, while a section of wire fence lay on the ground. Some workers continued construction inside.

Project supervisor Ibrahim Akand alleged that the attackers broke through Gate 4, seized guards' walkie-talkies, damaged CCTV cameras, snatched workers' mobile phones, snatched gold ornaments from Nazim's sister, and attempted to occupy a vacant plot before police arrived.

Security in-charge Farhad Hossain said several guards were beaten despite having no involvement in the land dispute.

On October 17, Nazim also lodged a general diary alleging death threats from three accused in the case.

During the September 26 attack, assailants allegedly vandalised the company's office, an under-construction building, and content creator Salman Muqtadir's studio, and looted cash and valuables.

Intellectual corruption hurt judiciary more

FROM PAGE 3

However, the government and the chief justice were pursuing a zero-tolerance policy towards those facing specific allegations, he added.

TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said an independent and neutral judiciary depended on the honesty, ethics, and accountability of judges.

He said uncertainty had emerged after the current government repealed ordinances issued by the previous interim government to establish a separate secretariat for the judiciary and introduce a process for appointing Supreme Court judges.

He hoped the government would formulate specific laws on these issues.

"Judicial integrity is essential for a people-centred, justice-based, and accountable state. Public trust in the courts depends on the integrity and ethical conduct of judges," he said.

He added that decades of unhealthy politics had normalised political and bureaucratic influence in the judiciary, as in other professions and institutions.

Delivering a message from UNDP Resident Representative in Bangladesh Stephen Rodriques, Romana Schweiger said the workshop aims to build an independent, accountable and people-centred justice system.

Describing judicial integrity as the foundation of independent decision-making and impartial justice, she said every judicial decision must be based solely on the law.

3 ordinances to be tabled as JS reconvenes today

FROM PAGE 3

Advisory Committee, chaired by Speaker and committee chairman Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, with Leader of the House and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Leader of the Opposition and committee member Shafiqur Rahman in attendance.

At the meeting, it was decided that the House will sit every day at 4:20pm, except on weekends (Friday and Saturday). The Speaker was authorised to make any necessary changes regarding the sitting hours and working days of the session.

A total of 3,751 questions have been submitted for the session, including 174 for the PM.

During the meeting, PM Tarique's proposal to declare the parliament complex a "Smoke-free Area" was unanimously welcomed by all participants.

The PM also sought an update on the installation of solar panels at the parliament complex.

In response, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Barrister Kayser Kamal, also convenor of the relevant subcommittee, said the solar power system with a 7 MW electricity generation capacity would be installed, meeting the parliament's electricity demand during sessions (approximately 6 MW, or less at times) and allowing surplus electricity to be supplied to the national grid.

Zero means zero

FROM PAGE 3

The lottery was held at Probashi Milanayatan in Dhaka's Ramna yesterday in the presence of officials from the expatriates' welfare ministry, Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, BOESL, and journalists.

Rashedul said the first flight carrying workers under the zero-cost recruitment initiative is expected in the first week of December.

He said the digital lottery marked a new approach to ensuring transparency in overseas recruitment.

Representatives of the Malaysian company are scheduled to arrive in Bangladesh on November 11 and conduct face-to-face interviews and practical examinations from November 12 to 15.

Of the 300 shortlisted candidates, the employer will finally select 112 workers based on their skills, qualifications, and performance in the examinations. The selected workers will subsequently undergo three days of training provided by the company before their departure.

Nazmun Nahar, general manager (administration, HR and finance) of BOESL, said shortlisted candidates had received SMS notifications. Their names would also be published on BOESL's official website and Facebook page.

She cautioned applicants against making payments to anyone, stressing that no financial transactions were required for recruitment.

The recruitment is part of the government's broader initiative to send 10,000 workers to Malaysia at zero migration cost through BOESL.

Rashedul said BOESL had so far received recruitment demand orders for 558 workers from Malaysian employers across different sectors, including technical assistance, manufacturing and tourism-related services.

300 families wiped out in road crashes

FROM PAGE 3

Four members of another family died when a pickup van overturned.

The report identified several factors behind these fatalities, including unfit vehicles, inexperienced and fatigued drivers, auto-rickshaws operating on highways, reckless motorcycling, substandard helmets, and traffic law violations.

RSF Director Saidur Rahman said stricter enforcement of traffic laws, road dividers and service roads, safer connections between rural roads and highways, stronger vehicle monitoring, and greater accountability among road safety authorities are essential to improving safety.

Prof M Shamsul Hoque, former director of BUET's Accident Research Institute, blamed regulatory agencies' lack of accountability for crashes that kill multiple members, sometimes spanning two or three generations, of the same family.

He said the BRTA issues licences through zigzag tests without assessing drivers' skills on actual roads. Despite the growing number of vehicles, the number of fitness inspectors has not increased, raising the risk of certificates being issued without proper inspections.

Questioning crash investigations, he said drivers were usually held responsible, while authorities failed to explain how unfit vehicles continued to operate for years and why the BRTA and police took no action.

"Two or three generations are being wiped out at once. We're not at war. Yet no one takes responsibility, and the BRTA remains asleep," he said.

He stressed that drivers, regulatory agencies, police and road authorities must all be held accountable to prevent crashes.

Anisur Rahman, assistant commissioner of the DMP Traffic Division, said direct connections between national highways and Local Government Engineering Department roads had been a major cause of crashes in recent years.

The lack of safe entry arrangements for vehicles at these junctions increased the risk of crashes, he said.

"There needs to be a safe way for vehicles to enter highways from feeder roads. The LGED and the Roads and Highways Department have jointly taken initiatives to renovate the junctions," he added.

Serve people, do not harass them

FROM PAGE 3

He urged them to treat service seekers with the same consideration they would expect when seeking assistance themselves.

Citing an example, Tarique said officials should not merely ask citizens to correct mistakes in applications but explain the errors and guide them through the process. "The country's people expect not only instructions and orders from you but also humanity," he said. He advised the officers not to compromise their professional integrity for preferred postings or promotions and to remain prepared to serve anywhere in the country.

On political affiliation, the PM said he did not personally consider it wrong for government officials to support a political party, but such support should be expressed through voting, not in government offices. He said the government was implementing its political agenda through the administration based on the people's electoral mandate.

Buses burn

FROM PAGE 1

Mohammad Aktar Hossain, deputy commissioner of DMP's media and public relations division, said police suspected a particular group who was deliberately carrying out sabotage. Several people, including members of banned organisations and their affiliated bodies, have already been arrested in connection with the incidents, he added.

According to DU sources, the blasts occurred around 6:42pm within minutes of each other. The sites included the intersection beside the metro rail station at TSC, near the Senate Building, the Institute of Modern Languages, in front of ULAB School, the Nilkhet intersection, and near the Nilkhet Gate.

OC Moniruzzaman of Shahbagh Police Station said students caught the suspects following an explosion beneath the metro rail station and handed them over to police. "They are being questioned. Details will be shared later."

DU Proctor Prof Israfil Ratan also confirmed explosions near the Senate Building and Mohsin Hall. "We don't know who carried out the explosions. Perhaps this was an attempt to create panic. We have informed the police administration."

Besides, a bus belonging to Jalsiri Cantonment School caught fire in front of Ananta Tower on the 100 Feet Road in the city's Bhatara area around 5:40pm yesterday, said police.

Our Savar correspondent reported that a D-Link Paribahan bus was set on fire in front of Afaz Uddin College in the Sharifbagh area of Dhamrai around 3:40am yesterday.

A Savar Paribahan bus was also set ablaze on the Dhaka-Aricha highway around 3:00am yesterday. OC Saiful Alam of Savar Model Police Station suspected that Awami League activists were behind the attack.

The DMP said it has strengthened intelligence-led operations, increased police deployment, and introduced mobile patrols to ensure public safety.

Police are also analysing CCTV footage to identify individuals collecting flammable materials for attacks. The detectives previously arrested several people with bomb-making materials and explosives, DMP official Aktar said, adding that law enforcement operations were continuing.

Office of the Executive Engineer
Market Construction Cell
Dhaka South City Corporation.
Level-12 (East Block), Nagar Bhaban
Fulbaria, Dhaka-1000

Ref. No: 46.207.007.09.00.544.2026 Dated: 08/11/2026

e-GP Tender Notice

Tenders are hereby invited through e-GP portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Executive Engineer, Market Construction Cell, Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of following packages which will be available at e-GP website (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) from date: 08/11/2026; Time-22:00 PM.

Sl No.	Tender ID	Name of works	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
01.	**1352721**	Repair and Maintenance work of Physical infrastructure (Market & Social Center) under market construction cell via annual term contract (FY 26-27) under Dhaka South City Corporation.	23-November-2026 13:30	23-November-2026 15:30

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit Tender, please register on the National e-GP portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to 14:30 hours on 23/11/2026. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১১৮/২০২৬-২৭

(Mohammad Golam Kibria)
Executive Engineer (Civil)
Market Construction Cell
Dhaka South City Corporation
Email: pemcc@dscc.gov.bd

GD-2710

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director (ACE), RHD
Construction of Five Climate Resilient Bridges in Mymensingh Division, Bangladesh
DTCA Bhaban (RHD Part), Level 8, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
☎ +8801321168690 ✉ pd.5bridgeproject@gmail.com

Memo No. 35.01.0000.080.14.002/C2.26-69 Date: 08 November 2026

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTANCY SERVICES – SELECTION OF FIRMS)

Country: Bangladesh
Name of the Project: Construction of Five Climate Resilient Bridges in Mymensingh Division, Bangladesh
Sector: Road Transport
Consulting Services for Proof Checking and Civil Works Supervision Consultancy for Nitai Bridge, Ganeshwari Bridge and Mahadev Bridge, Package-C2
Mode of Financing: Forward Lease and Loan (an IsDB Shariah-compliant financing modality)
Financing No: BGD 1096

The Government of Bangladesh has received financing from the Islamic Development Bank toward the cost of the "Construction of Five Climate Resilient Bridges in Mymensingh Division, Bangladesh", and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The services include independently review and verify the Contractor's Basic Design, Detailed/Construction Design, drawings, calculations, specifications, method statements, and other technical submissions and provide comprehensive construction supervision and contract-management services through completion and handover. The duration of the assignment is 48 months and comprises two phases, and total key professional staff-months is 357. Expected start date of the assignment is 01 October 2027.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be found at the following website: https://rhd.portal.gov.bd/
Or the TOR can be obtained at the QR link given below.

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of the Road Transport and Highways Division (RTHD), Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges (MoRTB) of the Government of Bangladesh now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consultants must provide specific information which demonstrates that they are fully qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).

The shortlisting criteria are as follows:

(a) **Design Checking Experience:** Proven experience in designing and/or independently checking major long-span bridges—Steel Tied arch bridges—of comparable scale, structural system, complexity and applicable standards. Design experience on comparable bridges will be accepted as relevant design-checking capability.

(b) **Construction Supervision Experience:** Proven supervision experience on major long-span bridges—particularly Steel Tied arch bridges—of comparable scale, methodology, complexity and standards, covering foundations, substructures, superstructures, prestressing, erection, testing and commissioning.

(c) **Contractual Management Experience:** Experience of the firm in administering international Design–Build contracts, preferably under the FIDIC Yellow Book or equivalent, including Contractor's design review, variations, claims, extensions of time, program and delay analysis, payments, testing, taking-over and dispute avoidance.

(d) **International, MDB and Regional Experience:** Experience in major internationally financed infrastructure projects, preferably transport or bridge projects, including MDB or equivalent procurement, contract management, and environmental and social requirements, together with experience in Bangladesh or comparable geographic and construction environments.

(e) **Organizational, Management and Financial Capacity:** Demonstrated ability to mobilize and retain a qualified multidisciplinary international team of long-span bridge, structural, construction supervision and contract-management specialists; access to international, regional or head-office expertise; and adequate financial capacity evidenced by relevant consulting turnover and other financial information.

Only the experience of the Lead firm and Joint Venture (JV) partners will be considered during the shortlisting stage. The experience of sub-consultants may be referenced but will not be evaluated. Key Experts will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to 1.12.1 and 1.12.2 paragraphs of the Procurement Policy of the *Guidelines for the Procurement of Consultancy Services under Islamic Development Bank Project Financing* April 2019 (Revised February 2023) (the "Procurement Guidelines"), setting forth IsDB's policy on conflict of interest.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) method among shortlist of International firms set out in the Procurement Guidelines.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours [Sunday to Thursday, 09:00 AM to 5:00 PM] (Bangladesh Standard Time).

Expressions of interest must be delivered in writing to the address below, in person or by mail or by email, by 2:00 PM (Bangladesh Standard Time) on 22 December 2026.

[Note: The Notice is also available on the websites of the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA), Road Transport and Highways Division (RTHD), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and DgMarket at www.bppa.gov.bd , www.rthd.gov.bd , https://www.isdb.org/ and https://www.dgmarket.com/ respectively.]

Office of the Project Director
Attention: Project Director (ACE, RHD)
Address: DTCA Bhaban (RHD Part), Level 8, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
Tel: +8801321168690
E-mail: pd.5bridgeproject@gmail.com
Website: https://rhd.portal.gov.bd/

(Md. Masum Sarower)
ID No. 001023
Project Director (ACE, RHD)
Construction of Five Climate Resilient Bridges in Mymensingh Division, Bangladesh

GD-2704

Why we need to rethink South Asia's agrarian history

In conversation with David Ludden

David Ludden, Professor Emeritus of History at New York University, is a distinguished historian of South Asia whose research has transformed our understanding of agrarian societies, peasant life and the historical forces shaping the region. In this interview with The Daily Star, he discusses his intellectual journey, the transformation of agrarian societies under colonial rule, the historical roots of Bengal's regional divisions, and the relationship between agriculture, nationalism and political power. He also reflects on the changing place of agrarian studies in an increasingly urbanised world facing a deepening climate crisis.



A village in a clearing in the Sundarbans, depicted in an 1843 sketch by Frederic Peter Layard, based on an earlier drawing from January 1839. The scene reflects the expansion of agrarian frontiers into Bengal's forested and riverine landscapes.

The Daily Star (TDS): Could you tell us about your journey as a historian and what drew you to South Asian agrarian history? You began conducting fieldwork in villages in Tamil Nadu when few historians pursued such research. What inspired this unconventional approach?

David Ludden (DL): I became serious about academic work when I was studying public health in college. A fellowship enabled me to spend a year working in a village clinic near Chennai. I was already troubled by inequality in America. In India, I learned about inequality on a global scale. I learned how poverty causes health problems.

I returned to university determined to study the Tamil language, which I had learned in the village, and the political economy of inequity, which I had come to believe was entrenched in capitalism and spread by imperialism. My studies led me to conclude that economic inequality is a global public health issue: it makes richer people healthier, while poor people (everywhere) suffer, separating rich and poor countries, rich cities and poor villages, rustic elites and poor village workers. That would be the subject of courses I would teach for forty years at the University of Pennsylvania and New York University.



David Ludden, Professor Emeritus of History at New York University

My first academic work, however, was to translate and interpret ancient Tamil poetry. Like much of Bengali literature, it is filled with images of social life in nature. It would lead me to a lifelong interest in the intimate details of social life and culture in natural and ecological environments.

For my dissertation, I brought the study of culture and political economy together in agrarian history. My research began by asking how British rule changed the system of land rights in India and, thus, the legal and cultural foundations of agrarian inequity. I quickly discovered that little was known about the history of the agrarian system that the British were changing, and that led me back into the history of landed property and agrarian society, which required the study of Tamil literature and inscriptions.

That is how I came to my distinctive long-term view of agrarian history. I became committed to studying agrarian history by combining local engagements with people in the present – fieldwork – with all kinds of historical evidence, including poetry, inscriptions, architecture, music and the natural landscape that people have transformed over centuries to create agrarian environments.

My original travels from New Haven to Chennai to Reddipalayam also became a template for my mobile career. I have now travelled for fifty years from Philadelphia, New York and London to cities, towns and villages in India and Bangladesh, where I married in 1994.

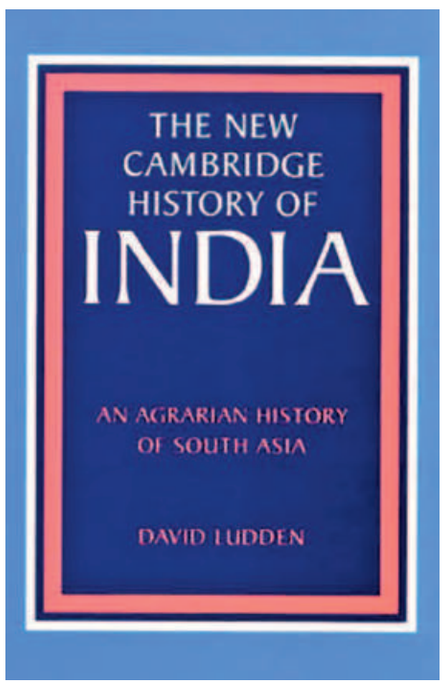
TDS: How did agrarian frontiers shape the history of South Asia?

DL: I shifted my studies to Bangladesh in the 1990s, when I was writing An Agrarian History of South Asia, to pursue the study of agrarian frontiers. I had discovered that local agrarian change results from the influence of mobile social forces – including merchants, armies, migrant settlers, new technologies, missionaries and ruling powers – which expand and transform agrarian territories. Over the centuries, forests become farms; migrant settlers displace forest dwellers; investors build irrigation works; dry land and rivers become paddy fields: agrarian territory expands and changes shape and substance as mobile social forces do their work on the land. Those mobile spaces are agrarian frontiers.

Agrarian societies thus change shape and substance through the local arrival of many kinds of mobile elements, which transform local worlds within the very specific natural ecologies that lay the groundwork for agrarian diversity. My first book concentrated on ecological diversity in one small region of South India; my second book followed agrarian frontiers across the vast diversity of agrarian South Asia. Since then, I have been focusing on Sylhet and on the diversity of agrarian spaces all around Bangladesh.

East and West Bengal provide a good example of how the interaction of mobile forces and ecological diversity organises agrarian societies: Calcutta bhadralok landlords formed an agrarian power structure that separated West Bengal from the modern agrarian frontiers in East Bengal. That difference has a wider context and relevance because agrarian frontiers form political territories all over Eurasia.

Agrarian frontiers in Western Europe were formed by imperial conquerors imposing settler colonies, when Roman armies formed latifundia, worked by slaves, which became the foundations of agrarian Europe. Conqueror settler colonialism drove European expansion into agrarian frontiers overseas. By contrast, in the arid Roman East (West Asia) and Persia, armies and merchants in city-centred territories used local landlords to rule agrarian economies and invest in expanding frontiers. That West Asian model travelled into semi-arid South Asia, through Persia, and into the wetlands of Bengal: Indian imperial territory broadly came to be dominated by warriors and merchants in cities who ruled farmers in agrarian frontiers through landlords.



The cover of *An Agrarian History of South Asia* by David Ludden, published in paperback by Cambridge University Press in February 2011.

The British adapted the Indian imperial model, using landlords to rule the countryside and heaping wealth and power on Calcutta and on the landlords who opposed the creation of East Bengal and Assam in 1905 because it empowered people in the ecologically unique, high-rainfall wetlands of the Jamuna-Meghna delta, where local village farmers propelled agrarian frontiers by investing their own labour and capital. Landlords lost local power to those village and small-town investors in farming frontiers, and Bangladesh emerged as an agrarian revolt against the Indian imperial model of city-centred landlord domination of agrarian society.

TDS: In your book An Agrarian History of South Asia, you identify the late nineteenth century as a turning point when colonial bureaucracy, development ideologies and industrial technologies transformed agrarian life. How did these changes give rise to what you call the 'Development Regime', and why did its inequalities persist after independence?

DL: I invented the idea of the Development Regime to describe the new assemblage of social powers that travelled with industrial capitalism into agrarian environments in the nineteenth century. Elites in British India organised that assemblage, but similar regimes emerged in the Native State of Mysore and in Russian, Chinese, Ottoman and American territories at the same time.

Development regimes include all forms of technical expertise, social power and technology that governments organise to increase economic growth and strengthen their ruling elites. Development regimes became foundational to modernity and imperialism, as well as to anti-colonial nationalism and independent nation-states. The idea that the British impoverished India was fundamental to Indian nationalists, and national governments always claim to be developing the nation. Development statistics measure every nation's status in the global rankings, forming a picture of the global development regime that emerged after 1950 and embraced all the new nations carved out of imperial territories across Africa and Asia.



The cover of *Reading Subaltern Studies: Critical History, Contested Meaning and the Globalisation of South Asia*, edited by David Ludden and published by Permanent Black in 2003.

Nationalism in South Asia evolved within the inequities of the imperial development regime in British India. That regime was designed to enrich investors in British India and overseas who built global supply chains to deliver labour, wealth and raw materials to people in areas of industrial demand. The 1947 Partition of British India left most of the imperial development regime in place within national territories, where radical change became unsustainable as the global development regime wrapped national regimes in capitalist supply chains that moved manufactured goods, labour and primary products up the ranks of wealth and power, from poorer to richer places around the world. As a result, the social and spatial inequities of the imperial development regime continued to operate within national territories.

TDS: You argue that agrarian societies underwent major transformations long before British colonial rule, although these changes are less visible in historical records. Why, then, has colonialism been regarded as the decisive turning point in South Asia's agrarian history?

DL: From a historian's academic perspective, the most dramatic change that occurs in agrarian history in the nineteenth century is the increase in documentation. Historians focus primarily on the 19th and 20th centuries because that is when social change became more clearly documented. In addition, all the social theory that we inherit pushes us to believe that Western imperialism, modern capitalists and British rule changed everything. The billiard ball metaphor is justified by social theory and, empirically, by the fact that, all of a sudden, the colonial archive portrays changes that are poorly documented, if at all, in earlier times.

The truth is, however, that looking more closely at older evidence reveals major changes already underway during pre-modern millennia. The Pala-Sena period in Bengal, the Chola period in South India, the Tang-Song period in China and the Abbasid period in Persia – circa 900–1200 – followed by the Mongol and post-Mongol periods across Asia – circa 1200–1800 – witnessed dramatic changes throughout Asia, which I have described for South India and now for various other areas, including Sylhet.

With all that change in view, we can summarise the dramatic changes in agrarian life in the 19th century as resulting not specifically from British policies but rather from technological, social and economic changes related to the industrialisation and urbanisation of market demand and control over agrarian relations. Increasing government power as a force in agrarian societies only really becomes visible in the late 19th century, and then it becomes much more prominent after 1947.

TDS: How did the eastward expansion of agrarian frontiers create differences between East and West Bengal, and how did these differences contribute to the Partition of Bengal in 1947?

DL: Agrarian frontiers travelled from west to east across the Ganga Basin, where pastoral economies coexisted and merged into expanding agrarian territories. A new kind of agrarian frontier emerged where the Brahmaputra/Jamuna-Meghna rivers combine with the Ganga/Padma lowlands and Meghalaya/Tripura highland drainage systems to carry some of the world's highest rainfall out to sea through a vast floodplain in the lowlands of Bangladesh.

As Bengali farmers travelled to settle and cultivate farmland in the floodplains, their frontiers moved from west to east, with increasing force after the fifteenth century. The uplands to the north and east formed mobile agro-pastoral spaces extending into the lowlands, where Khasis travelled across the Sylhet lowlands before 1800 and mingled with Bengalis to form Bengali-Khasi communities; those mixed communities disappeared in the nineteenth century after the British military and Bengali farmers pushed the eastern Bengal floodplain frontier into the northern Sylhet foothills.

East and West Bengal took shape as farmers moved the frontiers eastward. They followed the original course of the Brahmaputra, which flowed southeast through Mymensingh to join the Meghna at Bhairab Bazar. The river shifted course over the decades after 1787, and its new course formed the north-south route of the Jamuna. East of the Jamuna, migrant Bengali settlers mingled with non-Bengali people from the uplands, from West and Southeast Asia and from overseas, resulting in a range of ethnolinguistic differences between Bengal east and west of the Brahmaputra/Jamuna.

British rule increased that divergence by introducing into the East a zamindari landlord system designed to organise agrarian territories in the semi-arid western Ganga Basin. As village farmers moved agrarian frontiers from the drier West into the wetter East, Gangetic landlordism became unstable in the eastern floodplain. Nineteenth-century zamindar landlords, introduced into eastern Bengal by the British, were unable to control the local political economy of agricultural expansion; economic opportunities also drew them, as a high-caste bhadralok elite, to invest in Calcutta. Zamindars invested in urban education, urban careers and the Congress nationalism that logically rejected eastern Bengal's agrarian demands for zamindari abolition, which expressed the rising aspirations of Bengali farmers on eastern frontiers.

Partition and Pakistan emerged because voters in Bengal (and Punjab) rejected the Indian National Congress in elections in the 1920s and 1930s. The main reason for rejecting Congress in Bengal was the demand for zamindari abolition, which Congress would not accept and which divided politicians in East and West Bengal.

The British used the 1931 census figures for Muslims and Hindus as a basis for dividing Punjab and Bengal between India and Pakistan, but religion was not the reason that division became necessary. For centuries, Brahmanism and Islam had served as effective religious technologies for constructing social bonds in agrarian territories in Bengal. A Muslim majority in East Bengal emerged from the British practice of counting people in the 1871 census; that majority became part of the imperial development regime and, subsequently, part of the national and imperial politics that eventually produced the 1947 Partition of British India into India and Pakistan.

In the arid Roman East (West Asia) and Persia, armies and merchants in city-centred territories used local landlords to rule agrarian economies and invest in expanding frontiers. That West Asian model travelled into semi-arid South Asia, through Persia, and into the wetlands of Bengal: Indian imperial territory broadly came to be dominated by warriors and merchants in cities who ruled farmers in agrarian frontiers through landlords.

TDS: Bangladesh has experienced rapid urbanisation, with Dhaka emerging as the country's dominant economic and political centre. How do you explain this transformation, and what has it meant for the relationship between urban and agrarian societies?

DL: Countries that were least urbanised in 1900 have experienced the most dramatic rates of urbanisation since then. Bangladesh is at the top of the list. The reasons include the inherent mobility of the agrarian population, which is always on the move into new frontiers, and also the closure of the agricultural frontier as arable land became fully occupied. The urban-centric logic of modern development regimes also became increasingly dominant globally after 1950.

The city became a modern agrarian frontier in British India. Urban growth increased as the railway channelled agrarian wealth into cities and, most of all, into ports and capital cities. Calcutta dominated urban India until 1905; Dhaka grew during the short-lived Province of East Bengal and Assam; Calcutta fell behind Delhi and Bombay after 1911; and Dhaka only grew again after 1947, and still more after 1971.

As Bangladesh's population grew, opportunities for work and profits in Dhaka outpaced those in the rest of the country, and the garment sector boom increased rural migration into the city as Dhaka became a destination for capitalist investors in global supply chains. The economic and political centrality of Dhaka has created a single-city-centred country, where two-thirds of the population still lives in villages and where Dhaka's population floods back to the villages for Eid. Romantic images of rural Bengal produced by urban literati obscure the agrarian diversity of Bangladesh and bolster the idea of a homogeneous national population.

City-centred development regimes engage in that kind of flattening and standardisation of the countryside around the world. Modi's Hindutva regime is an egregious example, which we described the book Making India Hindu. Urban nationalist projects that turn complex, diverse, dynamic and borderless agrarian worlds into flat, stable, uniform national territories gain more popularity as cities absorb more and more of the world's population.

The interview was taken by **Priyam Paul.**

DHAKA MONDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2026, KARTIK 24, 1433 BS

SPORT

WHAT TO WATCH

T SPORTS
Bangladesh vs West Indies
2nd Test, Day 5
Live from 9:30 am

TEN SPORTS
Pakistan vs Sri Lanka
1st Test, Day 1
Live from 10:30 am

Butler battling cancer, BFF faces coaching call

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's national football team head coach Peter Butler has been diagnosed with cancer and will be unable to continue in his role as he requires immediate treatment, Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Tabith Awal confirmed on Sunday.

"Peter cannot continue as his cancer is confirmed and immediate treatment is required," Tabith told The Daily Star.

The federation is now facing a coaching decision ahead of the women's team's two FIFA international friendlies against Singapore on December 1 and 5, with an interim coach expected to take charge.

The women in red and green began preparations in Chattogram on October 31, but Butler, who was appointed head coach ahead of the 2024 SAFF Women's Championship after working at the BFF Elite Academy, returned to England for medical tests instead of joining the squad.



The 60-year-old had informed the federation after returning to England that he would not be available for the two friendlies.

The 60-year-old had returned to England for medical tests instead of joining the squad in Chattogram, where preparations began on October 31.

BFF Women's Wing chairman Mahfuza Akhter Kiron had earlier confirmed that Butler would miss the two friendlies against Singapore.

"Peter Butler has confirmed that he won't be available for the two friendly matches after going back to England," Kiron told The Daily Star on Sunday.

BFF technical director Saiful Bari Titu has been assigned to guide the team during preparations, while the federation looks for a coach to take charge for the Singapore matches.

Tabith had earlier said he was waiting for Butler's final health update before deciding on the next course of action. With the coach now unable to continue, the federation will have to make arrangements for the upcoming friendlies.

There has been speculation that French coach Erik Meyer could take charge of the team on an interim basis, although Tabith has not named any potential replacement.

U-17s go down 5-1 to Syria

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh made a false start to their AFC U-17 Asian Cup qualifying campaign, conceding two own goals and two penalties in a 5-1 defeat to Syria in their Group C opener at the Emirates Club Stadium in the United Arab Emirates on Sunday.

After three months of training at home followed by a two-week preparation camp in Jordan, Bangladesh had arrived in the UAE hoping to secure a place in the finals for the first time in a long while. However, their opening encounter against group favourites Syria proved a bitter experience.

Lodewijk De Kruif's charges fell behind in the 16th minute when Ahmed Al Sheikh Taha converted a penalty. Qussi Al Shalhani doubled Syria's lead in the 41st minute, also from the spot, before Aram Alhammoud extended the advantage just before half-time.

Bangladesh showed signs of a comeback immediately after the restart, with substitute Bayzit Bostami pulling one back in the 47th minute.

However, their hopes suffered a major blow in the 71st minute when midfielder Mohammad Arif was sent off, leaving Bangladesh to play the remainder of the match with 10 men.

The numerical disadvantage proved costly as midfielder Tarek Hossain put the ball into his own net in the 77th minute. Defender Maruf Ahmed then scored another own goal in stoppage time to complete Bangladesh's miserable outing.

The defeat leaves Bangladesh with work to do in their remaining group matches if they are to keep their hopes of qualifying for the finals alive.



West Indies batter Kavem Hodge wears a smile as he returns to the dressing room unbeaten on 140 at stumps on the fourth day of the second Test against Bangladesh at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday. The visitors, leading the two-match series 1-0, were 345 for three, with an overall lead of 315 runs heading into the final day. (Inset) Bangladesh's players and think-tank had plenty to ponder but little success to show for their efforts, as the hosts faced the prospect of a series defeat. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

A spin plan that failed to turn

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI *from Sylhet*

While Bangladesh are putting on a brave face heading into day five, their tactical gambles have repeatedly backfired. A draw is now the most positive result they can realistically hope for in the Sylhet Test, and even that would leave them losing the series. Their decision to back three spin options has once again failed to deliver.

Sylhet's green surface initially offered good bounce and movement for pacers. Yet even the four millimetres of grass was trimmed on the morning of the Test as the hosts persisted with their spin-heavy strategy. When spin failed to make an impact in the first innings, Taskin Ahmed and Hasan Mahmud were forced to do the heavy lifting. By day four, Bangladesh were left scrambling, with Kavem Hodge's unbeaten 140 effectively ending their hopes of victory.

The spin trio of Taijul Islam, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Nayeem Hasan bowled 58 overs on day four, conceding 224 runs. Taijul finished with figures of 2-118, unable to extract the sharp turn the team management had banked on.

Groundstaff had already cautioned that the surface might offer limited assistance to spinners, while the pitch appeared to become better for batting as the match progressed.

Taijul gave the ball more air on day four but still bowled quicker than Jomel Warrican, who had extracted some assistance during Bangladesh's innings. Taijul's average turn increased from 2.5 degrees in the first innings to four degrees in the second, but it had little impact despite his two wickets on the day.

"The wicket still looks good to us. But this is red-ball cricket. If we can get off to a good start, I think chasing is possible. First, we have to see how many runs they set as a target, and then we will plan accordingly."
TAWHID HRIDOY

"It's very difficult to put a number on that wicket. Like I said, we just have to come tomorrow and assess, keep ticking over, and I think we just have to play it by ear and keep going moment by moment. We can't think too far ahead because as we see, it's a very good cricket wicket. We don't want to leave too much out there or stay too long, but play it by ear as we go."
KAVEM HODGE

Nayeem averaged five degrees of turn on day four, yet his struggle to find the right areas was evident from the fact that he bowled only 10 overs. It revived the question of whether Bangladesh needed three spin options in the first place.

The pace department also struggled. Taskin and Hasan, who had been impressive in the first innings, appeared less effective in the second after bowling a combined 45 overs in the first innings.

The momentum generated by Tawhid Hridoy's commanding 242, a rescue act on day three, never translated into a dominant bowling effort. Ironically, a team management official described the wicket as "good enough for play to take place for another five days".

From Mirpur to Sylhet, Bangladesh's reading of the conditions has reflected misplaced priorities in their bid to level the series. Head coach Phil Simmons had admitted on day three that the spinners had not shown their "true qualities" in Dhaka or in the first innings in Sylhet. Hridoy, however, struck a defiant note after day four.

"We don't have regrets," Hridoy insisted. "We had a clear plan, since the head coach, captain and selector made up the team and decided what the best eleven would be. We are trying heart and soul, but execution didn't go well. We believe something good is possible from here."

Reality, however, paints a far grimmer picture.

With a commanding 315-run lead, the West Indies can effortlessly bat the hosts out of the contest within the morning's first hour. From there, they will back their own spinners to exploit a fifth-day surface with the ruthless, suffocating control the hosts have so glaringly lacked.

Taibur leads Dhaka's charge with career-best 211

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Division's Taibur Rahman stole the show with a career-best 211 off 294 ballsagainst Khulna Division on the second day of the sixth round of the National Cricket League (NCL) at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Resuming overnight on 128, Taibur, who had last scored a double century in 2017, finally ended his nine-year wait for another as Dhaka declared on 513 for five. Khulna reached 132 for two at Stumps.

Meanwhile, Chattogram's Irfan Sabri Takrir marked his first-class debut with a 212-ball 104 against Rangpur at the Khulna Divisional Stadium. The youngster, who had played for Chattogram's NCL second XI just a week earlier, struck 13 fours and a six as Chattogram reached 304 for five. Sadikur Rahman scored 90 after Chattogram had bowled Rangpur out for 166 on day one.

At Bogura, Nasum Ahmed claimed five for 43 to bowl Rajshahi out for 192 despite skipper Pritom Kumar's 105. Sylhet reached 63 without loss to take a 208-run lead.

At Chattogram, Abu Hider Rony took five for 35, his seventh first-class five-wicket haul, as Barishal slumped to 136 for eight in reply to Mymensingh's 386. Fazle Mahmud Rabbi top-scored with 80, while debutant Mosabbek Hossain had earlier made an unbeaten 69.





Sri Lanka and Bhutan players contest an aerial ball during their SAFF Championship Group A fixture at the National Stadium yesterday. Bhutan took the lead through Dawa Tshering in the 34th minute, but Oliver Kelaart equalised a minute later. Ahmed Razeek put Sri Lanka ahead on the stroke of half-time before Chencho Gyeltshen missed a penalty. The Bhutanese forward made amends with a 76th-minute equaliser for a 2-2 draw, a result that sent hosts Bangladesh into the semifinals. PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh, Pakistan in semifinals

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh and Pakistan booked their places in the semifinals of the SAFF Championship yesterday.

Hosts Bangladesh, who beat Bhutan in their opening Group A match on Thursday, were ensured a final-four spot after Bhutan held Sri Lanka to a 2-2 draw during the second game of the day at the National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday.

Whether Bangladesh will finish top of group and who will the other team from the group to qualify will be decided after Bangladesh play against the Lankans on Wednesday.

Earlier. Pakistan bounced back from their opening-match defeat to India to secure a semifinal berth with a convincing 3-0 victory over Maldives in their second and final Group B match.

Having suffered a 3-2 defeat against India, Pakistan had no option but to win to keep their hopes of reaching the last four alive. Nolberto Solano 's charges responded with a commanding performance to finish their group campaign with three points and a goal difference of plus two.

Pakistan made a flying start, with Aroon Abdullah converting a penalty in the fourth minute before Najeeb Ullah doubled the lead five minutes later. The 19-year-old forward then put the result beyond doubt with a superb individual effort in the 24th minute.

India also have three points but a goal difference of plus one from their solitary outing. They need only a draw against Maldives to finish as group champions. However, a heavy defeat could put the nine-time champions in danger of elimination, with head-to-head records and then goal difference determining the standings among teams level on points.

Messi first to win consecutive MLS Golden Boots

AGENCIES

Lionel Messi added another trophy to his already crowded collection, becoming the first player in MLS history to win consecutive Golden Boot awards after scoring a league-leading 26 goals for Inter Miami this season.

Messi, 39, is also the sixth player to lead the league in goals in multiple seasons. He also led MLS in 2026 with 43 goal contributions. Last season, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner claimed the Golden Boot with a 29-goal campaign.

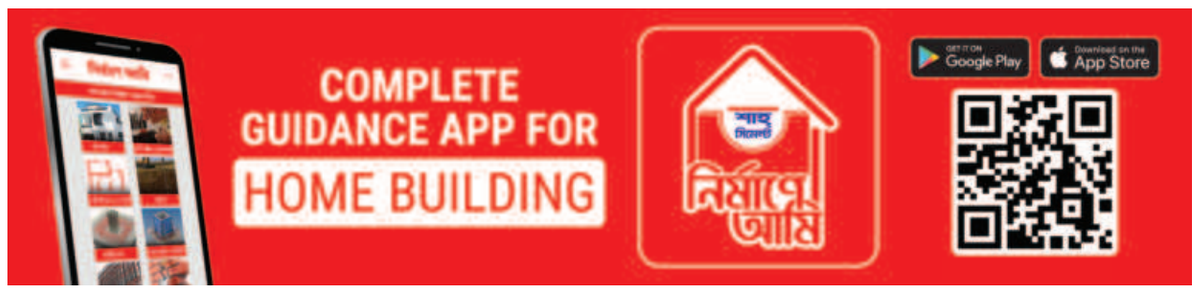
FC Dallas forward Petar Musa finished second to Messi with 22 goals, one ahead of Nashville SC striker Sam Surridge, who scored twice Saturday as the league's regular season ended.

Messi and Inter Miami finished second in the Eastern Conference and will host the №7 seed, the Columbus Crew, in a best-of-three first-round playoff series. Miami also secured a berth in the CONCACAF Champions Cup for the fourth year in a row.

Messi, who retired from Argentina's national team in October, is the front-runner to win a record third consecutive MLS MVP award. If he wins, he would become the first three-time recipient.

"I have no doubt that he's the best of all," Miami coach Cristian "Kily" Gonzalez recently said of Messi.





Gazprom makes fresh push for Bhola gas

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Russia's state-linked energy giant Gazprom is back with a renewed push to pursue gas exploration and infrastructure projects in Bhola, asking Bangladesh to move forward with proposals it submitted over the past several years.

The Energy and Mineral Resources Division has called a meeting with a visiting Gazprom delegation today to discuss cooperation in exploration, drilling and other areas of the country's oil and gas sector.

The proposals include drilling five wells, conducting a 3D seismic survey across Bhola, Char Fasson and Hatiya, constructing a pipeline to carry gas from Bhola to Barishal, and setting up a small-scale liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility.

The renewed approach comes when some of the company's earlier proposals have been overtaken by developments in the government's procurement process, while others remain unresolved.

The Energy and Mineral Resources Division has called a meeting with a visiting Gazprom delegation today to discuss cooperation in exploration, drilling and other areas of the country's oil and gas sector.

The government had several drilling projects in the pipeline

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



With schoolbags on their backs and little feet carrying big dreams, four children make their way along a road to Shishu Kalyan Primary School in Tepatari village of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila. The government-supervised school provides education to underprivileged children, many of whom walk long distances without their parents, who are away at work. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

UP POLLS

EC sticks to old laws, key reforms left out

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission's decision to hold union parishad elections under existing laws has raised questions over the fate of key electoral and local government reforms aimed at strengthening grassroots accountability and representation.

The EC plans to hold the polls in five phases between January and May next year, without incorporating recommendations made by the Electoral Reform Commission and the Local Government Reform Commission.

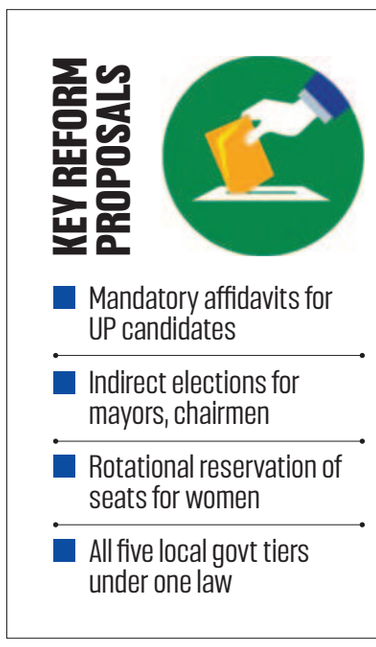
Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmanel Masud said the polls would be held strictly under existing laws.

Asked whether the EC would consider the reform proposals, he said, "No. These are matters for parliament now. We will consider them if the law is changed. We will not go an inch beyond the existing law."

He said the EC had already submitted proposals requiring legislative changes but had received no response.

Any subsequent amendments could be incorporated into municipal elections, but the UP polls would proceed under the current legal framework, he added.

The reform commissions proposed major changes, including non-partisan local government elections, mandatory affidavits for UP chairman and member candidates, and rotational reservation of seats for women.



The Electoral Reform Commission also recommended requiring MPO-enlisted teachers to resign before contesting local polls and holding local government

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Jamaat's old guard retains grip on local leadership

Incumbent ameers re-elected in 51 of 77 units

MAMUNUR RASHID

Long-serving leaders continue to dominate Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami's district and metropolitan units, with 51 of the 77 units retaining their previous ameers for the 2027-28 term. In at least 10 districts, the ameers have held office for a decade or longer.

However, several districts have seen leadership changes. In Khagrachhari, Minhajur Rahman, former district secretary, replaced Syed Md Abdul Momen, who had served as district ameer for nearly 28 years. New ameers were also elected in Joypurhat, Khulna, Barishal, Rajbari and Lakshmipur, where their predecessors had held office for 17 to 23 years.

The findings are based on an analysis of the lists of ameers for the previous and new terms, reports from The Daily Star's district correspondents and interviews with local and central Jamaat leaders.

The party announced the names of the elected ameers in a press release on Wednesday night. Jamaat Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman announced the names at an executive council meeting at the party's central office in Moghbazar, Dhaka.

According to the party, the ameers were elected through secret ballots cast by its rukons (members).

Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Maulana Abdul Halim told The Daily Star that members consider the criteria under Article 72 of the party constitution, including experience in organisational, political and

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Univs must not leave HSC retakers behind

Admission schedules have to be aligned with govt decision to introduce supplementary exams

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The introduction of supplementary examinations for students who fail one or two subjects in the Higher Secondary Certificate exams is a welcome move. It offers hundreds of thousands of students a second chance without having to lose an entire academic year.

Until now, students who failed one or two subjects had to wait another year to retake the HSC exams before becoming eligible for university admission. The new system is intended to spare them that wait. This year, 4,22,905 of 5,94,113 students who failed will be eligible to sit for the supplementary exams.

But a major problem has emerged: the new system is not aligned with university admission schedules. While the government has introduced a second chance for these students, universities appear to be proceeding with their existing admission plans without taking the change into account.

Dhaka University is set to hold its admission tests between December 5 and 26. Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has scheduled its admission test for January 16, while medical college admission tests may take place on December 18.

The supplementary exams, meanwhile, will begin on December 1, with results expected on December 31.

This means candidates may not receive their results before application deadlines or even admission tests at some institutions. Even if they pass the supplementary exams, they could be denied the opportunity to compete for university admission in the current academic year. There is also concern that other universities may follow the lead of DU and BUET, further narrowing their options.

This defeats the very purpose of introducing supplementary examinations. A system designed to save students an academic year should not leave them unable to pursue higher education because their results come out too late.

Admittedly, public universities are autonomous institutions with the authority to determine their academic calendars and

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

NEWS ANALYSIS



Gas supply was due to return to normal yesterday after a four-day shutdown of Summit LNG Terminal in Moheshkhali, Cox's Bazar, for emergency maintenance, but autorickshaws and other vehicles still waited in long queues at CNG filling stations in Chattogram. The photo was taken at a station in the CRB area in the afternoon.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

NEWS IN FOCUS

Eisenkot begins bid to form govt

Warns Netanyahu has brought Israel to historic crisis

AFP, *Jerusalem*

Israel's former military chief Gadi Eisenkot yesterday started the tough task of forming a government, reaching out to Benjamin Netanyahu's allies as he warned the veteran prime minister had brought the country to a historic crisis.

Eisenkot, 66, a political novice who has vowed to bridge Israel's deep polarisation under Netanyahu, formally received a mandate from President Isaac Herzog, giving him 28 days to form a government despite his bloc lacking a clear majority.

"We are in a state of emergency, approaching a point of no return for the State of Israel," Eisenkot, who had traded his usual all black for a suit and tie, said at a ceremony at the presidential office.

"We must form a national emergency government. This will require creative and unconventional political steps."

Eisenkot, born to a family of working-class Moroccan immigrants, would be the first Sephardic prime minister -- a community mostly descended from



Middle Eastern or North African Jews -- in a country long dominated by an Ashkenazi elite with ties to Europe.

Netanyahu is Israel's longest-serving prime minister, having led the country

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4