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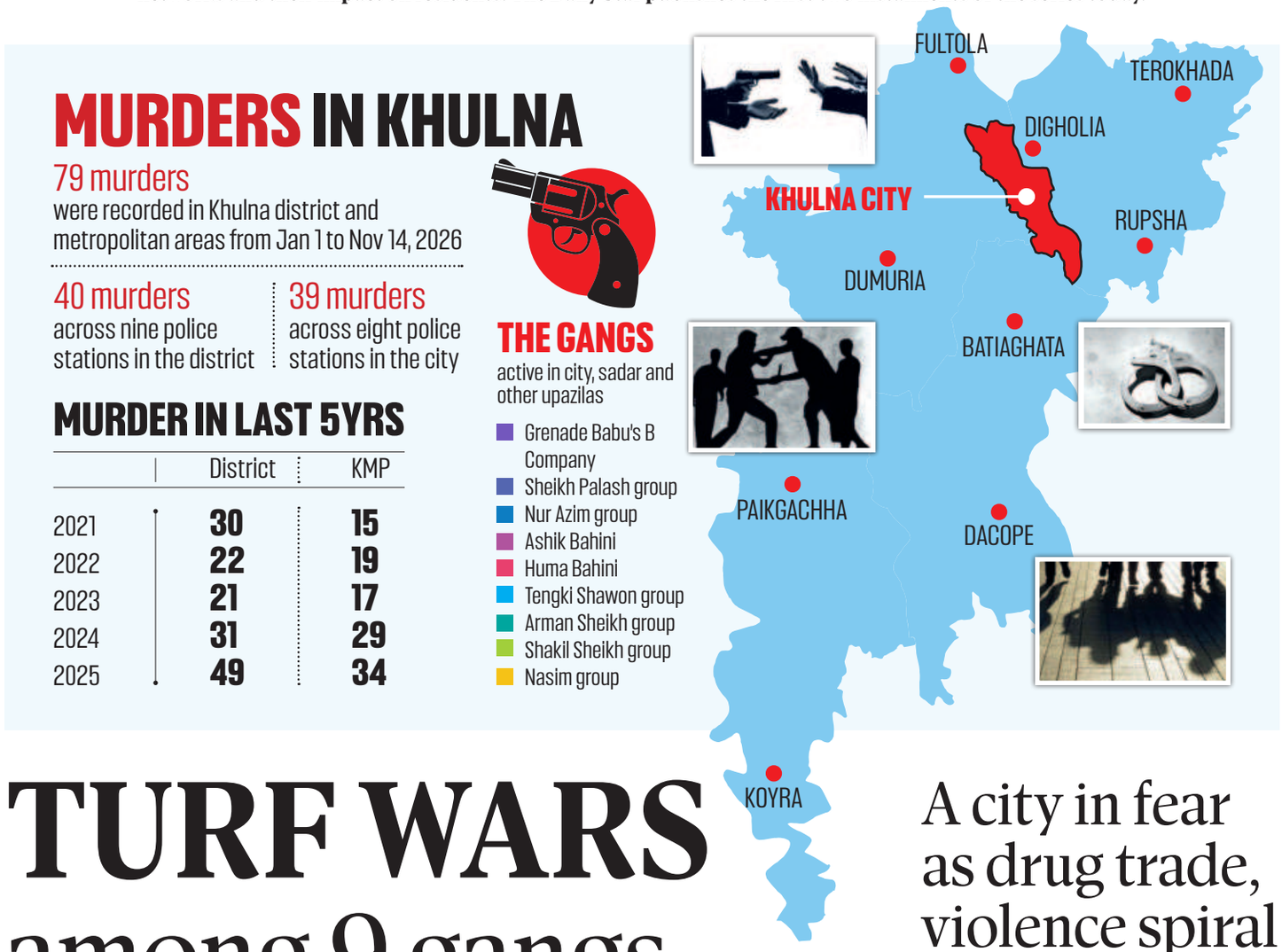
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Khulna's underworld is expanding at an alarming pace, with nine criminal gangs active in the industrial city. Turf wars, drug trafficking, extortion and killings have left residents living in fear. Rival gangs are fighting for territorial control and dominance over the drug trade, fuelling violence across the city. This four-part series examines the activities of the nine gangs, the forces behind the expanding criminal networks and their impact on residents. The Daily Star publishes the first two instalments of the series today.



TURF WARS among 9 gangs turn Khulna deadly

DIPAN NANDY, *back from Khulna*

Nine criminal groups are vying for control of Khulna's underworld, carving out areas of influence and competing over drug trafficking, extortion and businesses. Their rivalries have frequently spilt into deadly violence.

Police and local sources say the groups, once confined to smaller neighbourhoods, have expanded their reach since the political changeover on August 5, 2024, recruiting unemployed youths and teenagers to strengthen their networks.

A senior law enforcement officer, requesting anonymity, said police had been largely ineffective in the immediate aftermath of the political change, allowing criminal groups to expand drug trading and acquire firearms.

The groups that have become more active after the uprising are Grenade Babu's B Company, Sheikh Palash group, Nur Azim group, Ashik Bahini, Humayun Kabir's Huma Bahini, Sheikh Saidur Rahman's Tengki Shawon group, Arman Sheikh group, Shakil Sheikh group and Nasim group.

Although they operate in particular neighbourhoods, they often compete for overlapping areas.

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FIREARMS RECOVERED

Khulna District Police (Jan–Oct 31, 2026)
- 26 firearms recovered
- 18 cases filed
- 38 people accused

Khulna Metropolitan Police (Jan–Oct 31, 2026)
- 51 firearms recovered
- 48 cases filed under the Arms Act
- 81 people arrested

A city in fear as drug trade, violence spiral

DIPAN NANDY, *back from Khulna*

At around 12:30pm on November 9, a padlock hung from the door of a house in Durjanimahal village of Khulna's Rupsha upazila. Its courtyard was deserted, as the family moved elsewhere.

Among the residents of the house was 27-year-old Joy Dhali, who was killed in an attack on August 15. Just 51 days later, on October 5, his father, Akhtar Dhali, 55, was shot dead.

The family of six, including Joy's younger brother Prince Dhali, was involved in fish and shrimp farming in enclosures, locally known as ghers. The surviving family members left the house in fear.

Locals told this correspondent that Joy and his father were involved in the drug trade and used their political influence to maintain control over it.

Akhtar was involved with the BNP, they said.

Police and local sources said their alleged involvement in the drug trade brought them into conflict with B Company, a criminal gang led by Roni Chowdhury, alias Grenade Babu.

They suspect that the rivalry eventually led to the killings after the group had initially threatened the family.

An officer at Rupsha Police Station who is familiar with the investigation said Joy was killed over establishing supremacy in the narcotics trade.

Akhtar named some of his rivals in the

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25,000 bodycams gather dust as police resist scrutiny

TOUSIF KAIUM

Despite repeated directives from Police Headquarters (PHQ), most police members are reluctant to use body-worn cameras that were procured for about Tk 100 crore before the February election to improve transparency and accountability in policing.

Ahead of the 13th parliamentary polls, the interim government announced plans to procure 40,000 body-worn cameras for police.

The force ultimately purchased 20,000 devices and already had around 5,000 usable cameras, bringing the total number of operational devices to about 25,000, The Daily Star has learnt from PHQ officials.

The cameras were intended to help prevent crime, maintain law and order, and create a record of police interactions with the public. The PHQ also established a central data centre under its Operations Unit to monitor their use.

"We discuss the use of these cameras at our meetings regularly. Officials from district and metropolitan units say they will monitor the matter, but there has been no improvement," said a senior PHQ official.

Data from the central monitoring system show that only 314 online body-worn cameras were used between October 4 and 10.



Our force does not want to be accountable -- we have issued instructions repeatedly, but they do not use the cameras.

Additional Inspector General
Khandaker Rafiqul Islam

During the same period, 2,800 offline cameras were used, according to the PHQ Media Wing.

Additional Inspector General (Operations) Saidur Rahman acknowledged that body-worn cameras have remained limited outside major occasions.

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Govt vows debt transparency

Decides to publish regular debt data as repayment costs rise; Khosru outlines reforms as Bangladesh moves to launch sovereign bond

REJAUL KARIM BYRON, *from Cox's Bazar*

Bangladesh will start publishing detailed public debt data regularly as the government seeks to restore investor confidence and contain rising repayment costs ahead of the country's graduation from the UN's list of least developed countries.

Speaking at the country's first international conference on sovereign debt management in Cox's Bazar yesterday, Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said the finance ministry was working on medium-term debt management strategies, regular debt sustainability assessments, and public debt bulletins.

It will also publish its first annual borrowing plan this fiscal year.

"The government is committed to strengthening public debt management institutions, enhancing transparency, and adopting forward-looking financing strategies," he said.

The reform agenda includes clearer debt records and reporting, better assessment of debt risks, a deeper domestic capital market, and diversified funding sources.

The government also plans to improve coordination among agencies handling debt and fiscal policy and align debt management, including state guarantees, with international best practices.

Khosru said the government will also publish a list of state guarantees and a fiscal risk statement, introduce caps and fees on new guarantees, clear unpaid subsidy bills, establish a single debt management office, and revise the public debt law.

The push comes as loans taken under the previous Awami League government fall due.

Bangladesh spent $4.5 billion servicing its foreign debt in FY2025-26, and the annual bill is expected to peak at around $5.5 billion in FY2029-30, according to Khosru.

Finance Secretary Khairuzzaman Mozumder said the annual borrowing plan would make government financing "more predictable and transparent".

The ministry will also provide fuller reports on domestic and external debt repayments and improve Treasury bill and bond auctions.

Nazma Mobarek, secretary of the Financial Institutions Division, said annual interest payments on foreign debt, in taka terms, would more than double between FY2024-25 and FY2028-29.

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CHAOS IN GOPALGANJ

AL supporters go on the rampage

Take out armed procession and damage police, public properties

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gopalganj*

Gopalganj town descended into chaos yesterday as supporters of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations, many carrying sticks and other local weapons, marched through the district headquarters and vandalised police and public property.

Among the targets were a police armoured personnel carrier (APC), a police box, the July Monument and Hadi Square. Protesters also removed and replaced signboards at several institutions and reopened the local Awami League office.

Later in the day, there were reports of attacks on houses of BNP leaders and activists in other parts of the district.

All activities of the AL and its associated and affiliated organisations were banned last year, under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Gopalganj DC Md Arif-Uz-Zaman was withdrawn and replaced by Habiganj DC GM Sharfaraz, while Gopalganj SP Md Habibullah was transferred and replaced by Feni SP Pratyush Kumar Majumdar.

Amid the unrest, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel were

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Hundreds of Awami League leaders and activists, many carrying wooden poles and oars known locally as "logi-boitha", take to the streets of Gopalganj town yesterday, chanting slogans in support of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina. The procession, which began near BSCIC Bridge, breached police barricades and disrupted traffic as activists later set fires on several roads. PHOTO: STAR

US judge orders park remain open in Trump golf course project

AFP, *Washington*

A US federal judge on Saturday ruled a park in the heart of Washington must remain open to the public, after President Donald Trump's administration sought to close it for a planned renovation of a golf course.

An avid golfer who owns courses around the world, Trump aims to turn Washington's East Potomac Golf Links, a public course with affordable rates, into a facility capable of hosting major championship-caliber events.

To that end, the Trump administration called for the November 15 closure of East Potomac Park, a 395-acre (160-hectare) park where the golf course is located, to begin construction.

But a lawsuit filed by an environmental group against the project blocked the closure, with US District Judge Ana Reyes granting a temporary restraining order that required the park remain open for now as the lawsuit works its way through the courts.



PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

Workers peer through the closed gate of Lyric Industries (Pvt) Ltd in East Mouchak in Gazipur's Kaliakoir, amid ongoing labour unrest over wage demands. According to BGMEA data, an average of nearly 300 garment factories remained closed each day over the past two weeks, while 204 were shut in Ashulia, Savar and Gazipur on November 12. **Story on page 12.**

Freedom fighter named in sabotage case 7 months after death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Shariatpur*



Zahirul Haque

Zahirul Haque Samchu Dhali had been dead for nearly seven and a half months when police named him among 251 accused in a sabotage case over crude bomb explosions, truck vandalism and an expressway blockade near the Padma Bridge South Toll Plaza on November 9.

The 76-year-old freedom fighter, who was acting president of Kutubpur Union Awami League, was listed as accused number 219.

A resident of Dhalikandi village in Madaripur's Shibchar upazila, Samchu Dhali died of natural causes on March 29, according to his death certificate.

Shibchar UNO HM Ibne Mizan also confirmed his death after checking official records.

His son, Nazmul Haque Dhali, said his father was accorded state honours at his funeral. He alleged that his father was implicated solely because of his political affiliation and demanded the removal of his name from the accused list.

Case complainant Sub-Inspector Akram Hossain of Padma Bridge South Police Station said he had received the names from higher authorities and included them accordingly.

Officer-in-Charge Md Abdus Salam said the case was filed against 251 named and 600-700 unidentified people under

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A city in fear as drug trade, violence spiral

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trade in a case filed over his son's death, said the officer, requesting anonymity.

The killings are part of a wider range of violence in Khulna, where gangs are fighting over drug money, extortion proceeds, and territorial control, according to police investigators and local sources.

They have identified nine criminal groups operating across Khulna city and adjoining upazilas. Among them, the rivalry between B Company and Palash group, led by Sheikh Palash, has emerged prominently in probes into several killings.

Groups linked to Nur Azim, Ashik Islam, and other local figures are also accused of involvement in drug trading, extortion, and attempts to establish dominance over different areas.

Police records show that 79 murders took place across Khulna, including the city, between January 1 and November 14 this year. Not all were linked to organised crime, but investigators have identified drug-related disputes, and territorial rivalries as motives behind several.

Talking to The Daily Star, Sarker Omar Faroque, superintendent of police in Khulna, admitted that law and order was worrying and that police had struggled to restore public confidence.

An analysis by Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP) identified conflicts over drugs and territorial dominance as factors behind 13 of the 35 killings recorded in areas under its jurisdiction in the first 10 months of this year. Other killings involved family and personal disputes, suspected theft, and mob violence.

On November 30 last year, Hasib Hawlader, 41, and Fazle Rabbi Rajon, 37, members of the Palash group, came under attack outside the Khulna Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court after attending a hearing in an arms case.

The attackers, allegedly from B Company, first hacked them with sharp weapons and then opened fire. Hasib died on the spot and Rajon on the way to a hospital.

Investigators linked the killings to a longstanding dispute between the Palash group and B Company over drug proceeds, extortion, and establishing dominance.

On November 4 this year, police submitted a charge sheet in the case against 13 people, citing narcotics trading, disputes over extortion money, and control of criminal activities as the motives behind the killings.

Hasib's mother, Hasina Begum, raised four children by working in other people's homes. Her son, who had started fish trading, left behind two daughters, aged between four and nine.

Rajon, a sand trader, is survived by a child.

The two families are uncertain about their livelihoods and their children's future.

Infighting within the BNP over dominance has also been linked to political killings. Police sources say at least 11 leaders and activists of the party and its affiliated organisations have been killed in Khulna over the past two years.

On March 4, Rupsha upazila Sramik Dal convener Masum Billah was shot and hacked to death at Dakbangla intersection. Police arrested a man named Ashok Ghosh with a firearm shortly after the killing, but the family alleged that other accused named in the case remained at large.

"How could they shoot him in front of children?" asked his wife Fatematuz Johara. "Unless they are hanged, this pain will never go away."

On March 16, Rashikul Anam Rashu, former Chhatra Dal organising secretary, was shot dead at KDA Kalpataru Market in Daulatpur.

His father, Shariful Anam, a former ward BNP president, alleged that investigators had made little visible progress in identifying and arresting the key suspects.

Allegations of killings over gang rivalry returned in late October.

On October 22, Touhidul Islam and Khushi Akhter were killed in two separate incidents.

Police sources said Touhidul was associated with the Palash group, while Khushi allegedly sold drugs for B Company. Investigators suspect drug-related disputes and territorial rivalries were behind the two killings.

On October 31, the bloodied body of Shahidul Islam, 35, was recovered from a road in the city's Labanchara area.

Police alleged that Shahidul had been involved in drug peddling. He also stood accused in a murder case.

His mother, who filed a case, said in the case statement that a drug-related dispute led to the killing.

Two days later, on November 2, police recovered the bodies of Mehedi Hasan, 35, and Rezaul Karim, 30, bearing gunshot wounds, from a char in the Atharobeki river in Rupsha.

OC Masum Khan of Rupsha Police Station said Mehedi faced two drug-related cases, while Rezaul worked as a drug carrier.

Besides drug-related disputes, locals and police say conflicts over fish enclosures, sand trading, land, contracts and territorial control have also fuelled armed confrontations.

On November 5, fish enclosure trader Tarikul Islam, 35, was shot dead in Dumuria upazila. The killing took place on the day Prime Minister Tarique Rahman visited Khulna.

In another incident, attackers shot dead Jakir Hossain, 43, a brick-and-sand trader, inside a shop in Rupsha on November 12.

Police and locals describe a recurring pattern in several attacks: gunmen arrive on motorcycles, often wearing helmets or masks, shoot their targets at close range, and flee the scene.

Speaking to this newspaper, MM Shakiluzzaman, KMP additional commissioner (crime), said police were identifying and arresting suspects and recovering weapons. However, the perpetrators often went into hiding, concealed their firearms, and sometimes secured bail after arrest.

He also admitted that the reluctance of residents to provide information created difficulties for investigators.

SP Faroque said criminals sometimes moved between areas under district and metropolitan police jurisdictions after committing offences, making coordination essential.

Talking to this correspondent, Nazrul Islam Monju, Khulna City Corporation administrator, said competition over the drug market was fuelling conflicts among criminal groups.

He alleged that despite changes in police leadership and government interventions, the situation had not improved significantly.

Khulna Metropolitan BNP President SM Shafiqul Alam Mona said fear had deterred many residents from reporting crimes or testifying in murder cases.

Mizanur Rahman Babu, president of the metropolitan unit of Communist Party of Bangladesh, alleged that drug trading, political patronage, and failures of law enforcement had contributed to the deteriorating situation. "We cannot be sure of a natural death."

Amid growing concern, senior law enforcement officials met at Khulna Circuit House on the night of November 12 and decided to launch special joint operations against crime and extortion, deploy 200 Ansar personnel, strengthen checkpoints, and increase patrols and intelligence surveillance.

Former IGP Ashraful Huda, who served in Khulna between 1990 and 1995, said the situation raised fears of a return to the city's violent past.

He recalled that during his posting, officers sometimes received news of another body before returning from investigating an earlier killing.

Huda said police had eventually brought the situation under control by strengthening intelligence networks and cooperation with locals.

"Without intelligence work, you cannot control the situation simply by deploying uniformed police," he said.

Turf wars among 9 gangs turn Khulna deadly

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Nur Azim and Ashik groups are active in Khulna Sadar and Labanchara, while Tengki Shawon's influence extends to Sonadanga and Khalishpur. Arman Sheikh and Huma Bahini operate in Daulatpur and Khan Jahan Ali while Shakil Sheikh's group is mostly affiliated with Arman's one.

B Company has a wider network, particularly around Shamsur Rahman Road, Sheikhpara, the court area and Dakbangla. The groups' activities also extend to Dighalia, Aranghata, Koyra, Paikgachha and Dumuria, where smaller armed networks allegedly control drug trading, fish enclosures, sand businesses, land and contract work.

The rivalry between B Company and Sheikh Palash's group has been particularly violent. Police linked the double murder outside the Khulna Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on November 30, 2025 to disputes over drug money, extortion, and territorial control between the two groups.

On October 4 this year, Nasim group leader Nasimul Gani was shot dead in Dighalia, highlighting the spread of the violence beyond the city.

Khulna Superintendent of Police Sarker Omar Faroque said police were aware of the nine groups and were conducting special operations against their members and patrons. Police had not found political affiliations involving the gangs, he said.

"We are also trying to trace the sources of firearms and working to dismantle the interconnected drug and arms networks," he added.

Meanwhile, Khulna City Corporation Administrator Nazrul Islam Monju told The Daily Star that several Khulna leaders met Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in Dhaka on Saturday. Those present included an MP, the president and general secretary of the BNP's metropolitan unit, and the district council administrator.

Monju said the prime minister listened to their accounts of the situation in Khulna but gave no immediate instructions or comments on joint operations or other measures.

HOW THE GROUPS EMERGED

Interviews with residents, political leaders, and police officers suggest that most groups grew out of smaller criminal networks that had operated for years, allegedly under political patronage.

Iqbal Hossain, a resident of Iqbal Road in his late 60s, recalled how the city's underworld changed hands over the decades.

"In the 1990s, the Sarbahara groups controlled the city. Then came Ershad Sikder's rule. Those were terrifying days. Bodies would turn up on riverbanks almost every day," he said.

He said the political influence of Sheikh Helal and his brothers became dominant from 2009.

Another resident, Abul Hasan, alleged that former lawmaker Mizanur Rahman Mizan helped establish a group under then Chhatra League leader Sheikh Palash Talukder after the 2014 election.

The group, which included Ashik Islam and Nur Azim, allegedly controlled extortion activities but gradually slipped out of Mizan's control after 2016, with Ashik and Azim eventually operating independently.

Helal is on the run, while Mizan and Palash are in jail.

After the AL government's fall in August 2024, smaller groups expanded as the previous political power structure collapsed.

Palash's efforts to establish control over several neighbourhoods brought him into conflict with Grenade Babu. Local sources attribute at least 10 killings to their rivalry, although the figure could not be independently established through case records.

Palash's arrest on March 30, 2025, further fragmented his group, with some members allegedly joining rival networks.

INSIDE B COMPANY

Among the nine groups, B Company has allegedly developed one of the most extensive organisational networks.

Police sources said its leader, Roni Chowdhury, acquired the nickname Grenade Babu following a grenade attack on the vehicle of then Khulna mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman in 2004. He reportedly named his group after Mumbai underworld figure Dawood Ibrahim's D Company and also uses the alias "Nawab".

Law enforcement sources describe B Company as a multilayered network involving a second-in-command, cashier, shooters, motorcycle teams, drug sellers, informants, and social media promoters.

The group allegedly has several hundred members. Some receive Tk 7,000 to Tk 15,000 a month, while others are provided motorcycles, weapons or drugs to sell.Police records show at least 15 cases against Grenade Babu, involving allegations of murder, attempted murder and assault. Joint forces raided his house on June 7, 2025, and recovered weapons, ammunition, cash and documents but failed to arrest him.

Police sources allege that he now directs the network from abroad using foreign telephone numbers.

Khulna Metropolitan Police has listed 181 criminals in the city, including around 25 associated with B Company, 12 with Nur Azim's group and nine with Ashik Bahini.

YOUNG RECRUITS, PAID ATTACKS

The recruitment of unemployed youths has emerged as another worrying feature of the gangs' activities, with investigators finding evidence of payments for individual crimes.

In the March 4 killing of Sramik Dal leader Masum Billah at Dakbangla intersection, accused Ashok Ghosh said in a confessional statement before a court that he had taken part in the murder under a Tk 50,000 agreement.

On November 11, police detained Fahad Hossain while he was allegedly attempting to set fire to the July memorial at Shibbari intersection. Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sonadanga Police Station, said Fahad had told investigators he was offered Tk 2,000 to carry out the act.

Video footage of attacks on Sandhani Clinic, New Apollo Diagnostic Centre, and Chinese Palace restaurant also showed that many participants appeared to be in their early 20s.

Police and local officials said unemployment, poverty and drug use were drawing young people into criminal activities.

Khulna Sadar Police Station OC Lokman Hossain said youths from impoverished neighbourhoods were being recruited for small payments and drugs, while City Corporation Administrator Nazrul Islam Manju said many gang members were aged between 17 and 20.

Mizanur Rahman Babu, president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh's Khulna metropolitan unit, also blamed unemployment and the closure of jute mills, claiming that workers of the closed mills were still owed around Tk 4,500 crore.

"These gang members are our own sons, brothers, and family members. They too have a right to live. Nobody willingly chooses this dark path, but the system has pushed them towards it," he said.

"Factories have closed, unemployment has become a curse, and as a result, some are taking up arms."

OLD CONNECTIONS, ELUSIVE SUSPECTS

Several current gang figures also have family links to people previously associated with Khulna's criminal underworld.

In South Tutpara, residents identified Asad Peshkar as an underworld figure in the 1990s. His son Amin Muhuri subsequently became involved, while Amin's sons, Fardin Khan and Faisal Khan, are now on police lists.

Other families in South Tutpara and Chandmari also have multiple members listed by police, including four brothers -- Nur Azim, Shahriar Islam Rocky, Jiko Khan and Rinku -- and Ashik and Sajib, sons of Mashiur Rahman alias Zulfikar Dakat.

Despite repeated operations, police have struggled to dismantle the networks and bring suspects to justice.

In the Masum Billah murder case, only four suspects had been arrested in eight months, while those identified in video footage remained at large, according to information gathered for this report.

A similar picture emerged in the courthouse double-murder case. Most of the accused remained fugitives when the chargesheet was submitted on November 4. B Company member Miraj Hossain alias Kauwa Miraj was listed as absconding, while another accused, Ejazul, secured bail after four months.

Sheikh Jahangir Hossain Helal, Khulna-2 (Sadar) MP and secretary of Khulna Metropolitan Jamaat-e-Islami, said the nine criminal groups had existed in some form for years but had recently become more aggressive, with the increasing use of firearms and open criminal activities particularly alarming.

He said the administration already had information about the groups, their operations and those providing them with shelter and political patronage. Jahangir urged the home ministry to deploy a specialised force or launch joint operations to contain the violence.

Copper wire upgrade behind US flight suspension

Says transport secretary; FAA expects normal air travel today

AGENCIES

A nationwide US ground stop that triggered thousands of flight cancellations and widespread travel disruption was caused by a technical fault linked to a copper wire upgrade, Transport Secretary Sean Duffy said.

Speaking at a news conference on Saturday evening, Duffy said authorities were investigating whether the issue, which prompted air traffic controllers to halt departures for four hours on Friday, stemmed from contractor error or faulty equipment.

Duffy said maintenance work on US air traffic control systems involved replacing copper wiring with fibre-optic cable, a project being carried out by technology contractor L3Harris.

Meanwhile, air travel was expected to return to normal later yesterday or early today, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said.

FAA chief Bryan Bedford said that 12,000 flights were canceled on Friday, while tracking website FlightAware showed more than 6,600 canceled flights on Saturday, reports AFP.

Speaking at a news conference in Washington on Saturday, Bedford said that he expected airline operations to largely return to normal by late Sunday. He also apologised for the disruption, adding that the system remains stable.

Tim Johnson, consumer director at the UK Civil Aviation Authority, said although US flights have resumed, there could be "some follow-on disruption" as airlines re-book passengers and get all services back to normal.

At LaGuardia airport, some travellers were more sanguine than others about the continued disruption of their flights.

The ground stop not only plunged US air travel into chaos -- it also raised serious concerns about the country's aging infrastructure.

Duffy appealed for $50 billion in funds to upgrade and modernize the air traffic control system, and called for Congress, which controls the purse strings of the US government, to "meet this moment."

BNP plans busy December to stay on streets

FROM PAGE 12

counter-programmes against the programmes currently being announced by the Awami League nor prevent them from holding their programmes.

"We must remain politically active on the streets ... Plans have been made for our party and its affiliated organisations to organise programmes to ensure that no one can create unrest or destabilise the country."

Another BNP leader alleged that the AL was attempting to create instability. The BNP plans to respond by remaining politically active.

Party sources said the leadership had also decided against organising neighbourhood patrols similar to those the AL used to deploy in an attempt to obstruct BNP programmes when it was in power.

The decision comes at a time when leaders and activists of the AL and its affiliated organisations have reportedly been carrying out various activities in the country.

BNP sources said several important national and party occasions are in December, providing the BNP with opportunities to organise programmes.

These include Martyred Intellectuals Day on December 14 and Victory Day on December 16. December 25 will mark the first anniversary of Tarique Rahman's return to Bangladesh, while December 30 will be the first death anniversary of former prime minister and BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia.

BNP acting Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, party leader Shahid Uddin Chowdhury, Habib-un-Nabi Khan Sohel, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Emran Saleh Prince and Abdus Salam attended the meeting.

The conveners and member secretaries of Chhatra Dal, Jubo Dal, Swechchhasebak Dal, and the BNP's Dhaka Metropolitan North and South units also took part.

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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পূবালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

19-year-old killed in fire at Korail slum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 19-year-old youth was killed in a fire at Dhaka's Korail slum early yesterday.

The deceased is Shahriar Rahman Shuvro.

The fire broke out in the western part of T&T Colony in the slum around 4:54am, said Anwarul Islam, a media wing officer of Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Three firefighting units rushed to the scene and brought the blaze under control by 5:25am.

Firefighters later recovered Shuvro's body from the scene, he added.

PRAYER TIMING
NOVEMBER 16

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	5-05	12-45	3-45	5-21	7-00
JAMAAT	5-40	1-15	4-00	5-24	7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Residents of Korail slum look on in dismay at the charred remains of their homes and belongings after a fire broke out around 4:54am yesterday, killing a 19-year-old. According to the Fire Service and Civil Defence, three firefighting units rushed to the scene and brought the blaze under control by 5:25am.

PHOTO: STAR

4 infantry divisions get new GOCs

Ten senior officers reshuffled; Ansar-VDP gets new chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four infantry divisions of the Bangladesh Army have got new general officers commanding (GOCs) in a reshuffle involving 10 senior officers, according to official orders.

The reshuffle also includes a new director general of Bangladesh Ansar and Village Defence Party (VDP), changes at two military training and strategic studies institutions, and the transfer of two major generals to the foreign ministry for appointment as ambassadors.

Three brigadier generals will be promoted to temporary major general upon assuming their new appointments.

Maj Gen Md Sajedur Rahman, currently serving at the National Defence College, has been appointed GOC of the 7 Infantry Division. Maj Gen Abu Hena Mohammad Razi Hasan, currently at the 7 Infantry Division headquarters, has been appointed GOC of the 55 Infantry Division.

Brig Gen ABM Abdul Batin Imani and Brig Gen Mozammel Hossain, both currently at Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) headquarters, have been appointed GOCs of the 11 and 19 Infantry Divisions, respectively. Both will be promoted to temporary major general upon assuming new posts.

Brig Gen Raju Ahmed, currently at Armed Forces Division,

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Politics, weak oversight fuel health sector graft

Finds Bangladesh Health Watch report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Corruption in Bangladesh's health sector is driven by weak institutional accountability, political influence, lack of transparency and conflicts of interest rather than merely individual misconduct, according to a new Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW) report.

The report found widespread irregularities in patient services, medical procurement, recruitment, transfers and promotions, along with inadequate regulatory oversight.

Titled "Challenging Corruption: Strengthening Governance in Bangladesh's Health Sector", the biennial report for 2025-26 was launched yesterday at the International Mother Language Institute in Dhaka.

The report found widespread irregularities in patient services, medical procurement, recruitment, transfers and promotions, along with inadequate regulatory oversight.

"Corruption in the health sector is not just individual misconduct. It is usually a sign of weak governance: too much discretion with too little accountability, unmanaged conflicts of interest, fragmented oversight, uneven transparency and an institutional culture that treats informal practices as normal," said Shams El Arifeen, senior scientist at icddr,b, while presenting the findings.

The 11-chapter report, prepared by 17 researchers, examined corruption in healthcare access, professional accountability and health system management. However, it did not specify when the documented irregularities occurred.

It found that brokers, unofficial payments for hospital beds and discharge papers, and referrals to private clinics had turned access to healthcare into a negotiation.

The report also found that diagnostic centres reportedly paid referring doctors 20-50 percent of test charges.

Researchers estimated that commissions among the largest providers alone could reach Tk 1,861

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

IN BRIEF

Law and order under control: Salahuddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law and order situation across the country remains under control, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed informed the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs during a meeting yesterday.

He also said law enforcement agencies remain firmly committed to preventing all forms of sabotage and terrorism, according to a press release issued by the Parliament Secretariat after the meeting held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

Salahuddin said the government had taken an initiative to construct and modernise 108-kilometre fencing along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border as part of efforts to combat drug trafficking.

No scope for fresh trial of Hasina

Says ICT chief prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Md Aminul Islam yesterday ruled out a fresh trial of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, saying Bangladesh's legal framework does not allow anyone to be tried twice on the same charges.

Asked about an international media report that India wants Hasina to be allowed to appeal or face a retrial, he said there was no legal provision for that.

He said neither the government nor the prosecution had the authority to grant an appeal beyond what the law permitted.

Aminul noted that the ICT Act, 1973, was enacted by the then Awami League government, while the Rules of Procedure were framed in 2010 during its tenure. The tribunal operated under the same framework until 2024. "We have not changed any provision of the law relating to appeals. The trial is being conducted under the existing law. Whatever the law provides will be followed."

Malaysia-bound workers to leave from late November

Says minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Ariful Haque Choudhury yesterday told the parliament that the migration of Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia will begin at the end of November.

He also said that the list of authorised medical centres for Malaysia-bound workers would be published today.

The minister said the migration cost had been fixed at Tk 1.54 lakh, and warned of strict action against anyone charging more than the approved amount or engaging in any irregularities outside the official system.



SP held over alleged AL contact in Ctg

Placed on 4-day remand in sedition case



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Chattogram*

Md Jahangir Alam, superintendent of police of the Chattogram Range Reserve Force (RRF), was arrested on Saturday night in a sedition case over allegations that he maintained contact with leaders and activists of the Awami League, whose activities are banned.

He was later placed on a four-day remand after being produced before court yesterday. Chattogram Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Mostafa passed the order around 3:30pm.

A team of the Special Response Unit, formerly the Counter Terrorism unit, of Chattogram Metropolitan Police, along with Panchlaish Police, arrested Jahangir from the CMP Officers' Mess in the port city on Saturday night, shortly after the case was filed.

CMP Commissioner Hasan Md Showkot Ali said, "ASP Abul Kashem of the RRF filed the sedition case against Jahangir. He was arrested after we received approval from the home ministry yesterday [Saturday]."

Earlier, on Tuesday, Chattogram Range Deputy Inspector General Md Abdul Quddus Chowdhury questioned Jahangir, a 28th-batch police officer, at his office after preliminary evidence emerged over allegations that he had shared sensitive internal police information with AL members.

Both Jahangir's personal and official mobile phones have been seized and sent to the Special Branch in Dhaka for forensic examination.

Meanwhile, Additional DIG (Operations) of Chattogram Range Safizul Islam is conducting a departmental investigation into the matter.

Citing the case statement, a CMP official said the first information report alleged Jahangir had sent messages from his mobile phone, including one that read, "In December, people will take to the streets like bees. In 1996, when my father took to the streets demanding a caretaker government, inspired by Bangabandhu's ideology, I also joined the demonstrations despite being very young, sir. We must rescue Bangladesh, sir..."

"There are several other messages of a similar nature," the official said.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the recipients of the messages or obtain details of the FIR.

The case will be investigated by the SRU, a specialised police unit operating under the Counter Terrorism framework.

Three sued over rape of girl in Netrokona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrokona*

A case was filed against three people over the alleged gang rape of a 15-year-old girl in Netrokona's Kendua upazila yesterday.

The victim's father filed the case with Kendua Police Station under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, said its Officer-in-Charge Tarikul Islam.

The accused -- Md Shuvo, 24, Md Nure Alam, 33, and Shah Alam, 31, all residents of the upazila -- have been absconding since the incident, he said.

According to the case statement and family sources, Shuvo, who knew the girl, allegedly lured her out of the house on Friday night with a promise of marriage while her father was away.

He took her to a nearby crop field, saying they would wait there for an auto-rickshaw.

Nure Alam and Shah Alam later arrived around 10:30pm. All three allegedly raped the girl and recorded the incident. The accused threatened to post the video on Facebook if she told anyone.

Terrified, the girl took shelter on the veranda of a classmate's house. The family found her around 7:00am and informed her relatives, who took her home.

She later told them what had happened.

8 die of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least eight dengue patients died and 1,952 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of the deceased, five were from Dhaka division, and one each from Chattogram, Khulna and Mymensingh divisions.

With the latest deaths, the total death toll this year rose to 499, while the cumulative number of cases reached 1,62,509.

Currently, 5,816 dengue patients are undergoing treatment in hospitals countrywide.



Writer, library organiser Fazle Rabbi dies at 92

CITY DESK

Writer, translator and library organiser Fazle Rabbi died early yesterday. He was 92.

He was a former director of the National Book Centre.

He is survived by a son, two daughters, relatives and well-wishers.

His namaz-e-janaza was held after Esha prayers at Gulshan-1 Jame Mosque yesterday. His burial is scheduled for after Fazr prayers today at the family graveyard in Agla, Nawabganj.

Rabbi began his career at Bangla Academy as deputy director of publications.

In 1979, he joined the National Book Centre as its director and served in the position for nearly 15 years.

He founded Sudhijon Library in Narayanganj and was one of the key organisers of the Ekushey Book Fair.

Eight more die with measles symptoms

UNB, *Dhaka*

Eight more patients died with measles-like symptoms in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, bringing the country's combined tally of confirmed and suspected measles-related deaths to 1,314 this year.

The Directorate General of Health Services classified the latest fatalities as suspected measles deaths.

With this, the total number of suspected measles deaths has reached 1,209, while confirmed measles deaths remained unchanged at 105.

A total of 1,414 new suspected measles cases were reported during this period, pushing the cumulative number of suspected cases nationwide to 2,48,060.

4 infantry divisions

FROM PAGE 3

has been appointed Senior Directing Staff (Army) at the NDC. He will also be promoted to temporary major general upon assuming the post.

Meanwhile, Maj Gen Towhidul Ahmed, currently at the 11 Infantry Division headquarters, has been appointed DG of Ansar and VDP. He will replace Maj Gen Abdul Motaleb Sazzad Mahmud, who has been appointed commandant of Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training.

Maj Gen Hussain Muhammad Masihur Rahman, currently at BIPSOT, has been appointed DG of Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.

Meanwhile, Maj Gen Hafizur Rahman, currently at 55 Infantry Division headquarters, and Maj Gen Syed Anwar Mahmud, at the 19 Infantry Division headquarters, have been placed under the foreign ministry for appointment as ambassadors.

The officers will assume their new responsibilities in accordance with army regulations. Gazette notifications for the appointments will follow.

Commercial Space Available

Two floors of 8000 sq.ft. (approx.) each (1st and 4th floor) is for rent in Tejgaon I/A, Dhaka.

Call: 01730325857

Jagannath University

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http//www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works.

Sl.	Tender/Proposal ID, Reference No and name of works	Tender/Proposal Document last selling/downloading date and time	Last Date and Time for Tender/ Proposal Security submission	Tender/ Proposal closing Date and Time
1.	**Tender ID: 1371551** Ref. No- JnU/P&D/Framework Contract/236 (Part-1) /2018/188 **Name of work:** Printing and Supply of 19 Types of Envelopes, Forms and Documents (Including Samples) for the Office of the Controller of Examinations, Jagannath University under framework contract for three years	Date: 26/11/2026 Time: 15:00	Date: 26/11/2026 Time: 15:45	Date: 26/11/2026 Time: 16:00

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 in the National e-GP System Portal (http//www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@www.eprocure.gov.bd).

(Sayed Ahamed)
Director, (Planning, Development and Works)
E-mail: drsayed271@gmail.com
Phone: 226640015/01814748666

GD-2768



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Divisional Electrical Engineer
Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chattogram.

e-Tender Notice (OTM) (Corrigendum)

Memo No: 54.01.1500.569.05.006.26 Dated: 15-11-2026

SL No.	Tender ID No	Name of Works	Previous Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Previous Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time	Revised Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Revised Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time
01.	1359354	Overhauling of Cylinder Heads and Fuel Injection Pumps for 8-Cylinder Diesel Engines under the jurisdiction of SSAE/GER Shop/PHT.	15-Nov-2026 15:00	16-Nov-2026 15:00	19-Nov-2026 15:00	22-Nov-2026 15:00
02.	1359366	Repairing, Dismantling, Fitting, Chemical Cleaning, Washing, and Servicing of Complete Radiator Units with Radiator Cores for 8-Cylinder Power Cars under the jurisdiction of SSAE/GER Shop/PHT.				
03.	1359373	Supply of lead acid generator starting battery for power car under the jurisdiction of SSAE/GER Shop/PHT.				
04	1359377	Supply of Turbocharger Core and Related Spare Parts for Deutz BF8M1015C Generator Engines under the jurisdiction of SSAE/GER Shop/PHT.				
05	1359379	Supply of Coolant Pump and Related Spare Parts for Deutz BF8M1015C Generator Engines under the jurisdiction of SSAE/GER Shop/PHT.				
06	1359383	Supply of Magnetic Contactors 630A for power car under the jurisdiction of SSAE/GER Shop/PHT.				

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 in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to one hour before tender last selling time.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

এস (২৬) (১০৮)

(Md. Amir Hossain)
Divisional Electrical Engineer (C.C.)
Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chattogram
E-mail: deepht@railway.gov.bd

GD-2772

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Cumilla
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.1900.000.07.427.26.7826 Date: 15-11-2026

e-Tender Notice
Tender Notice No: 41/2026-2027

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (**http://www.eprocure.gov.bd**) for the Procurement of Works as stated below:

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of Works	Tender/ Proposal ID No.	Document Last selling/ downloading Date	Tender/ Proposal Closing Date	Method of Tender
1	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-48	Periodic Maintenance of Monohorgonj GC -Laksmanpur- Bipulasar RHD Rd. from Ch 00m - Ch 1015m (Road ID: 419902007) under MONOHORGANJ Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call).	1372172	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
2	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-52	Periodic Maintenance of Khamargramme C&B road to Khamargramme uttarpara rd. from Ch 00m - Ch 700m (Road ID: 419814061) under MURADNAGAR Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call)	1372173	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
3	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-54	Periodic Maintenance of Dhamghar Musamarket - Bhubanghar - South para Maddrasha - mosque Rd. from Ch 00m - Ch 400m (Road ID: 419815112) under MURADNAGAR Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call)	1372174	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
4	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-55	Periodic Maintenance of Jhalam Gastalbari-Mohidpur Road from Ch 2050m - Ch 3320m (Road ID: 419094011) under BARURA Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call)	1372175	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
5	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-60	Periodic Maintenance of Mirjanagar-Jagdashar Road from Ch 00m - Ch 620m (Road ID: 419095005) under BARURA Upazila, District: Cumilla.	1372176	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
6	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-61	Periodic Maintenance of Adraha UP Office-Khorshad House Road Via Dulal House Road. from Ch 00m - Ch 912m (Road ID: 419095200) under BARURA Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call)	1372177	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
7	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-68	Periodic Maintenance of Barapukurpar - Bowara Bazar via Durlavpur Road from Ch 00m - Ch 1200m (Road ID: 419675044) under CUMILLA-S Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call)	1372178	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
8	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-69	Periodic Maintenance of Open University RHD road- Bordail-halimanagar- Kotbari road from Ch 1970m - Ch 4000m (Road ID: 419673012) under CUMILLA-S Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call).	1372179	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM
9	LGED/GOBM /Cum/ 26-27/ RW-110	Rehabilitation (widening) of Baynagar bazar - Talerseo bazar via Mohammadpur Purba UP Office Road. from Ch 2533m - Ch 3580m (Road ID: 419363016) under DAUDKANDI Upazila, District: Cumilla (2nd Call)	1372187	29-Nov-2026	30-Nov-2026	OTM

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To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited through online at any Branches of registered Bank.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
The Tender Notice will be available on the website: www.lged.gov.bd and www.lged.comilla.gov.bd.

(Md. Mafiz Uddin)
Executive Engineer
LGED, Cumilla
Phone: 081-68960
E-mail: xen.cumilla@lged.gov.bd

GD-2770

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
মৎস্য অধিদপ্তর, বাংলাদেশ
মৎস্য ভবন, ঢাকা
সেবা ও সরবরাহ শাখা
www.fisheries.gov.bd

স্মারক নং: ৩৩.০২.০০০০.০০০.১০৫.২৭.০০১.২৩.১৪০০ তারিখ: ৩০ কার্তিক ১৪৩৩ / ১৫ নভেম্বর ২০২৬

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিষয়: মৎস্য অধিদপ্তরের রাজস্বখাতভুক্ত 'অফিস সহায়ক' ও 'অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক' পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে বাছাই (MCQ) পরীক্ষা গ্রহণ তারিখ ও সময়সূচি প্রকাশ সংক্রান্ত।

সূত্র: মৎস্য অধিদপ্তরের নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্মারক নং: ৩৩.০২.০০০০.১০৩.০১.০০৯.২৬.৯১, তারিখ: ০৯ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৬ খ্রি.

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, মৎস্য অধিদপ্তরের রাজস্বখাতভুক্ত ৩য় ও ৪র্থ শ্রেনীর কর্মচারী নিয়োগর লক্ষ্য প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি অনুযায়ী 'অফিস সহায়ক' (২০তম গ্রেড) এবং 'অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক' (১৬তম গ্রেড) পদের প্রার্থীদের ১০০ (একশত) নম্বরের ০১ (এক) ঘণ্টার বাছাই (MCQ) পরীক্ষা ঢাকা মহানগরীর বিভিন্ন পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রে নিম্নবর্ণিত সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী অনুষ্ঠিত হবে:

ক্র. নং	পদের নাম	গ্রেড	পরীক্ষার তারিখ ও বার	পরীক্ষার সময়	প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোডের তারিখ
০১	অফিস সহায়ক	২০তম	২০ নভেম্বর ২০২৬ খ্রি. (শুক্রবার)	সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে ১১:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	১২ নভেম্বর ২০২৬ খ্রি. হতে
০২	অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক	১৬তম	২৭ নভেম্বর ২০২৬ খ্রি. (শুক্রবার)	সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে ১১:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	২২ নভেম্বর ২০২৬ খ্রি. হতে

২. উল্লিখিত পদসমূহের আবেদনকারী যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের অনুকূলে যথাসময়ে মোবাইল ফোনে SMS-এর মাধ্যমে প্রবেশপত্র সংক্রান্ত নির্দেশনা প্রেরণ করা হবে। প্রার্থীরা টেলিটকের নির্ধারিত ওয়েবসাইট (http://dof.teletalk.com.bd) হতে নিজ নিজ User ID ও Password ব্যবহার করে নির্ধারিত তারিখ থেকে প্রবেশপত্র (Admit Card) ডাউনলোড করতে পারবেন। পরীক্ষার্থীদের প্রবেশপত্রে উল্লিখিত রোল নম্বর, পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্র ও পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত সাধারণ নির্দেশাবলী যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করার জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

৩. পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও ফলাফল মৎস্য অধিদপ্তরের নিজস্ব ওয়েবসাইট (www.fisheries.gov.bd) এবং টেলিটকের ওয়েবসাইটে যথাসময়ে প্রকাশ করা হবে।

(ড. ফজলুল কাবীর)
উপপরিচালক (চ. দা.)
ফোন: ০২-২২৩৩৮৭২১৭
ই-মেইল: ddgeneral@fisheries.gov.bd

GD-2774

Nations grapple with loss of 1.5C target at COP31

AFP, *Antalya*

For a decade, the 1.5C goal has served as the north star of climate action, a line nations pledged to hold to avoid the worst ravages of a warming planet.

But at this year's global climate conference -- the first since the United Nations said the 1.5C threshold would be missed -- nations appear unsure how to take the news.

The world has already warmed about 1.4C above pre-industrial times and the UN declared in September that crossing 1.5C -- the most ambitious target threshold of the Paris accord -- was imminent and unavoidable.

Yet in Turkey, where the COP31 negotiations are at the midway point, some nations are clinging to the goal, particularly those on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr, whose Pacific island nation is threatened by rising seas, said 1.5C was not "an abstract target".

"It is an existential threat to our food, our economies and sovereignty," he told world leaders in Antalya. Some countries want a final deal at COP31 to affirm that 1.5C remains the "right goal", according to a summary of negotiating positions released by Australia, which is chairing the talks.

There's also a push for language about returning to 1.5C "as soon as possible" and that global temperatures are "still able" to be lowered once exceeding the threshold.



A police officer stands at the site of a building damaged in a Russian drone strike in Chornomorsk, Odesa region, Ukraine, yesterday. Another strike hit an energy facility operated by Ukrainian energy company DTEK. About 41,000 families across Odesa Oblast were temporarily left without power as utility workers worked to restore electricity. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Eisenkot says Netanyahu knows he lost

Denounces unity talk as a 'trick'

AFP, *Jerusalem*

Israeli prime ministerial hopeful Gadi Eisenkot on Saturday said caretaker premier Benjamin Netanyahu "knows he lost the election", accusing him of playing "tricks" by appealing for a unity government.

"Netanyahu is calling for negotiations while they are already underway; he claims to want unity but... sows division and stokes tensions as if there were no tomorrow," the former army chief said, adding that "these tricks don't work on me".

The latest exchange comes as Eisenkot is in the midst of negotiations to form a government. Netanyahu warned against Eisenkot's plan to form a minority government, presented as an "emergency government".

Asean reaffirms Myanmar engagement

Seeks to advance five-point peace plan

REUTERS, *Manila*

Southeast Asian leaders reaffirmed the need to keep engaging with Myanmar while sticking with a plan calling for an immediate end to violence in the war-torn country, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said yesterday.

Chairing the annual summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Manila, Marcos said the 11-member bloc agreed to pursue "constructive and principled engagement" while adhering to its five-point peace plan, Asean's framework for responding to the crisis in Myanmar since a 2021 coup.

The summit is under pressure to ease a five-year ban on Myanmar's military-backed leaders attending high-level meetings, after Thailand and several other members stepped up engagement despite Myanmar's civil war.

UKRAINE PEACE PROPOSAL

US floats Donbas-for-Nato membership deal

Says Zelensky; Ukraine strikes major Russian industrial city

AGENCIES

US negotiators have floated the idea of Ukraine's potential withdrawal from its eastern region of Donbas in exchange for joining Nato, President Volodymyr Zelensky said, following the latest round of peace talks with Russia in Abu Dhabi.

This is the first time the question of linking Nato membership to territorial concessions has been raised during the talks, Zelensky said in remarks to reporters released by his office later on Saturday.

"The Americans raised a question: 'What if Ukraine joins Nato? Would Ukraine withdraw from Donbas?" he said. "That is why I believe Nato is back on the agenda. But you have also heard (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's signals, and this is an extremely difficult conversation."

Putin has long said Ukrainian membership of Nato is a red line for Moscow, citing the issue as one reason for launching Russia's full-blown invasion in 2022, reports Reuters.

Zelensky reiterated his position that Kyiv was not ready to concede territory but said that if it received a comprehensive package including security guarantees, the right to a strong and well-funded Ukrainian army and funds to rebuild, he would put the question to a national referendum.

Putin considers Ukraine's Nato membership a red line, citing it among reasons for launching Russia's 2022 invasion

Meanwhile, Ukrainian airstrikes hit the central Russian city of Nizhnekamsk yesterday, local authorities said, with media reporting a fire in one of the country's biggest petrochemical plants, reports AFP.

"Early this morning, Nizhnekamsk was the target of a massive and prolonged attack by enemy drones. As a result of this attack, facilities in the industrial zone were damaged," the city's mayor, Radmir Belyaev, wrote on Telegram.

A residential building was also damaged, he added.

Zelensky on Friday dismissed Russia's call for a broad agreement on European security architecture to be reached before the specifics are agreed on how to end the war in Ukraine.

"We cannot turn everything upside down and start by talking about changing the security framework in the world or across the continent overall, and only then talk about ending this war. This war must be ended first," he said.

US President Donald Trump's envoy and son-in-law Jared Kushner said on Saturday that the two sides had set out "maximalist positions" in the talks this week, but in private discussions both "understand that practical compromises will be necessary to end this war."

IN BRIEF

ISRAELI STRIKE

Hamas says senior armed commander killed

REUTERS

Hamas' armed wing said yesterday that a senior commander who helped plan and oversee the October 7, 2023, attack had been killed in an Israeli airstrike.

The Al-Qassam Brigades identified the commander as Samir Abu Younis, 53, the commander of its Rafah brigade, and said he was killed on Saturday.

The Israeli military said yesterday it had struck a senior commander in Hamas' armed wing but did not identify him.

Medics said Abu Younis was killed and others were wounded in an airstrike that targeted him in a street in the Mawasi area of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

Hamas said Abu Younis joined Hamas' armed wing in 1991 and had held several senior operational roles in Rafah before becoming commander of the brigade.



SpaceX makes first spaceship catch

AFP, *United States*

Elon Musk's SpaceX on Saturday pulled off the first-ever "catch" of a spaceship, a technical feat that shows the feasibility of fully reusable rockets and brings affordable spaceflight one step closer to reality.

The Starship emerged from a cloudy sky after surviving the extreme heat of re-entering Earth's atmosphere, then descended slowly over Starbase before slipping smoothly between mechanical "chopstick arms" above Launch Pad 2.

The success marked a milestone in the space industry's decades-long pursuit of fully reusable rocket systems that can reduce mission costs.



Protesters scuffle with police officers during a demonstration against US President Donald Trump's upcoming visit and participation in the 49th Asean Summit in Manila, Philippines, yesterday. PHOTO: **AFP**

MIDTERM REBUKE OF REPUBLICANS

Battle for young male voters intensifies in US

REUTERS

Barely a week after the midterm elections, Democrats are debating how to turn newfound support among young men into a lasting coalition, while Republicans are trying to understand why the group abandoned them so decisively.

An estimated 59 percent of men ages 18 to 29 voted for Democratic US House of Representatives candidates, compared with 37 percent for Republicans, according to Tufts University's Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. That marked a sharp reversal from 2024, when AP VoteCast found young men backing President Donald Trump over Democratic nominee Kamala Harris by 14 points, 56 percent to 42 percent.

That rapid shift has made young men one of the most influential and unpredictable voting blocs in American politics, with both parties viewing them as critical to winning the White House in 2028.

Democratic Party operatives are wasting no time looking for ways to sustain their gains. At a conference on the party's future in Denver last week, one session examined strategy for winning over younger voters, under the title: "What we are still getting wrong about Gen Z."

Republicans have yet to conduct a formal postmortem, but party strategists and activists are already calling for an end to the unpopular war in Iran and measures to bring down the cost of living, according to interviews with five party officials and strategists.

"No party owns them," said John Della Volpe, director of polling at Harvard Kennedy School's Institute of Politics, arguing Democrats could keep some, if not all, of their gains if they deliver tangible policy results. "It will clearly swing."

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
কর কমিশনারের কার্যালয়
কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা।
১২/১, আত-তুরীক টাওয়ার, বিজয়নগর, ঢাকা।

নথি নংঃ ০৮.০১.২৬৬৬.৫১৪.০০১.১১.০০০১.২৬. ২০৫

তারিখঃ ৩০ কার্তিক, ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দ / ১৫ নভেম্বর, ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

"নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়, অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ, কর-১ শাখা, এর স্মারক নম্বর ০৮.০০.০০০০.০০০.০৩৭.১১.০০০১.২৪.৩৪০; তারিখঃ ১৩ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২৬ খ্রি. অনুযায়ী প্রাপ্ত ছাড়পত্রের ভিত্তিতে কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা এর অধীনে [চাকরি (বেতন ও ভাতাদি) আদেশ, ২০২৬ অনুযায়ী] গ্রেড-১৩ হতে গ্রেড-২০ পর্যন্ত নিম্নোক্ত ৬টি ক্যাটাগরির ৪৯টি শূন্য পদে সরাসরি কোটায় অস্থায়ী জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে ঢাকা জেলার প্রকৃত স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাদের নিকট হতে পদের পার্শ্বে বর্ণিত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের শর্ত সাপেক্ষে (https://tax14.teletalk.com.bd/) ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। উল্লেখ্য, অনলাইন ব্যতীত অন্য কোন উপায়ে আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও গ্রেড	পদ সংখ্যা
(১)	কম্পিউটার অপারেটর গ্রেড-১৩	০১ (এক) টি
(২)	প্রধান সহকারী গ্রেড-১৩	০৮(আট) টি
(৩)	উচ্চমান সহকারী গ্রেড-১৪	০৫ (পাঁচ) টি
(৪)	সাঁট-মুদ্রাক্ষরিক কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর গ্রেড-১৪	১৫ (পনেরো) টি
(৫)	অফিস সহকারী কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক গ্রেড-১৬	০৯ (নয়) টি
(৬)	অফিস সহায়ক গ্রেড-২০	১১ (এগারো) টি

২. পূর্ণাঙ্গ বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা এর ওয়েবসাইট https://taxeszone14.dhaka.gov.bd এবং https://tax14.teletalk.com.bd অথবা QR Code স্ক্যান এর মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশের একমাত্র রাষ্ট্রীয় মোবাইল অপারেটর টেলিটকের জব পোর্টাল https://alljobs.teletalk.com.bd ওয়েবসাইটে সরাসরি প্রবেশ করেও বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি পাওয়া যাবে। নিয়োগ পরীক্ষার, তারিখ, সময় ও অন্যান্য তথ্য https://taxeszone14.dhaka.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইট হতে জানা যাবে।

৩. উল্লেখ্য, আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও পরীক্ষার ফি জমাদান শুরুর তারিখ ও সময়ঃ ২২/১১/২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা এবং আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়ঃ ১৩/১২/২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।

*** Online এর আবেদন ও নিয়োগ পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যে কোন বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

*** শেষ তারিখ ও সময়ের জন্য অপেক্ষা না করে হাতে যথেষ্ট সময় নিয়ে অনলাইন-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও আবেদন ফি জমাদান সম্পন্ন করতে পরামর্শ দেওয়া যাচ্ছে।

কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা এর ওয়েবসাইটে প্রবেশ এর QR code

কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা এর টেলিটক পোর্টালে প্রবেশ এর QR code

১৫/১১/২০২৬

(মোঃ জাহিদুল ইসলাম)
উপকর কমিশনার
সদর দপ্তর (প্রশাসন)
কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা
ও
সদস্য সচিব
বিভাগীয় নির্বাচন কমিটি
কর অঞ্চল-১৪, ঢাকা।

GD-2767

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

We must not leave the Basel Convention

Don't take steps that risk weakening safeguards in shipbreaking

We are concerned by the government's decision to withdraw from the Basel Convention's provisions on shipbreaking at the request of industry owners and to solely rely on the Hong Kong Convention instead. By doing this, it risks weakening an important international mechanism for preventing the dumping of hazardous waste in our coastal areas. Last month, the government also downgraded the shipbreaking industry from the "red" to the "orange" category at the owners' demand, potentially removing the requirement for an environmental impact assessment (EIA) before a yard is established. Given the industry's continuous record of workplace accidents and environmental risks, these moves raise serious questions about whether industrial interests are being prioritised over environmental protection.

The Basel Convention, signed by 170 countries including Bangladesh, was adopted in 1989—and came into force in 1992—following international outrage over the dumping of toxic waste in developing countries. It regulates the transboundary movement of hazardous waste, while the Hong Kong Convention, which came into force in June last year, primarily deals with the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships in shipbreaking yards. Under the former, end-of-life ships classified as hazardous waste cannot simply be exported without prior notification and written consent from the importing countries. It also requires the exporting countries to take back the waste if it cannot be disposed of in accordance with the agreed arrangements. These provisions are particularly important for a country like ours, which receives vessels from developed nations for dismantling and recycling.

In August this year, 10 workers died from toxic gas exposure while dismantling a vessel at Ferdous Steel Ship Recycling Yard in Sitakunda. Although the yard had green certification under the Hong Kong Convention, serious safety deficiencies were found in it.

In a study commissioned by international shipping organisations, Netherlands-based research organisation CE Delft identified weaknesses in the Hong Kong Convention concerning yard inspections, hazardous waste management, and hazardous materials identification. It noted that the convention does not prohibit beaching methods, which can allow toxic substances to contaminate coastal soil and water. Moreover, it places primary responsibility for managing hazardous waste on importing countries, rather than ship owners or exporting countries. The NGO Shipbreaking Platform has pointed out that the two conventions can be implemented together to provide stronger protection for both workers and the environment.

In August this year, 10 workers died from toxic gas exposure while dismantling a vessel at Ferdous Steel Ship Recycling Yard in Sitakunda. Although the yard had green certification under the Hong Kong Convention, serious safety deficiencies were found in it. These deaths and other previous accidents show that certification alone cannot guarantee compliance. If the existing framework is proving difficult to enforce, the government should strengthen monitoring and accountability, not weaken the safeguards.

The government must reconsider its decision and retain the Basel Convention's provisions alongside the Hong Kong Convention. It must ensure that exporting countries cannot evade responsibility for the hazardous waste they send here. At the same time, the authorities must strengthen the enforcement of existing environmental and safety standards through regular independent inspections, proper management of hazardous waste, and strict penalties for violations.

Delay in rebuilding a library concerning

Authorities must meet the revised deadline for the National Public Library

We are disappointed that the Sufia Kamal National Public Library in Dhaka's Shahbagh area remains inaccessible even more than four years after its modernisation project began. Originally scheduled for completion in December 2024, the project is still only around 66 percent complete, with its deadline reportedly pushed to June 2028. To illustrate how painfully slow it has been of late, the project was around 65 percent complete in April, meaning that only one percent of work has been completed in about seven months. This raises questions about the planning and professionalism of those involved.

The prolonged delay comes with considerable financial implications as the estimated project cost has increased by Tk 27 crore from the initially approved Tk 561.3 crore. While the director general of the Department of Public Libraries assured that work on the steel structure, lifts, escalators, and air-conditioning system was underway, a recent visit to the site revealed very little construction activity, with only a handful of workers present.

Since the old building's demolition in 2022, the library has been operating from the 12th floor of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) building in Ramna. There, only about 70,000 books are on display, out of around 350,000, while the rest are kept in cartons due to space constraints. Limited space and fewer available books have reduced the number of visitors to 35 to 40 people each day. While we understand the logistical and technical challenges that may be involved in a reconstruction project of this scale, it is nothing that a well-executed plan cannot address.

The library, once complete, is expected to accommodate around 1,500 readers at a time, while about 5,000 people will be able to use the premises simultaneously. It will also have separate science, reference, and general reading rooms, an e-library, and facilities for children, adolescents, and people with disabilities. All that sounds promising, but we hope the new complex will also be adequately staffed and properly maintained. Public libraries are inclusive spaces essential to build an informed, curious, and critically thinking society. Unfortunately, we have far too few of them, limiting our access to shared spaces for accumulating knowledge and exchanging ideas. The authorities, therefore, must expedite the reconstruction of the National Public Library and ensure that the revised deadline is met without failure.

Caught between extradition and voluntary return



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**

Two reports concerning Sheikh Hasina—who has been tried in absentia and sentenced to death by Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal for crimes against humanity—have generated considerable political speculation and heated debate in recent weeks. The first concerned a reported request by a British lawyer, claiming to represent her, for the issuance of a Bangladeshi passport and National Identity Card (NID). The second claimed that New Delhi had set two preconditions for sending her back to Dhaka.

The first story emerged following the leak of a letter written by London-based barrister Steven Powles KC to Bangladesh's Acting High Commissioner in New Delhi. The letter, however, did not explain why Hasina needed a passport and NID, the latter of which reportedly remained locked rather than revoked. Her supporters portrayed the request as further evidence of her determination to return home, come what may. None of her supporters are ready to accept that she also needs a passport to move to a third country, if she chooses to. Some even argued that Dhaka's subsequent rejection of the idea of issuing her a passport to facilitate her return demonstrated its inability to execute the tribunal's verdict, and suggested that keeping her away from Bangladesh might, in fact, be the preferred option.

What they fail to explain, however, is what a reasonable conclusion to the official extradition process, initiated in December 2024, would look like. Should Dhaka withdraw its extradition request, which both India and Bangladesh have acknowledged as a major obstacle to normalising bilateral relations? Issues ranging from trade and water sharing to consular matters have remained entangled in the dispute over the ousted prime minister's future. Her political activities from exile have been characterised as destabilising and subversive by both the interim administration led by Professor Muhammad Yunus and the elected government of Tarique Rahman.

The second report, published by BBC Bangla, was even more intriguing. According to the report, Indian officials have indicated that Bangladesh must arrange for Hasina's return through its military to ensure her safety and security.

On August 5, 2024, at the height of the mass uprising, Hasina left Dhaka aboard a military transport aircraft bound for New Delhi. India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, told the Indian parliament on August 6, 2024: "On 5th August, demonstrators converged in Dhaka despite the curfew. Our understanding is that after a meeting with leaders of the security establishment, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina apparently made the decision to resign. At very short notice, she requested approval to come for the moment to India."

According to Jaishankar's statement, Hasina had decided to resign and sought permission to travel to New Delhi, which the Indian government granted. The phrase "for the moment" is particularly significant. It suggests that India may not have envisaged her indefinite stay on its soil when it initially agreed to accommodate her.

The second precondition, according to BBC Bangla, is that Bangladesh must guarantee Hasina the opportunity to appeal against her death sentence and ensure a fresh trial concerning the killings during the July uprising. While no government can simply overturn a judicial verdict through an executive order, the possibility of an appeal or other judicial remedy cannot be entirely ruled out. A precedent of sorts has already been set when the Supreme Court granted former Jamaat-e-Islami leader Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, also convicted by the ICT of crimes against humanity, permission to seek a hearing on the admissibility of his long-delayed appeal against the death sentence.

When asked about these reported preconditions, Randhir Jaiswal, a spokesperson for India's Ministry of External Affairs, neither confirmed nor denied them. Instead, he reiterated that the extradition matter would be handled through established legal channels. Although officials at Bangladesh's foreign ministry expressed ignorance of any such demands from New Delhi, one cannot help but wonder why Jaiswal avoided directly addressing the question of preconditions.

If India has indeed demanded guarantees concerning Hasina's security and her right to appeal, could it be interpreted as a signal of its willingness to honour Bangladesh's extradition request? Indications emerging from diplomatic circles in India also suggest that her continued presence there may soon become less welcome, if it hasn't already. BBC Bangla further reported that her attempts to relocate to other countries had also been unsuccessful.

Is there another way to resolve the extradition question, such as voluntary return? The answer is yes, but it would require an admission of guilt and an agreement to surrender to the requesting country. Without a guilty plea, withdrawal of an extradition request is unprecedented. One recent example is the case of Julian Assange, the celebrated founder of WikiLeaks, whose organisation published a trove of classified US documents in 2010.

Assange faced multiple charges, including allegations relating to computer hacking and espionage. Following prolonged negotiations, the United States reached a plea agreement with him in June 2024, ending its pursuit of extradition from the United Kingdom. Assange agreed to plead guilty to a single charge under the Espionage Act. He subsequently appeared before a US court in the Northern Mariana Islands, where the agreement was approved. Having been sentenced to time already served, he was allowed to leave as a free man.



VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

Hasina's case, however, bears a closer resemblance to that of another elected leader turned authoritarian ruler: Peru's Alberto Fujimori, who was eventually convicted in his own country for crimes against humanity.

Of Japanese descent, Fujimori was initially elected president of Peru. His rule, however, became synonymous with authoritarianism, entrenched corruption, extrajudicial killings and serious human rights violations. He was subsequently found guilty of responsibility for the activities of the clandestine Colina Group, comprising military and security personnel who carried out a series of killings. He fled Peru for Japan in 2000 after controversially securing a third presidential term. The Peruvian Congress removed him from office despite his resignation from abroad. Lima subsequently sought his extradition, but Tokyo refused, recognising his Japanese nationality and citing constitutional and legal obstacles to surrendering him to another country.

After a prolonged diplomatic deadlock, Fujimori, hoping to launch another presidential bid, travelled to Chile, where a friendly conservative government was in power. But Chilean authorities arrested him, and its Supreme Court eventually authorised his extradition to Peru in 2007.

Back in Peru, Fujimori was tried and convicted. The verdict was particularly significant for its treatment of indirect responsibility and the doctrine of authorship by command: a leader could be held criminally responsible for crimes committed by others acting under his orders, even if he had not personally carried them out. In 2017, Fujimori received a presidential pardon, ostensibly as part of a national reconciliation effort. The decision, however, triggered widespread outrage, bringing protesters back onto the streets of Lima. Fujimori's political movement retained a substantial support base, and his daughter, Keiko Fujimori, in her fourth attempt, got elected as president last June.

In resolving Sheikh Hasina's extradition issue, few relevant precedents exist other than Fujimori and Assange's cases, which offer very different pathways: one through extradition and subsequent prosecution in the home country, the other through a negotiated plea agreement and surrender.

Could either provide a way forward for Dhaka and New Delhi? The Fujimori precedent suggests that extradition, even after years of political and diplomatic complications, remains possible. The Assange case demonstrates that a negotiated settlement may also offer an alternative, provided the parties concerned are willing to accept its legal and political implications. The way forward may depend not only on Dhaka and New Delhi's calculations but also on Sheikh Hasina herself.

Regular, risk-based forensic auditing must become the norm

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■ **SAMIRA TASNIM** *and*
■ **RAFAD ASGAR**

Public money is not protected simply because every expenditure has a bill, voucher or approval. Behind apparently legitimate transactions may lie inflated costs, fictitious suppliers, collusive contracts or conflicts of interest. By the time irregularities surface, the money may be gone. Bangladesh must ask: are we auditing transactions, or actually following the money?

For too long, forensic auditing has been treated as an exceptional response to corruption allegations, financial scandals or institutional failure. Yet substantial public resources flow through development projects, procurement contracts, financial institutions and social programmes. Forensic auditing should therefore become a regular, risk-based component of financial oversight, not merely a response after losses occur. Traditional financial audits examine the accuracy of financial statements and compliance with rules. Forensic audits go further: they investigate suspicious transactions, trace funds, identify potential beneficiaries and gather evidence of possible misconduct. A payment may be properly recorded without being legitimate. A contractor may submit all required documents although the work is incomplete or overpriced. A bank may conceal questionable related-party transactions behind its financial statements.

Public procurement is an obvious starting point. Although electronic government procurement (e-GP) has improved transparency and record-keeping, digitalisation cannot eliminate collusion, conflicts of interest or manipulation of competition. Suspicious bidding patterns, repeated contract awards, unusual price variations and questionable contract amendments warrant closer examination. The banking sector presents another compelling case. Non-performing loans, irregular lending and connected borrowers show why financial statements alone are insufficient. Investigators must trace loan disbursements, identify ultimate beneficiaries and check whether funds served their declared purposes. Even apparently sound banks need independent scrutiny to identify emerging risks.

Similar questions arise in public healthcare and development projects. Are procured medicines reaching hospitals? Do payments match deliveries? Does infrastructure spending reflect completed work? Are social protection funds reaching eligible beneficiaries? Expenditure records cannot always provide the answers. Forensic auditing should establish not only who benefited from irregularities but also why the system allowed them. Where procurement irregularities recur, identifying offenders is not enough. Weak tender evaluation, supplier verification, contract management and payment controls must also be addressed. Individual accountability matters, but so does institutional accountability: preventing misconduct from recurring.

Bangladesh needs a structured framework for regular, risk-based forensic auditing without subjecting every transaction to a full-scale investigation. Periodic forensic reviews should complement conventional audits, with greater scrutiny of high-risk transactions and institutions. First, national guidelines should specify when and how forensic audits are initiated across public institutions, state-owned enterprises, major development projects and financial institutions. Second, investigators need professional independence, access to records and protection from undue interference, particularly when influential individuals or organisations are involved.

Audit reports that identify irregularities without prompting corrective action serve little purpose. Implementation of audit recommendations should be transparent, subject to legal and confidentiality requirements. Forensic auditing should be seen not as an accusation against institutions but as a mechanism of responsible governance. Regular scrutiny can protect institutions as much as it can expose wrongdoing.

Third, Bangladesh must invest in specialised expertise in financial investigation, procurement analysis, digital evidence and data analytics. Finally, findings must lead to action. Coordination among the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh, the Anti-Corruption Commission, Bangladesh Bank and other oversight bodies should help ensure appropriate recovery of funds, administrative action, legal proceedings and institutional reforms.

Audit reports that identify irregularities without prompting corrective action serve little purpose. Implementation of audit recommendations should be transparent, subject to legal and confidentiality requirements. Forensic auditing should be seen not as an accusation against institutions but as a mechanism of responsible governance. Regular scrutiny can protect institutions as much as it can expose wrongdoing.

Bangladesh must move beyond recording expenditure to examining financial risks, tracing beneficiaries and correcting systemic weaknesses. The question is not why forensic audits are needed after scandals, but why institutions are not routinely examining risks before they occur.

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Why are there no women on the RMG minimum wage board?



Azra Humayra is a sub-editor at The Daily Star Campus.

AZRA HUMAYRA

Mohsina Begum is in her 40s; she has been in the RMG sector, stitching away for 18 years. She works almost 12 hours a day and receives Tk 18,000-20,000 a month, with overtime. Of her salary, Tk 8000 directly goes towards rent, and the rest is simply not enough to sustain her family, she told The Daily Star. She joined a garment workers' minimum wage protest in Mirpur at the end of October. Just like Moshina Begum, Laili Begum took to the streets as she could not afford her daily necessities, including proper meals and her children's tuition fees. Her children had to drop out of school.

This is an issue for female workers as much as it is for male workers.

On November 1, the government formed a new six-member wage board to revisit the wages of garment workers. All six members of the board are men, and they will decide what workers, many of whom are women, will be paid from January 2027 amid persistent protests by the latter.

When we look at the data, we can say that women built this industry. A recent report states that about half of the approximately 40 lakh garment factory workers are women, who contribute to over 80 percent of the country's export income, which translates to roughly $39 billion last financial year. Women's contribution has been used as a handy tool to make the Bangladeshi government, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) and various clothing brands look good. They have been advertised as the public face of success, but where are they when it matters the most?

New York University (NYU) Scholar Dina Siddiqi explains that every wage revision since 1994 followed mass protest and repression. Women have been at the forefront of the same protests since 1994. In November 2023, as workers rejected Tk 12,500 and held out for Tk 23,000, 23-year-old sewing operator and mother of two, Anjuara Khatun, was shot dead during a protest in Gazipur. Her husband blamed the police and told AFP that she was shot in the head. In other words, women also pay for each wage settlement when they protest.

The current wage board has been created under Section 138 of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006. It is constituted by a chairperson, an independent member, two employer representatives, and two worker representatives. A district and session judge chairs the board, with a university teacher as the independent member, the secretary-general of the Bangladesh Employers' Federation, and a director of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association representing owners, and the president of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, and the general secretary of the Bangladesh Garments and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWF) representing workers. While the new board saw these positions duly filled, its gender composition again left women workers entirely unrepresented.



FILE PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Women garment workers, along with their male colleagues, blocked the Dhaka-Tangail highway in Gazipur on November 3, demanding fair wages.

Representation on the wage board means that the government and the employers know whose voice needs to be heard. The voices present in the meeting are the voices that get counted, and when women are being sidelined despite being on the streets demanding a liveable wage, it is of utmost importance to listen to them. Or else, the hypocrisy of advertising women's contribution to make the employers look good on paper but making decisions for them without giving them a floor to speak is laughable.

In 2006, Nazma Akter, the then president of National Garment Workers Federation, was appointed as one of the workers' representatives on the board. The then women's affairs secretary of Jatiya Sramik League Shamsunnahar Bhuiyan was on the 2018 board; in 2023, however, the board was again devoid of any female representation. To be effective, representation, whether male or female, must go beyond token appointments. Representation does not automatically mean that the person has the capacity to be firm on decisions. In fact, unions have previously complained that the appointees reflect official preferences more than the mandate from the workers. Even then, female representation matters, despite the fact that, Section 138 of the labour law does not mention anything on gender composition.

One reason why it matters is that those on the board must be genuinely accountable to the workers they represent. And there are capable women who can speak for the workers, so proper representation can lead to proper decisions eventually. Take, for example, Nazma Akter, who began factory work when she was 11. Later, she founded the Sommilito Garments Sramik Federation after facing persistent discrimination as a woman labour leader. Her organisation boasts over 70,000 women members. Taslima Akhter, president of the Bangladesh Garment Sramik Samhati and a former Labour Reform Commission member, was demanding a quick wage board in August. Then there is Kalpona Akter, president of BGIWF, whose general secretary now sits on the board. All this is to say that there is no shortage of women who could do the job.

These women are quoted in reports of almost every protest, but they are missing from places where it matters the most, especially when increased automation has started to cut down the number of women in the RMG workforce. Dina Siddiqi mentions Jacquard machinery, which simplifies textile production. Male labour is recruited specifically for this. She believes a "re-masculinisation" of garment production is underway. The wage board is emulating the same phenomenon.

In this connection, it is important to ask whether labour unions, from which workers' representatives on the board emerge, are themselves adequately representative of women workers. Despite the improved legal conditions for workers, including women, to organise and participate in trade unions following the 2026 Labour Act amendment, there is still considerable room for improvement. Practical difficulties continue to persist to this day. According to a 2025 BILS policy brief based on a 2024 field survey, 79 percent of respondents, who were workers and workers' representatives, reported women's presence in trade union executive bodies. However, the study did not establish what proportion of executive positions women actually occupied. There is an important distinction between women's presence in union leadership and their actual influence over decision-making. Without reliable and updated data on their share of leadership positions and the extent of their involvement in unions in general, it is difficult to assess how adequately their interests are represented.

Representation on the wage board means that the government and the employers know whose voice needs to be heard. The voices present in the meeting are the voices that get counted, and when women are being sidelined despite being on the streets demanding a liveable wage, it is of utmost importance to listen to them. Or else, the hypocrisy of advertising women's contribution to make the employers look good on paper but making decisions for them without giving them a floor to speak is laughable. Wages set by people who never had to stretch them thin tend to be priced against what factories can bear, not what a household needs.

Since the late last century, Bangladesh's RMG industry has tremendously profited from women's labour. For four decades, women mostly ran the wheels of the sector, which propels Bangladesh's economy. If they are indispensable to building the sector and, in turn, the economy, why are their voices absent when it comes to deciding what their labour is actually worth?

New port rules, but where are the safeguards against monopoly?



Ahamedul Karim Chowdhury is former head of Kamalapur Inland Container Depot and Pangaon Inland Container Terminal, and an adjunct faculty member at Bangladesh Maritime University.

AHAMEDUL KARIM CHOWDHURY

The government's new rules for appointing berth, terminal and ship-handling operators at Chattogram port are a welcome step. As *The Daily Star* reported on November 8, the Chittagong Port Authority (Appointment of Berth, Terminal and Ship Handling Operators) Rules, 2026, issued by the shipping ministry through gazette notification on November 5, introduce a formal framework for licensing, selection and supervision.

This is the first time gazetted rules have been formulated to govern the licensing and appointment of private operators. However, one crucial question remains: where are the safeguards against monopoly and excessive concentration in container terminal operations?

I raised this concern in a previous column in this daily, titled "Foreign or local, Bangladesh cannot afford a port monopoly". The nationality of an operator matters less than the competitive structure of the market. The country must not confuse the arrival of several international operators with the creation of genuine competition. The new rules, according to the above-mentioned report, provide for open tendering under the public procurement framework. Applicants generally require an operator's licence before bidding, while international terminal operators may be appointed through a separate statutory route with government approval.

Transparent appointments are important. However, competition for a concession is not the same as competition between terminals once those concessions are awarded. The former determines who secures a contract, while the latter assesses whether traders and shipping lines can choose among efficient, independently managed facilities for years to come. Even a fairly conducted tender could strengthen market dominance if its winner already controls substantial handling capacity through another terminal or an affiliated company. Hence, any licensing or appointment system should assess market concentration before awarding a concession, rather than investigate misconduct only afterwards.

Here, India's experience provides some insights. Recognising this danger, the country issued the Policy for Preventing Private Sector Monopoly in Major Ports in 2010, restricting the sole private operator handling a particular cargo category at a port, along with its associates, from bidding for the next terminal handling the same cargo at that port. The idea was to establish independent competitors rather than allow successive concessions to accumulate under common control.

The application of India's policy has evolved, so it should not be portrayed as a permanent blanket prohibition across all its ports. Nevertheless, its underlying principle remains useful: competition should be built into the concession structure.

Bangladesh could adopt a similar safeguard, adapted to local conditions. An operator already controlling a major container terminal should not automatically be allowed to control another competing terminal in the same relevant market. Where an exception is justified, an independent assessment should establish that it would not substantially weaken competition. The test must also cover subsidiaries, joint ventures, consortium partners and common beneficial ownership. Separate corporate names don't necessarily represent separate commercial interests.

The Competition Act, 2012 already offers a legal foundation for the country. Section 15 addresses anti-competitive agreements, Section 16 prohibits abuse of authority, and Section 21 addresses combinations harmful to competition. These protections should be explicitly reflected in terminal concession policy, with a defined role for the Bangladesh Competition Commission.

Before awarding a major concession, the government should review a bidder's existing terminal interests, affiliated businesses, current and projected capacity, and possible links with shipping lines and inland logistics facilities. An independent competition assessment should form part of the decision-making record, regardless of whether selection takes place through tendering or another lawful investment route. This is not an argument against successful operators or foreign investment, but for applying consistent rules to everyone.



An operator already controlling a major container terminal of a sea port should not automatically be allowed to control another competing terminal in the same relevant market.

FILE PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

A trader's right to choice

The public benefit of a landlord port model should ultimately be measured at the cargo owner's end. Importers, exporters and shipping lines need alternative terminals offering reliable vessel handling, predictable delivery, and transparent commercial conditions. Without realistic alternatives, a dominant operator may face little pressure to improve its performance.

Independent terminals can compete through higher crane productivity, shorter vessel waiting times, more efficient gates, and attractive service terms. Where prices are market-responsive, competition can also put downward pressure on commercial charges. Of course, statutory tariffs require separate regulatory decisions. Even when tariffs are fixed, better service can reduce the overall cost of moving cargo.

But competition is ineffective when shipping lines face exclusive arrangements, related-party preferences, discriminatory access, or inadequate inland connections. A terminal cannot be considered a practical alternative merely because it has a different signboard. Traders must have meaningful choices in the services they can actually use.

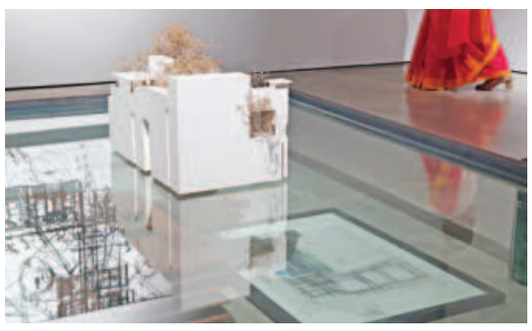
This matters especially for the country's export economy. Delays, uncertainty and avoidable logistics charges eventually affect factory competitiveness, imported input costs, and consumer prices. The aim should be an open market that rewards efficiency instead of protecting market power.

A landlord needs independent oversight

The Chittagong Port Authority will remain the owner and guardian of strategic public infrastructure while private firms increasingly operate its terminals. That makes concession oversight more important. Every major agreement should include measurable investment and productivity obligations, non-discriminatory access, clear rules on related-party dealings, controls on ownership changes, transparent complaint procedures, and enforceable remedies. Publicly reported performance indicators would help distinguish efficient operators from those merely benefiting from their market position.

However, an authority that awards concessions and earns revenue from them should not be the sole judge of whether the resulting market remains competitive. A structured review involving the Bangladesh Competition Commission and sector specialists would provide an essential check. The legal framework should also distinguish ordinary five-year operator appointments from long-term infrastructure concessions that require more complex investment and risk allocation.

The newly issued rules are a starting point, not the final architecture of landlord-port governance. The government should now adopt explicit anti-concentration tests for future terminal awards, scrutiny of common ownership, independent competition reviews, and safeguards to ensure fair access for shipping lines and cargo owners. Existing lawful contracts should be respected while future decisions protect the market as a whole. The country should not replace a public monopoly with private monopolies. The true test of reform is whether traders have genuine choices, receive better services, and face lower overall logistics costs.







RAFIQ AZAM'S SOLO EXHIBITION

'Threshold' reflects on art, architecture and memory

SHAHBAZ NAHIAN

Rafiq Azam is among the finest architectural minds to have emerged from liberated Bangladesh and the wider region. With a thirty-five-year practice deeply intertwined with spatial experiences and human relationships, his work has continually challenged the conventional ideas of architecture. Yet, his sixth solo exhibition, ***Threshold: Art & Architecture***, falls short of the curatorial standards one might expect from an architect of his stature.

Currently on view at Bengal Shilpalay in Dhaka, the exhibition offers a glimpse into Azam's creative and psychological journey. Open to visitors daily from 4:00pm to 8:00pm, it will continue until December 5.

To an untrained eye, ***Threshold*** may appear fascinating. But beyond its initial visual appeal, the exhibition raises questions about its overall curatorial quality.

The dimly lit Quamrul Hassan Gallery sets the mood. Upon entering, visitors are greeted by a mass model of Old Dhaka, mounted vertically on one of the movable white walls. A mesh of innocence runs through the creative details of the exhibition. A plumb bob and a pencil hang above low-lying, steel-framed, glass-topped tables, where architectural models and archival materials are arranged in carefully composed displays, both above and beneath the glass. Rafiq Azam's two monographs sit at one end of these long, rectangular tables, representing an exceptionally rare achievement: a Bangladeshi practitioner being published by major international publishing houses.



PHOTOS: SHAHBAZ NAHIAN

Rusted steel features prominently in several models, including one placed beside an unrecognisable self-portrait imagining Rafiq in old age. Another installation pairs a photograph of a *nouka* (boat) beside an interior pool with a boat model mounted beneath it.

Yet, the overall curation is difficult to praise. The movable white walls evoke the alleys of Old Dhaka, opening into a larger space. The juxtaposition of watercolours and sketches with photographs of completed projects, alongside recordings of Rafiq speaking in the *Dhakaiya* dialect, are thoughtful touches. However, the arrangement of visual materials along the passage reveals a certain naivety in exhibition design.

In Rafiq's own words, ***Threshold*** is neither a retrospective nor a collection of finished works, but a glimpse into his psychological journey. While the thinking behind the exhibition is evident, its execution often feels like a soliloquy that only he can fully understand.

Architecture is inherently multidisciplinary, but expertise in one creative field does not automatically translate into curatorial expertise. As Dhaka's exhibition scene evolves, collaboration across disciplines becomes increasingly important. Recent architectural exhibitions such as ***Parallels*** and ***Learning Unlearning*** have faced similar shortcomings.

Rafiq Azam is a man of contradictions: an imposing creative mind with a formidable ego, yet someone who laughs like a child and remains open to contrasting perspectives. "I watercolour landscapes. I architecture landscapes as well," he once told me. Growing up in Old Dhaka, surrounded by sunlight, greenery and the then-youthful Buriganga, he developed an early fascination with landscapes that would eventually shape his architectural language.

Over three and a half decades, his journey has been marked by personal struggles, professional reinvention and an unwavering commitment to transforming the spaces we inhabit. His influence extends well beyond the awards in his cabinet. And so, the question remains: does the curation of ***Threshold*** truly reflect the creative mind and complex persona of Rafiq Azam?

Runa Laila receives golden guitar as birthday gift



To mark the legendary singer Runa Laila's birthday tomorrow (November 17), Channel i has produced a special programme titled ***Runa Mahal***, through which a golden guitar was presented to her as a birthday gift.

Hosted by actor Afzal Hossain, the programme features actor Alamgir, eminent singer Rafiqun Nabi and renowned singer Ankhi Alamgir.

During the programme, Channel i Managing Director and children's author Faridur Reza Sagar presented Runa Laila with the golden guitar as a birthday gift, adding a special touch to the occasion.

Runa Mahal will also reveal many lesser-known facts about the singer's life and career.

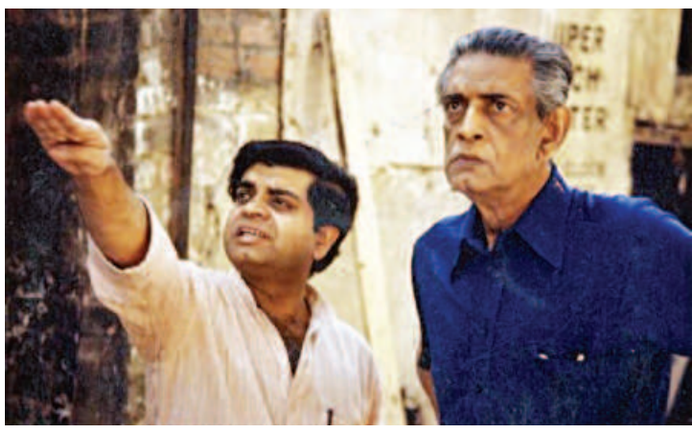
Directed by Arif Khan and produced by Anonna Ruma, the programme will air on Channel i on November 17 at 10:15pm.

Satyajit Ray's son Sandip Ray begins shooting anthology of four Ray classics

Filmmaker Sandip Ray has begun filming an untitled anthology feature adapting four short stories written by his father, the late Satyajit Ray—***Khagam***, ***Batik Babu***, ***Bhuto***, and ***Neel Atanka***. Produced by Pradip Kumar Nandi under the banner of Nandy Movies, the project went on the floor on November 13.

The four segments bring together distinct settings and tones, spanning supernatural horror, psychological suspense, and colonial-era dread.

The ensemble cast features Subhasish Mukhopadhyay, Saswata Chatterjee, Sabyasachi Chakraborty, Supriyo Dutta, Kaushik Ganguly, Ritwick Chakraborty, Shaheb Chattopadhyay, Subhrajit Dutta, Kaushik Banerjee, and Barun Chakraborty.



NEWS

2 killed after being 'pushed off' bus in Rangpur

FROM PAGE 12

30, and Shakil Islam, 28, both construction workers in Cumilla and residents of Charai Khola village in Nilphamari Sadar upazila, police said.

The injured, Atikul Islam, 30, is from the same village.

According to Atikul, witnesses and locals, the three were travelling from Cumilla to Jaldhaka in Nilphamari on a Saimum Paribahan night coach.

Around 8:30am, an argument broke out between the passengers and the bus supervisor and helper over the fare at Jigartal. As the dispute escalated, the two allegedly pushed all three off the moving bus.

Mukul and Shakil died on the spot, while locals rescued Atikul and took him to Taraganj Upazila Health Complex.

Protesting the incident, locals blocked the Rangpur-Saidpur highway, demanding the arrest and exemplary punishment of the bus driver, supervisor and helper.

Around noon, locals detained the driver, Aziz Hossain, 44, and helper Shafiqul Islam Shafik, 35, in Taraganj's Chikli area and handed them over to police. Both are residents of Dimla upazila in Nilphamari.

Taraganj Highway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mostafizur Rahman said police recovered the bodies from the spot and the injured passenger was receiving treatment.

"The detained bus driver and helper have been handed over to Taraganj Police Station," he said.

Khandaker Mahmud, inspector (investigation) and currently in-charge of Taraganj Police Station, said Kalu Mia, father of one of the deceased, filed a case.

"Two people have been arrested. They are being interrogated," he said.

Tarique, Erdogan talked about defence industry investment: Kobir

FROM PAGE 12

of the most significant meetings on the first day was with our prime minister," he said.

On defence cooperation, Humaiun said the discussions focused on investment opportunities in the defence sector, including the possibility of investment in a defence industrial park and other defence manufacturing initiatives.

"The discussions on moving towards an investment partnership were very fruitful," he said.

Regarding the Rohingya crisis, the state minister said the two sides discussed strengthening cooperation ahead of the International Court of Justice's ruling on the Rohingya genocide case, expected on Thursday, as well as mobilising greater international support for humanitarian assistance.

He said Bangladesh and Türkiye agreed to work closely to raise global awareness of the issue and coordinate diplomatic efforts.

Humaiun quoted Erdoğan as telling the prime minister, "You are my valued brother. You are the leader of the 180 million people of Bangladesh, but beyond that, you are my valued brother and a leader with whom I will work closely."

The Turkish president had also praised recent policy reforms in Bangladesh and expressed his willingness to further strengthen bilateral ties, saying Türkiye stood ready to support Bangladesh in areas of mutual interest, Humaiun said.

8-year-old's body found in madrasa toilet

FROM PAGE 12

The accused are Hafiz Mokarrom Hossain, 30, director of the madrasa in the College Road area of Biral municipality, and his brother-in-law, also a student there.

The court ordered the teen to be sent to the Jessore Child Development Centre.

Biral Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Al Imran said Safayet, son of Solaiman Ali of Thonthonia village in Bhandara union, was admitted to the madrasa around eight months ago.

His grandfather visited him on Saturday afternoon and found him in good health.

The madrasa director initially told police that he noticed a toilet door had remained closed for an unusually long time that night.

After repeated knocks went unanswered, he shone his mobile phone's flashlight through an opening above the door and saw someone lying inside.

He broke open the door with two others around 8:00pm and found Safayet.

The boy was taken to Biral Upazila Health Complex, where an on-duty doctor declared him dead.

Police later prepared an inquest report indicating that the boy might have been strangled.

Safayet's father filed a murder case against the director and his brother-in-law that night. The body was sent to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy, the OC said.

Freedom fighter named in sabotage case 7 months after death

FROM PAGE 2

the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Explosive Substances Act.

He said the allegation concerning the deceased freedom fighter had yet to be investigated and his name would be dropped if the claim was proven.

Advocate Shahidul Islam Sojib of the Shariatpur District Bar Association said, "He is a freedom fighter who fought for the country. Even after death, he was not spared from being accused in a case. This is deplorable."

The case also named Md Jahangir Hossain, a certificate assistant at the Shariatpur Deputy Commissioner's Office. The Detective Branch arrested him on November 12 on allegations of financing the sabotage.

Hotelier Sultan Kazi was accused of taking an order for 500 packets of khichuri from AL activists.

According to the case statement, 700-800 people gathered near the toll plaza in Zajira's Naodoba area around 1:30am on November 9, blocked the expressway, detonated crude bombs and vandalised two trucks, halting traffic between Dhaka and the southwestern region.

Police have arrested eight people in connection with the incident since November 12.

Nine more RMG units adopt 'no work, no pay'

FROM PAGE 12

Workers at only five factories in the region have not started work and are sitting idle, he said.

"The overall situation in Savar, Ashulia and Dhamrai was calm -- no disorder has been reported anywhere," he added.

Babul Akhter, workers' representative on the wage board, and Amirul Haque Amin, president of National Garment Workers Federation, echoed the same.

Normalcy will return within the next two to three days when the minimum wage is announced, Amin said.

"We are waiting for the proposal from the owners' representative to fix the final amount," Babul said.

The owners' representative is scheduled to submit the proposal of minimum salary for garment workers in today's meeting of the wage board.

Nearly 1,500 garment factory owners have held a view exchange meeting at the BGMEA office in Uttara on the current labour unrest and fixing the monthly salary of the garment workers.

Most of the factory owners have proposed Tk 15,000 as the minimum salary, up from Tk 12,500 fixed in 2023, The Daily Star has learnt from meeting attendants.

The workers' representative has already proposed Tk 32,000 as the minimum monthly salary for the garment workers.

It seems that the situation is turning normal as the intensity of the unrest has come down, said BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan.

And yet, production was disrupted in 60 factories yesterday, he said.

The new factories at Konabari area in Dhaka were affected yesterday, although normalcy is being restored gradually, said BGMEA Vice-President Md. Rezwan Selim, who looks after the labour issues.

Some of the factory owners who had invoked the Section 13(1) clause resumed production yesterday, while some are gearing up to reopen from today, he added.

Meanwhile, workers demanding higher wages blocked the Dhaka-Tangail Highway in Gazipur's Kaliakair upazila for around 30 minutes yesterday morning, disrupting traffic before police intervention brought the situation under control.

The protest took place in the Mouchak area between 8:30am and 9:00am yesterday.

Traffic resumed after police persuaded the workers to leave the road, said Manzur Morshed, inspector of Naojor Highway Police.

However, traffic between Tongi and Mawna on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway remained normal, with no reports of worker protests along the stretch.

Govt vows debt transparency

FROM PAGE 1

Public debt, however, is projected to remain just below 39 percent of GDP.

The government attributes much of the pressure to borrowing and financial liabilities accumulated under the previous administration.

Public debt rose by Tk 5.4 lakh crore in the two years to June 2024, reaching Tk 18.9 lakh crore ($163 billion), or 36 percent of GDP.

Over the same period, government borrowing from the central bank to finance the budget deficit surged from Tk 730 crore to Tk 56,750 crore, effectively creating money and helping push inflation close to 10 percent.

The previous government also left around Tk 40,000 crore in unpaid power and fertiliser subsidies and about $2.5 billion (Tk 31,100 crore) in overdue fuel import bills.

Officials say the economy has since stabilised.

Central bank lending to the government fell to Tk 482 crore by June 2026, foreign currency reserves recovered to above $30 billion, and the yield on 91-day Treasury bills declined from around 12 percent in June 2025 to 8-9 percent.

But the pressure on public finances remains significant.

Qingfeng Zhang, Bangladesh country director of the Asian Development Bank, which co-organised the conference, said debt servicing had risen from 2.3 percent of GDP in FY2020-21 to 3 percent in FY2024-25.

Although the budget deficit narrowed to 3.5 percent of GDP last fiscal year, the improvement was largely driven by lower spending on development projects, he said.

"Rising debt service is constraining development expenditure and reinforcing reliance on domestic financing," Zhang said.

The conflict in the Middle East is adding to the strain through higher energy prices, trade disruptions and tighter global financing conditions. Better recording and reporting of public debt, including government guarantees, would help identify risks early, he added.

Speaking to reporters after the sessions, Khosru identified weak revenue collection, rather than the overall size of public debt, as the country's main fiscal challenge.

He said the government plans to widen the tax net, reduce tax exemptions, and digitise VAT and income tax administration to tackle these challenges.

BUILDING THE BOND MARKET

The government is also looking to deepen the domestic bond market and attract foreign investors to broaden its financing options.

Bangladesh's local-currency government bonds have been included in JPMorgan's GBI-EM Edge index, while the government is exploring links with international securities settlement platforms Euroclear and Clearstream.

Tanvir Shahriar Ghani, special assistant to the prime minister, said attracting foreign investors would require sound economic fundamentals, transparent trading and reliable mechanisms for repatriating investment proceeds.

Khosru said Bangladesh was also considering its first international sovereign bond, but any issuance would have to be "carefully sequenced".

Tanvir said the country should explore dollar-denominated Eurobonds and sukuk, or Islamic bonds, while carefully assessing how much it could afford to borrow.

However, Bangladesh's credit ratings could make such borrowing expensive. Moody's rates the country B2, while S&P and Fitch assign it B+. Both S&P and Fitch downgraded their outlooks to negative this year, citing weaknesses in the banking sector and the fallout from the Middle East conflict.

Prasad Ananthakrishnan, an ADB consultant, told delegates that bond issuance by B-rated countries had fallen to about a third of its 2017 level, while average maturities had shortened from 16 years to eight.

He urged Bangladesh to prioritise developing its domestic bond market and publish comprehensive information on government guarantees and the liabilities of state-owned enterprises.

"In today's market, transparency is cheaper than credit enhancement," he said.

The UN General Assembly recently extended Bangladesh's preparation period for LDC graduation to November 24, 2029, giving the country more time to prepare for the loss of trade benefits and concessional financing.

Ananthakrishnan said the era of cheap borrowing was over and every taka borrowed would now have to generate returns exceeding its cost.

He offered debt managers a simple test for assessing financing plans, using "r" for interest rates and "g" for economic growth: "If r rises by a point and g falls by a point, will your plan still work? If the answer is yes, you borrow. If not, you need to fix the plan first."

Syria car bomb kills two people including child

AFP, *Damascus*

A car bomb killed two people including a child in a suburb of the Syrian capital on Saturday, state media reported, as authorities struggle to restore full security to the country.

The SANA news agency said the explosion in the city of Jaramana also wounded one person.

Authorities had "established a security perimeter at the scene and opened an investigation", it cited security forces as saying.

Syria has frequently been hit by explosions or attacks against civilians or security forces since the fall of former president Bashar al-Assad in December 2024.

In August another blast struck Jaramana, with the attack on a bus wounding 14 people, according to SANA.

In the capital Damascus, two devices exploded near a hotel where French President Emmanuel Macron was staying during a landmark visit in July.

That blast left one person dead and 36 wounded.

AL supporters go on the rampage

FROM PAGE 1

deployed to help maintain law and order in Gopalganj, the home district of ousted prime minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina.

The government also replaced the district's top civil and police officials.

Gopalganj Deputy Commissioner Md Arif-Uz-Zaman was withdrawn and replaced by Habiganj Deputy Commissioner GM Sharfaraz, while Gopalganj Superintendent of Police Md Habibullah was transferred and replaced by Feni SP Pratyush Kumar Majumdar.

Witnesses said hundreds of AL leaders and activists began arriving in the town from surrounding areas around 11:00am by motorcycles, vans, buses and trucks.

Around noon, they brought out a procession from the BSCIC Bridge area after breaking through a police barricade. The march moved through Launch Ghat, Women's College and the Shilpakala Academy area before spreading across different roads in the town. Participants chanted slogans in support of Hasina.

Many carried wooden poles and oars, locally known as "logi-boitha". Witnesses said activists spray-painted "Joy Bangla" on a police APC and hurled brick chunks at a police box and broke a window near Launch Ghat.

They later removed the nameplate from the main entrance of Gopalganj Government College and replaced it with a banner reading "Government Bangabandhu College". A signboard at Hadi Square on the campus of Gopalganj Science and Technology University was also removed and replaced with one reading "Muktijuddho Chattar".

Witnesses said the protesters also reopened the AL office in the town's Bank Para area.

At several points, activists set fire to tyres and other materials on roads near the old Launch Ghat, Government College and the Press Club, disrupting traffic. Police later extinguished the fires and restored traffic movement. Traffic near Launch Ghat remained suspended for about 40 minutes.

In the evening, at least seven houses belonging to BNP leaders and activists were attacked, according to party leaders.

Among them was the house of Emdad Hossain Mollah, president of the Tungipara municipal BNP, which was looted and set on fire, said Gopalganj district BNP President Sharif Rafiquzzaman.

Tungipara Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mohammad Ayub Ali said police had received information about the incidents and were investigating.

Additional security personnel were deployed across key locations, while intelligence surveillance was stepped up, security officials said.

At a briefing at the Gopalganj Circuit House, Dhaka Range DIG Mostafizur Rahman said 1,350 police personnel had been deployed across the district.

He said patrol teams and strike forces were on standby along the district's 67km stretch of national highway, while additional personnel had been deployed across all four upazilas and Gopalganj Sadar to protect government installations and maintain public security.

Brig Gen Mahmudul Hasan, commander of the BGB's Jashore Region, said around 150 BGB members in six platoons had been deployed to help maintain law and order and prevent any untoward incidents.

He said the deployment was made under directives from the home ministry.

Besides BGB, members of the police, SRB, APBn, and Ansar were also on the ground, while plans were in place to deploy additional personnel if required, he said.

The unrest followed attacks on BNP and Jubo Dal offices in Tungipara on Saturday night.

According to media reports, the BNP office in Kushli union and several nearby shops at Nilfa Bazar were vandalised and set on fire around 8:00pm. The upazila Jubo Dal office at the Patgati bus stand was also ransacked.

On November 10, AL supporters allegedly set fire to a police vehicle, clashed with law enforcers and blocked roads at several locations in Gopalganj.

In this connection, Moslem Ali, sub-inspector of Tungipara Police Station, filed a case under the Anti-Terrorism Act accusing 224 named people and around 2,000 unnamed people.

During yesterday's unrest, Moslem was on duty at the bus station area. At one point, he came under attack and had to be taken to Tungipara Upazila Health Complex, said Tungipara police OC Mohammad Ayub Ali.

Moslem suffered injuries in his head and was released after treatment, said Tungipara Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Tanvir Ahmed.

The district also witnessed deadly violence on July 16 last year when clashes between law enforcers and AL supporters surrounding an NCP rally in the town left at least four people dead and dozens injured.

25,000 bodycams gather dust

FROM PAGE 1

"We are trying to increase the use of these cameras," he said, adding that they were being used occasionally outside metropolitan areas, particularly during major religious festivals and other important events.

Police officials and field officers cited accountability concerns, budget constraints, technical difficulties and operational challenges as reasons for the force's reluctance to use them.

"Our force does not want to be accountable -- we have issued instructions repeatedly, but they do not use the cameras," said Additional Inspector General (AIG) Khandaker Rafiqul Islam, who transferred from the Crime and Operations wing to the Human Resource Management wing in September.

Some officers were reluctant to use the devices because recordings could expose them to scrutiny over allegations of bribery, misconduct and mistreatment of members of the public, said another senior PHQ official.

An inspector in Rajshahi Range echoed that assessment while also pointing to financial constraints.

"Body-worn cameras are good for ensuring accountability, but who will pay for the internet?"

According to PHQ, half of the newly procured devices are online cameras, which allow live monitoring through the central system. The remaining 10,000 are offline devices that store footage for later upload.

After the procurement, the PHQ introduced a standard operating procedure outlining when officers must wear them.

The guidelines require their use during patrols, traffic management, responses to crimes and accidents, raids, searches, arrests, investigations, crime scene examinations and public order operations.

They are also intended to record police activities during election campaigns, at polling centres where applicable, and during major national and international events.

The force had initially planned to procure the cameras through the UNDP, but the organisation could not supply them within the required timeframe, said former IGP Baharul Alam.

The PHQ subsequently allocated funds to district police chiefs and metropolitan commissioners to purchase the devices.

"I cannot recall the exact amount, but these are expensive cameras. The expenditure would certainly be more than Tk 100 crore," he said.

Asked why camera use remained limited, AIG (Media) Kamarum Munira cited funding shortages.

"Each camera requires an internet connection costing around Tk 1,000 a month -- we have a budget shortfall for this. Cameras are used at events through special allocations, which is why their use remains limited," she said.

Politics, weak oversight fuel health sector graft

FROM PAGE 3

crore annually, although the figure requires independent verification.

On medical negligence, the report said the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council received 172 complaints between 2010 and May 2025. Of these, 79 remained pending, while 29 resulted in disciplinary action.

Political influence and paper-based record-keeping also affected recruitment, transfers and promotions, it said.

The report cited the cancellation of recruitment of 2,839 health workers in 2021.

Absenteeism was another concern. A study cited in the report found around 40 percent of physicians absent during unannounced visits, while subsequent studies recorded rates exceeding 70 percent at some remote facilities.

Citing media investigations, the report said procurement irregularities caused losses of Tk 459 crore at the Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD), with supplies sold at up to 18 times their fair value. Medical equipment worth Tk 283 crore was also found lying unused.

It said the number of medical colleges rose from 62 in 2010 to 118 in 2022-23 without corresponding improvements in regulation and quality assurance.

The report also identified what it called "intellectual corruption", citing a delay of around 31 months in publishing the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18.

It pointed to a discrepancy between Bangladesh's official Covid-19 death toll of around 29,000 and the World Health Organization's estimate of approximately 1.6 lakh excess deaths.

Questioning regulatory independence, the report said around 70 of the BMDC's roughly 90 members were linked to the government.

It also noted that the government hears appeals against the council's decisions, while patients have almost no representation in any of the six regulatory councils reviewed.

Speaking at the launch, State Minister for Health MA Muhit said the report could serve as an important reference for health sector reforms. "Meaningful corruption control requires preemptive action and systematic change, with checks and balances and transparency in our medical education system," he said.

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Nicolas Weeks stressed the importance of strong institutions in strengthening relations between citizens and the state.

Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, BHW convener and another editor of the report, and Shireen Parvin Huq, former chief of the Women Affairs Reform Commission, also spoke.

BHW Advisory Group member Halida Hanum Akhter chaired the event.

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
"BSC Bhaban", Saltgola road, Chittagong

REF: 18.16.0000.373.02.334 & 335 .26-27 Date: 15.11.2026

Invitation of Tender

S.L No.	Tender ID	Name of the Tender	Tender Closing & Opening date and time
1.	COMC-03112026 Dated: 15.11.2026 Ref: 18.16.0000 .373.02.33 4.26-27	BADC-334// INTERNATIONAL LIMITED TENDER FOR TRANSPORTATION OF 12TH LOT OF 30,000 MT (+/- 10%) TSP FERTILIZER IN BULK FROM SAFI PORT/JORF LASFAR PORT, MOROCCO AND DELIVERY IN 50 KG NET BAG TO TRANSPORT AGENT LOCATED AT CHATTOGRAM AND SHIROMONI GHAT (KHULNA) VIA OUTER ANCHORAGE OF CHATTOGRAM PORT (A/B/C ANCHORAGE), BANGLADESH AND/OR HARBARIA, MONGLA PORT, BANGLADESH AS PACKAGE BASIS (RATIO: CTG & MONGLA : 40%:60%) LAY CAN 09-11 DECEMBER, 2026 A/C OF BADC. N.B: IMCC ENLISTED BROKERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER.	19-11-2026 12:15 PM & 19-11-2026 12:20 PM at BSC Tower (22nd Floor), Dhaka
2.	COMC-04112026 Dated: 15.11.2026 Ref: 18.16.0000 .373.02.33 5.26-27	BADC-335// INTERNATIONAL LIMITED TENDER FOR TRANSPORTATION OF 13TH LOT OF 30,000 MT (+/- 10%) TSP FERTILIZER IN BULK FROM SAFI PORT, MOROCCO AND DELIVERY IN 50 KG NET BAG TO TRANSPORT AGENT LOCATED AT CHATTOGRAM AND SHIROMONI GHAT (KHULNA) VIA OUTER ANCHORAGE OF CHATTOGRAM PORT (A/B/C ANCHORAGE), BANGLADESH AND/OR HARBARIA, MONGLA PORT, BANGLADESH AS PACKAGE BASIS (RATIO: CTG & MONGLA : 40%:60%) LAY CAN 18-20 DECEMBER, 2026 A/C OF BADC. N.B: IMCC ENLISTED BROKERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER.	30-11-2026 12:15 PM & 30-11-2026 12:20 PM at BSC Tower (22nd Floor), Dhaka

General Manager (Chartering)
Phone: 031-728269
E-mail: gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd

GD-2769

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, (RHD)
Sherpur Road Division, Sherpur.
Phone/Fax: 0931-61821
E-mail: eeshed@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No.35.01.8900.470.14.409.26-1929 Date: 15-11-2026

e-Tender Notice.

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works:

Sl. No.	Tender/ Proposal ID. Reference No.	Name of works	Publishing Date, Closing Date
01.	e-GP/Rev-22/OTM/SherD/26-27 1372520,	Single Bituminous Surface Treatment and Seal Coat work at Ch. 01+650 km to Ch.02+290 km, Ch. 04+036 to Ch. 05+100 km, Ch. 06+984 to Ch. 07+500 km, Sherpur (Akher Bazar)-Longorpara-Shreebordi (mamdamari) Road(Z-4604) road under Sherpur Road Division During the year-2026-2027.	15-Nov-2026 12:00 29-Nov-2026 16:00
02.	e-GP/Rev-23/OTM/SherD/26-27 1372531	Repair of damaged pavement by seal coat work at 1st (p) & 2nd (p) km of Nakla Bypass (Z-4610) Road under Sherpur Road Division during the year 2026-2027.	15-Nov-2026 12:00 29-Nov-2026 16:00

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 in the National e-GP System portal (http//www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guide lines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

15.11.2026
(Amit Kumar Chakrabarty)
ID No. 602208
Executive Engineer, RHD
Sherpur Road Division
Sherpur.

GD-2773

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- ২৭.২১.০০০০.০০০.৭৬৭.৫১.০০০১.২৬.৯৭৫ তারিখঃ ১২/১১/২০২৬খ্রিঃ

e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, ফরিদপুর দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Reference	Title of Works
1367028	27.21.0000.000.767.51.00001.26.964; Date: 11.11.2026	Repair & Maintenance of Ansar Barac and Indoor Store at Madaripur 132/33 kV Grid Substation under GMD, Power Grid, Faridpur.
1366983	27.21.0000.000.767.51.00001.26.966; Date: 11.11.2026	Construction of Security Watch Tower, Walkway and Pond Excavation works at Gopalganj 132/33 kV Grid Substation Under GMD, Power Grid, Faridpur.
1366941	27.21.0000.000.767.51.00001.26.967; Date: 11.11.2026	Repair & Maintenance of 132kV Control Room Roof and Water line in Garden area at Faridpur 230/132/33kV Grid Substation and Repair & Maintenance of Bachelor Barac & tea room in GMD building and Walkway under GMD, Power Grid, Faridpur.
1366915	27.21.0000.000.767.51.00001.26.968; Date: 11.11.2026	Repair, Maintenance and upward extension of Boundary wall (South-west side) and Repair & Maintenance of work of Officers Residential Building at Gopalganj 132/33 kV Grid Sub-Station under GMD, Power Grid, Faridpur.

আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

হেলাল উদ্দিন
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, জিএমডি, ফরিদপুর

BEST HOLDINGS PLC.
BSL HOUSE: 49, Kazi Benzir Sarani
Nikunja 2, Khilkhet, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh
+88 02 8900095, 8900096 +88 02 8900098
share.dept@bhlbd.com www.bhlbd.com

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is to notify for information of all concerned that the 206th, 207th & 208th Board of Directors Meeting of Best Holdings PLC. (BHPLC) held on November 15th, 2026 at the Corporate Office: 49, Kazi Benzir Sarani, Nikunja 2, Khilkhet, Dhaka-1229 has approved the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Querter unaudited financial statements for the year 2025-2026 of the Company and disclosed the following information and decision:

1) 1st Quarter ended 30st September, 2025

PARTICULARS	Standalone		Consolidated	
	30 Sep 2025	30 Sep 2024	30 Sep 2025	30 Sep 2024
Net Assets Value (NAV) BDT in Crore	5,675.93	5,698.04	5,675.06	5,697.43
Net Asset Value (NAV) Per Share in BDT	53.59	53.79	53.58	53.79
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in BDT	0.30	0.22	0.30	0.22
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in BDT	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01

2) 2nd Quarter ended 31st December, 2025

PARTICULARS	Standalone		Consolidated	
	31 Dec 2025	31 Dec 2024	31 Dec 2025	31 Dec 2024
Net Assets Value (NAV) BDT in Crore	5,684.85	5,653.06	5,683.93	5,652.36
Net Asset Value (NAV) Per Share in BDT	53.67	53.37	53.66	53.36
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in BDT	0.67	0.56	0.67	0.55
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in BDT	0.10	0.11	0.10	0.11

3) 3rd Quarter ended 31st March, 2026

PARTICULARS	Standalone		Consolidated	
	31 Mar 2026	31 Mar 2025	31 Mar 2026	31 Mar 2025
Net Assets Value (NAV) BDT in Crore	5,688.07	5,668.56	5,687.08	5,667.77
Net Asset Value (NAV) Per Share in BDT	53.70	53.52	53.69	53.51
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in BDT	0.93	1.12	0.93	1.12
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in BDT	0.13	0.25	0.13	0.25

Reasons for Significant Deviations: Arising from geopolitical instability and adverse impact of the Iran-US conflict on the Company's business performance.

Attributable to the temporary scaling down of agro and fisheries operations resulting from the strategic allocation of land towards the ongoing development of The Muslin Luxury Resort in Bhaluka.

The details of the Financial Statements of the Company (BHPLC) are also available in the website of the Company at www.bhlbd.com

Dated, Dhaka
15 November, 2026

By order of the Board-
Sd/-
Md. Abul Kalam Azad
Company Secretary

Asia Insurance PLC.
এশিয়া ইন্স্যুরেন্স পিএলসি.
Serves For The Total Security of Your Assets

JOB CIRCULAR

With a view to reframing the Company's business trajectory to a new dimension and fastening the quality services, the Board of Directors of Asia Insurance PLC., one of the leading Non-Life Insurance Company in Bangladesh is looking for the following position with qualifications and requirements are as shown below :

POSITION : CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

Requirements :

- Master's and Bachelor Degrees from any recognized University with at least Second Class or equivalent CGPA. or 04 (four) years Bachelor (Honors) Degree from any recognized University with at least Second Class or equivalent CGPA.
  Candidates holding degrees from Foreign Universities must submit an equivalence certificate issued by University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh.
- Must have sound knowledge of Insurance Laws, IDRA rules and regulations, Underwriting, Reinsurance, Claims, Finance and Risk Management.
- Strong capacity of leadership, strategic planning, decision making and inter personal communications skills.
- In-depth knowledge of Corporate Governance and General Management best practices. An entrepreneurial mindset with outstanding organizational and leadership skills.
- Contribute to Policy Formulation, Business Growth and Profitability.
- Provide Marketing plan and the vision of the Company's future Development.
- Proven experience as CEO in any reputed non-life insurance company will get preference.
- He/ She must fulfill the eligibility criteria mentioned in the IDRA SRO No. 375-Law/2012 Dated 04.11.2012, IDRA SRO No. 338-Law/2023 Dated 24.12.2023 and IDRA SRO No. 474-Law/2025 dated 22.12.2025.

Age Limit : 50 – 64 years.

Salary : Negotiable and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Other Benefits : As per Company Policy, permissible under IDRA Rules and Regulations.

Experience : At least twelve years of working experience in the Non-life Insurance Company, which must include at least one year of experience as a Chief Executive Officer or Additional Managing Director or as a General Manager in the Sadharan Bima Corporation, or at least three years of experience as a Deputy Managing Director—with one of those years spent at the Head Office in an Administrative or other capacity other than development-related roles. Individual having proven experience of International Reinsurance Markets and strong relationship with Regulators, Reinsurers and other stakeholders will get preference.

Interested candidates are requested to send application with full CV and recent passport size photograph along with relevant documents addressing to the **Chairman, Asia Insurance PLC, Corporate Head Quarters, Rupayan Trade Centre (14th Floor), 114-115 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Bangla Motor, Dhaka – 1000 within 30 November, 2026.** The Name of the Post shall be mentioned at the top of the envelope.

As per Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority's Directives, "মুখ্য নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা নিয়োগে বীমা উন্নয়ন ও নিয়ন্ত্রন কর্তৃপক্ষ বরাবর আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই। আবেদনকারীগন নিয়োগ কোম্পানী বরাবর আবেদন করতে চাইলে কর্তৃপক্ষকে অনুলিপি প্রদান করতে পারবে।"

The lonely worlds of SYED WALIULLAH'S FICTION

NIAZ ZAMAN

Syed Waliullah was a novelist, a short-story writer and a playwright. Though he was not a prolific writer – he has only three novels, four plays and two short-story collections to his credit – he is recognised as one of the foremost modern writers in Bangla literature, with a Bangla Academy Award to his name. This essay will discuss his fiction, in Bangla as well as in English.

His two volumes of short stories, *Nayanchara* (1945) and *Dui Teer O Anyanya Galpa* (1965), contain a total of 17 stories. However, his total number of stories may be around 50. Syed Shamsul Haq attributes about 25 short stories to Syed Waliullah. *Syed Waliullah: Galpa Samagra* (Jonaki Prakashani, 2021) reveals that he had 32 published stories which he did not anthologise. Ahmed Mostofa Kamal, in *Syed Waliullah: Shrestha Galpa* (Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, 2008), has included nine stories which were not anthologised by the writer himself. Kamal believes that perhaps Waliullah was too busy or thought the stories did not fit in with the other stories in the anthology.

Waliullah's correspondence with Anne-Marie Thibaud – who would soon become his wife – suggests a possible reason why another short-story anthology did not soon follow *Nayanchara*. In a letter dated 24 November 1954, Waliullah tells Anne-Marie about a volume of short stories he was putting together. According to him, the manuscript was ready for the press: "I have collected most of them. I am now busy retouching them which I find absolutely necessary. . . . Though you will not understand the language, I will send you a proofcopy containing these titles. You can at least say if they look good" (in Anne-Marie Waliullah's *Waliullah: My Husband as I Knew Him*, Nymphea, 2022).

Waliullah believed that the manuscript would be ready for the press by Friday – that is, two days later. He had been planning to write a novel in English, but he told Anne-Marie that work on the book had to be suspended for the Bangla short-story collection. He also had to write a play of about 12,000 words for PEN. No one knows what happened to this collection of short stories, as his second short-story anthology appeared almost ten years later. The English novel he was planning was perhaps suspended permanently.

From his posting in Karachi in 1951 to his subsequent postings in Jakarta, London and Bonn, and finally to Paris in 1961, where he lived until his death in 1971, Waliullah lived away from his homeland and his Bangla-speaking milieu. However, he never forgot the land where he had spent his childhood and youth. Most of his short stories, whether in Bangla or English, are set in Bengal, though a few are set on board a boat or a ship, some in a place that could be anywhere on earth, and one in an undetermined space between two countries. *Lal Salu* (1948), as well as the two Bangla novels he wrote in Europe – *Chander Amabasya* (1963) and *Kando Nadi Kando* (1966) – are set in Bengal.

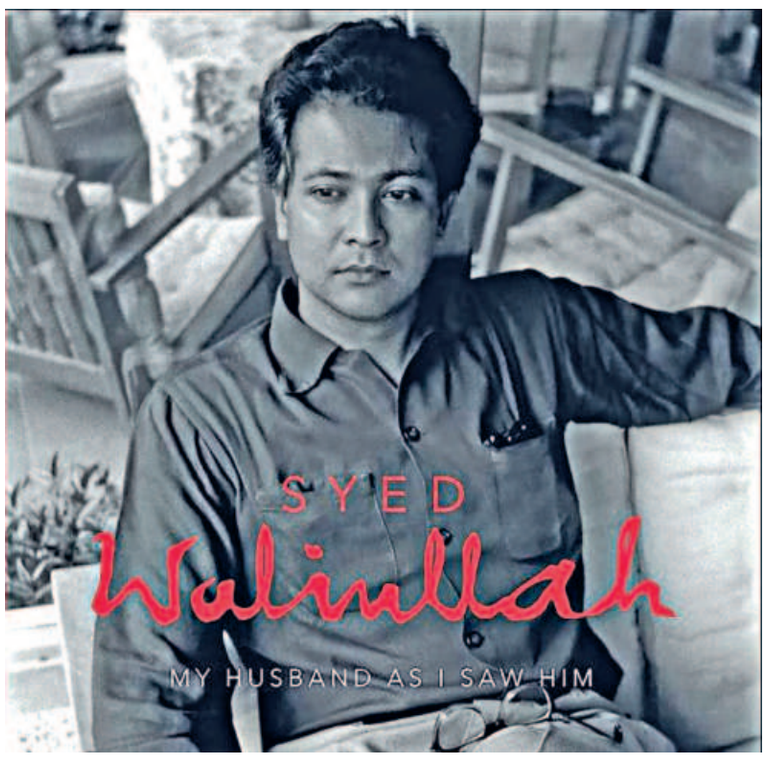
Almost all of Waliullah's fiction has a sad ending. Perhaps losing his mother when he was very young left a void in Waliullah's life, which is reflected in much of his fiction. As Anne-Marie notes in *Waliullah: My Husband as I Saw Him*, "This constant shift of places, which means he most likely could not make close school friends, together with the loss of his mother at the age of eight, partly explains his reserved character, his aloofness and some of his rootlessness."

His father's second marriage must also have affected him. Though later in life Waliullah always visited his half-brothers, half-sisters, stepmother and step-aunt when he returned to his homeland, they could not fill the void in his life. Moreover, Waliullah's relationship with his father was not a close one. Syed Ahmedullah could not understand his artistic son. His step-aunt relates how upset his father was when he came upon his son drawing instead of studying. He tore up the painting and pulled his son up by his hair. Waliullah quietly said, "I'll have to cut my hair to go on painting." The relationship between son and father may be seen replicated in different ways in his fiction, most particularly in the relationship between Mohammad Mustafa and his father in *Kando Nadi Kando*. Thanks to the nature of his father's job, Waliullah got to see the small mofussil towns of Bengal, but the unhappy relationship between father and son, who showed no keenness to follow in his father's footsteps and become a civil servant, is revealed in his fiction, as well as in what we learn from his letters to his wife and other sources.

The tone of nostalgia and gloom, perhaps what may be called an existential despair, is present in many of his stories, whether written in Bangla or English. Stories like "No Enemy" and "Cargo" – both written in English and later translated by Waliullah into Bangla – as well as "Mrityuyatra" (The Death March) reveal an existential despair, as do his later novels *Chander Amabasya* and *Kando Nadi Kando*.



Syed Waliullah and his wife, Anne-Marie Waliullah, in 1955.



Cover of *Syed Waliullah: My Husband as I Saw Him by Anne-Marie Waliullah (Nymphea, 2022)*, a personal account of the celebrated Bengali novelist's life and literary journey.

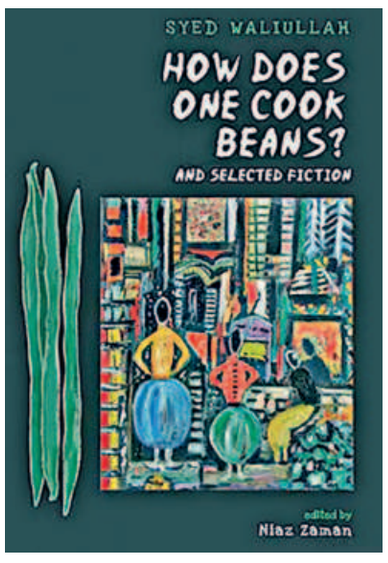
Waliullah wrote only three novels in Bangla: *Lal Salu* (transcreated as *Tree Without Roots*, 1967), *Chander Amabasya* and *Kando Nadi Kando*. *Lal Salu*, referring to the red cloth used to cover shrines, is Syed Waliullah's first and most famous novel. Initially published by Comrade Publishers in Calcutta, *Lal Salu* was subsequently published in Dhaka, East Pakistan, and continues to be published in Bangladesh.

Lal Salu narrates the story of Majeed, who finds a neglected shrine and pretends that it is the resting place of a famous Muslim saint. Appointing himself as its guardian, he preys upon the simple villagers. He marries Rahima, a childless widow. After some years of a childless marriage, he takes a second wife, a young girl named Jamila. Unlike the docile Rahima, Jamila has a mind of her own. One day, Majeed decides to punish her and forces her to spend the night alone in the shrine. However, that night there is a violent hailstorm. When Majeed goes to the shrine to see how Jamila is, he finds her unconscious. Alarmed, he takes her to their hut and leaves her with Rahima. He then sets off to check what damage the hailstorm has caused to his crops. On the way, villagers come to him, lamenting their losses. Majeed tells them not to lose faith in God. The Bangla novel ends here, with Majeed and the villagers looking at the fields destroyed by the hail.

In 1963, Anne-Marie Thibaud's French translation of the book, *L'arbre sans racine*, was published. Four years later, an English translation of the novel appeared as *Tree Without Roots*, with the title translated from the French. Four translators were credited: Anne-Marie Thibaud, Qaiser Saeed, Jeffrey Gibian and Malik Khayyam. However, in *Waliullah: My Husband as I Saw Him*, Anne-Marie describes how she had translated the book, as well as *Chander Amabasya*, from Waliullah's own English translation.

Waliullah could not resist correcting or improving what he had written earlier. Even published pieces are marked by corrections or changes. The English translation that he had prepared of *Lal Salu*, so that his wife could translate it into French, was done more than a decade after he had written the novel. Apart from the change in the title, there are several other changes. Perhaps the most striking ones are in the opening and final chapters. The poverty of the land is described in vivid language: "There are too many of them on this land, this piece of raped and ravaged land which yields no more. They know it, but what can they do? Every inch of it is ploughed and sown."

The most significant deviations of *Tree Without Roots* from the Bangla original are the added chapters at the end, which make Majeed a more complex character than in *Lal Salu*. The Damra, a quiet river which was thought to be dying, has flooded, and Majeed realises that the river has become so powerful that, at any moment, it could break its high bank and flood his hut and the shrine. He cannot leave the shrine which he has created, but at least he can save his wives. Accompanied by Rahima and



The cover of *How Does One Cook Beans? and Selected Fiction*, edited by Niaz Zaman and published by University Press Limited (UPL) on 30 October 2026. Waliullah wrote the unfinished work in English under the pseudonym Abu Sharya.

carrying Jamila in his arms, he takes them to his friend Khaleque's house and asks him to look after them. Leaving them there, he returns through the floodwaters to the shrine: "A thin, haggard man, with sunken, utterly expressionless eyes, his sparse beard as pale as the dawn, a frail human speck standing alone on the edge of a vast expanse of water that merged into the infinite vastness of the sky."

Syed Waliullah's second novel, *Chander Amabasya*, opens with the description of a moonlit scene in a bamboo grove. Aref Ali, a young teacher who happens to be there, discovers the half-naked dead body of a young woman. When he emerges from the bamboo grove, he notices a man whom he recognises as Qadir, the younger brother of Dada Sahib, the elderly man who has hired him. Though Aref Ali recognises Qadir, he cannot connect the man to the dead woman.

Later, Qadir asks for Aref Ali's help in burying the woman. Aref Ali thinks that the murder was an accident and that Qadir was in love with the young woman. He believes that Qadir wanted to hide the woman's body because he was in love with her and did not want her half-naked body to be seen by people. However, when Aref Ali realises that Qadir had never loved the woman, he decides that it is his moral duty to tell Dada Sahib, his patron, as well as the police.

He does so. However, the police do not seem to believe his story. He finds himself being accused of the murder. Apart from him, there is no witness, and he is told that he has been seen committing the murder. Aref Ali ponders over the death of the young woman and thinks that someone has to be punished for the crime. Even, perhaps, he himself. As in the later *Kando Nadi Kando*, *Chander Amabasya* also asks the same moral question: How far is a person responsible for an act committed by someone else?

Syed Waliullah's *Kando Nadi Kando*, translated by Osman Jamal as *Cry, River, Cry* (2015), tells two parallel stories: one of a dying river, Barkal, and the other of Muhammad Mustafa, a young magistrate in charge of administering a small town. There are two narrators: Tabarak Bhuiyan and an unnamed narrator, the cousin of Muhammad Mustafa. Bhuiyan was a booking clerk at the steamer station when Mustafa became a magistrate.

One day, the steamer station is dismantled, an acknowledgement that the river is dying. That same night, Sakina Khatun, the daughter of Mokhtar Moslehuddin, hears a strange cry. Sakina says, "The river is crying. The river Barkal is crying." Believing that if they give gifts to the river, it will not die, the townspeople throw whatever they can into the river: a slaughtered calf, pots, pans, clothes, rice, pulses, gold and silver ornaments.

Mustafa is supposed to board the steamer on the day it does not arrive. When Mustafa returns home, he hears that his cousin, Khodija, has committed suicide. As children, Mustafa and Khodija had been pledged to each other by his father. When Khodija learnt that he was getting married to someone else, she drowned herself in the small pond behind the house. Mustafa is tormented by the thought that she committed suicide because of him, and wonders how far human beings are responsible for the actions of others. Finally, one morning, the household awakes to find that Mustafa has hanged himself from a tamarind tree, his eyes looking towards the algae-covered, stagnant pond where Khodija had drowned herself.

In addition to these three novels, Syed Waliullah wrote one English novel, *The Ugly Asian*, under the pseudonym Abu Sharya. The novel was published posthumously in 2013 by the Bangla Academy.



The cover of the first edition of Syed Waliullah's debut novel, *Lal Salu* (1948), designed by Zainul Abedin.

Waliullah had high hopes that this novel, so different from his Bangla novels, would be accepted by a Western publisher. His letter, dated 5 July 1961, to Macmillan Publishers expressed the hope that "a novel about Asian reaction to the problem dealt with in 'The Ugly American' by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick may interest many people in the West." He explained that he was "a Bengali novelist and [enjoyed] some reputation in serious circles." His Bangla novel had also received an award from "the Bengali Academy of East Pakistan." However, he wished to publish the English novel under a pseudonym and therefore wanted the correspondence to remain confidential.

We do not have Macmillan's reply.

A political allegory, *The Ugly Asian* takes place in an imaginary Asian country where there has just been a change of government. However, the new government is as corrupt and hostile to the people as the previous one. Set during the Cold War, the novel explores the relationship between the US and the Asian country, which is attempting to throw off its colonial roots and becomes the setting for America's proxy struggle against Communism.

Though different in language and theme from Waliullah's other novels, *The Ugly Asian*, too, has a lonely hero in Professor Ahsan. Professor Ahsan fails, much as Majeed, Aref Ali and Muhammad Mustafa – the protagonists of his Bangla novels – fail. Unlike them, however, he is a political figure and, through him, Waliullah voices his opinions on American politics and how South Asian countries are affected. Ahsan tells an American named Johnson, who is on a "fact-finding mission", that even a small nation must be left to itself to decide what it wants. "Go and defend your own shores but not mine. I do not want you to defend anything of mine because I know that you are not defending me but yourself. I do not therefore accept you as my defender. If the other side comes to my country to defend itself, I will also ask him to leave my country." If America really wants to help Asians, it must learn what Asians want. In "An Asian Speaks", an afterword to *The Ugly Asian*, there is an imagined dialogue between an Asian peasant and an American who speaks his language fluently. The American tries to convince the Asian that Communism is bad but fails to do so: "The American spoke the man's language. But the man did not understand what the American meant."

As mentioned earlier, Syed Waliullah had also attempted to write a novel in English in 1954. He was at the time posted in East Pakistan, separated from the woman whom he would marry a year later. He was lonely and depressed. In a letter to Anne-Marie, dated 15 October 1954, he told her he was writing "a novel about the life in the villages here but with my individual notes interwoven throughout." In a later letter to her, dated 5 November 1954, he said, "I feel so uncertain about my future. . . . that is why I am putting so much faith and hope in the book I am writing. I have a feeling if it is accepted by an outside publisher, I might take a bold decision."

Almost all of Waliullah's fiction has a sad ending. Perhaps losing his mother when he was very young left a void in Waliullah's life, which is reflected in much of his fiction. As Anne-Marie notes in Waliullah: My Husband as I Saw Him, "This constant shift of places, which means he most likely could not make close school friends, together with the loss of his mother at the age of eight, partly explains his reserved character, his aloofness and some of his rootlessness."

This book was not *The Ugly Asian*, which is not about villages but about American politics in Asia. Did Syed Waliullah ever write this book? If he had written even a few pages, Anne-Marie would have kept them safe, just as she kept all his published and unpublished writings safe – something their daughter Simine is doing now.

One piece of unfinished English writing which Anne-Marie kept safe was a work very different from his other writings. Written in English, like *The Ugly Asian*, and, like it, under the pseudonym Abu Sharya, it is very different in tone, setting and theme from that novel. *How Does One Cook Beans* begins in a South Asian country but then shifts with the narrator to France. It is a humorous piece of writing, reflecting the side of Waliullah that his family and friends saw. Though there is a sort of an ending, it is unfinished. He had started writing it in 1961, but perhaps the demands of life, work and family intervened, and he could not finish it. Instead, he went on to write two other Bangla novels, *Chander Amabasya* and *Kando Nadi Kando* – both set in his homeland.

Niaz Zaman *is a retired academic, writer and translator.*

DHAKA MONDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2026, AGRAHAYAN 1, 1433 BS

SPORT



"I believe that everyone in that side knew what was going on. It (sandpaper) was used in two Tests and there was discussions in the change rooms of how we were going to get the ball to reverse.

Retired Australia pacer **CHADD SAYERS**

'Angry' Jamal questions Bangladesh's gameplan

SPORTS REPORTER

Jamal Bhuiyan on Sunday criticised head coach Thomas Dooley's gameplan against Pakistan following Bangladesh's heartbreaking 1-0 defeat in the SAFF Championship semifinal, which ended their hopes of reaching the final.

"We already knew that Pakistan would play with five defenders. Actually, when a team plays with five defenders, normally we get some solutions, but yesterday [on Saturday] I didn't hear any solution. So, this was a bit disappointing," Jamal told reporters at the team hotel on Sunday when asked whether Pakistan had sprung any tactical surprises.

The former captain was also unhappy with being brought on in stoppage time.

"Everyone in the team was tired, so I thought I would come on earlier. Even then, the three of us together, I mean, we were called at the 86th minute, but... We came on at ninety plus two minutes. So, I talked a lot about this after the match because I was angry. I think that was not up to the mark, but it's life. End of the day we lost and couldn't play in the final," Jamal said.

He was also critical of Dooley's decision to keep key players, including Hamza Choudhury and Shamit Shome, on the pitch for much of the group-stage match against Sri Lanka instead of giving them a rest ahead of the crucial semifinal against Pakistan.

"I agree with this. Because when the last match was two-nil, at that time I think those who are important players, everyone is important, but players like Hamza needed rest. Because after two days, I mean after 48 hours there is a game, there was



another game. So, there were some mistakes there, but not only the players have to learn, the management also has to learn about this. So, but end of the day, it's the coach's decision who will play and who will not play," Jamal said.

He added: "After the match, coach talked to everyone in the dressing room. So, he gave a lot of points, but really what's the use?"

The former captain said he had barely slept since the defeat and spent much of the night with new captain Hamza at the team hotel.

"I am feeling very bad, couldn't sleep all night. I was in Hamza's room until 6:00 am. So, I am feeling very bad because actually we couldn't play like the previous match, the reason for this is maybe lack of tactical," Jamal said.

WHAT TO WATCH

T SPORTS, EUROSPORT
South Africa vs Bangladesh
1st Test, Day 2
Live from 2:00 pm

SONY SPORTS 1, 2, 5
UEFA Nations League
Germany vs Netherlands
Switzerland vs Scotland
Live from 1:45 am (Tuesday)



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(L) Kagiso Rabada wreaked havoc after Bangladesh elected to bat on the opening day of the first Test against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg yesterday, reducing the visitors to 22 for three before striking twice more to leave them reeling at 121 for five. However, a record 206-run partnership between Tawhid Hridoy (137) and Litton Das (92 not out) put Bangladesh in a strong position at stumps, with the score at 327 for six. PHOTO: **AFP/CSA**

Hridoy's discipline ensures dream day

SPORTS REPORTER

Towhid Hridoy hardly put a foot wrong after his two dismissals in the Mirpur Test, and yesterday he demonstrated his growing mental strength by pacing his innings masterfully to score his second Test century. He became only the second Bangladesh batter after Mahmudul Hasan Joy to score a hundred in South Africa.

After a shaky start to his Test career, Hridoy has found his footing, and his latest effort helped Bangladesh enjoy a memorable day at the Wanderers.

It was a brave decision by skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto to bat first on a greenish Wanderers surface. Kagiso Rabada quickly raised questions over that call, reducing Bangladesh to 22 for three in just the ninth over. But Hridoy once again showed that he could grind out an innings under pressure.

With the new ball and challenging surfaces making life difficult for top-order batters, Test cricket increasingly demands a balance between defence and counter-attack. Hridoy and Litton Das followed that template, justifying Shanto's decision to bat first and take the game to the Proteas.

While visiting teams often prefer to bowl first on the grassy Wanderers track, Bangladesh backed their batting.

Hridoy had come under scrutiny following his two dismissals in Mirpur, but his subsequent performances suggested a growing ability to value his wicket and absorb pressure. Scores of 242 not out and 82 in Sylhet reflected his concentration, while the pace and bounce at the Wanderers presented a different challenge. He adjusted by frequently moving across the crease to counter the movement, a method that worked until he fell to Marco Jansen off the final delivery of the day for 137. It was the joint-highest individual score by a Bangladesh batter in South Africa, alongside Joy.

Bangladesh's early collapse had put them under severe pressure. Mahfijul Islam Robin fell for a first-ball duck, while Mominul Haque edged Rabada after hanging his bat outside off. With the visitors reeling at 22 for three, Hridoy held one end together as Tanzid Tamim played more aggressively. Their 99-run partnership helped Bangladesh see off the new ball, but Rabada returned in the second session to strike twice in successive deliveries, including the wicket of Tanzid (67).

The arrival of Litton changed the tempo. He played the older ball with authority, initially helping consolidate before taking the attack to the bowlers. Hridoy, meanwhile, remained patient, negotiated the extra bounce and continued to build his innings.

Talking to broadcasters prior to the start of the game, head coach Phil Simmons highlighted the need for Hridoy to move on from his remarkable 350 not out for Bangladesh A in Potchefstroom and focus on the demands of the Test series.

"Yeah, it was a special innings and he [Hridoy] has to now come down from that. All the other batsmen, they've been working hard the last two days on trying to get the adjustment they need when we come here now. And hopefully, they've, you know, been comfortable enough to play the innings that we need from them," Simmons said.

Hridoy responded with an innings built on discipline, while Litton looked increasingly comfortable playing his shots. Their 206-run stand, Bangladesh's highest partnership against South Africa in Tests, surpassed the previous record of 138 set by Jaker Ali and Mehidy Hasan Miraz for the seventh wicket.

Coming together at 121 for five, the pair carried Bangladesh to 327 for six at stumps, their highest total against South Africa. Litton remained unbeaten on 92, just eight runs short of a century.

"The discipline with which he batted, leaving the ball, gave me more confidence. We wanted to bat long," Litton said at the end of the day's play, summing up a memorable effort from the pair.

Mosaddek hits record double ton in NCL

SPORTS REPORTER

All-rounder Mosaddek Hossain registered the record for the most number of double centuries by a Bangladesh batter in first-class cricket, hammering a 215-ball 220 for Mymensingh against Rajshahi yesterday.

Resuming on 137 at the Sylhet Academy Ground on Day 2 of the National Cricket League's seventh and final round, he notched his fourth first-class double ton.

It was his first double century in a decade following two in 2014-15 and one in 2015-16. He dominated a 218-run eighth-wicket stand with Ariful Jony (an unbeaten 163-ball 53). Following Ariful's Day 1 resistance, Mosaddek took charge, smashing 170 of those partnership runs off just 152 balls. Laced with 22 fours and 10 sixes, his explosive innings propelled Mymensingh to declare at 440 for 9. In response, Rajshahi



reached 178 for 3 at Stumps, anchored by Habibur Rahman, who narrowly missed a ton with a 101-ball 93.

At Khulna Divisional Stadium, Sylhet dominated Barishal. Pacer Abu Jayed Rahi's fifer bowled Barishal out for 228, despite Fazle Rabbi's 79. Overcoming two early wickets, Sylhet reached 239 for 4 -- an 11-run lead -- fueled by a 129-run fourth-wicket stand between Mubin Ahmed Dishan (75) and Amite Hasan, who fell late after his 13th first-class century (101).

At Rajshahi Divisional Stadium, Dhaka resisted title-contenders Chattogram. Ashikur Rahman Shibli hit his fifth first-class ton -- a 190-ball 105 -- before falling in the final hour. Dhaka closed at 282 for 7, trailing by just six runs.

At Sylhet International Stadium, Nurul Hasan Sohan's unbeaten 94 kept table-toppers Khulna afloat. Replying to Rangpur's 338, Khulna reached 276 for 7 at Stumps, with Rangpur's Tasfir Arafat claiming 4 for 65.





Portugal players line up with young mascots during the national anthems, wearing the number seven shirt as a tribute to Cristiano Ronaldo, before their UEFA Nations League match against Denmark at the Estadio Municipal de Braga in Braga on Saturday. (Inset) The players look dejected after Denmark handed Portugal a 4-1 defeat in their first match since Ronaldo's retirement from international football. PHOTO: **REUTERS/AFP**

Chasing success without building the foundation

ANSIUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh's 1-0 defeat to Pakistan in the SAFF Championship semifinal on Saturday has once again exposed the need for a stronger domestic football structure and a proper youth development system. While a regional title remains elusive for more than two decades, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) appears to be chasing short-term success without addressing the foundations needed to achieve it.

Since Kazi Salahuddin took charge of the federation in 2008, the focus has largely remained on the top-tier league and the national team. Facilities for the senior side improved through better training and accommodation, overseas preparations, FIFA friendlies and foreign coaches. However, little was done to build a sustainable youth pipeline or ensure that professional clubs invested seriously in young players. Youth development often remained on paper, with little pressure on clubs to establish effective programmes.

The approach has largely continued under the current executive committee led by Tabith Awal. The inclusion of overseas-based players such as Hamza Choudhury, Shamit Shome, Farhaan Ali Wahid, Zidane Yousuf and Zayyan Ahmed has added depth and generated enthusiasm among football followers, but has yet to translate into regional dominance. Pakistan and Sri Lanka are also recruiting overseas-based players of origin in pursuit of quick success, while India have reached the Asian Cup finals twice in the last three editions and retained their regional supremacy largely with home-grown players.

Bangladesh's three successive SAFF final appearances between 1999 and 2005, including the 2003 title, were built on a generation of



PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

experienced, technically sound footballers developed through a competitive Dhaka Football League. The professional league has failed to produce a comparable pipeline. Players with only five to eight top-flight appearances have received national call-ups, reflecting the shortage of quality options.

There is nothing wrong with bringing in overseas recruits, particularly if they can complement home-grown players. But they need to be integrated into a team capable of understanding and executing a common game plan, with the necessary pace, positional awareness and decision-making. Hamza has often had to instruct teammates about their positioning on the pitch, underlining the gap in tactical awareness. The BFF must therefore give greater priority to youth development, whether through its Elite Academy or club-level programmes, and make regular investment in young players a requirement for professional clubs.

After Saturday's defeat, head coach Thomas Dooley said: "Everything was taking too long, it was too slow. I said we needed to play much faster out of the back like we did last time, but we kept the ball and waited."

He also explained how Pakistan anticipated Bangladesh's passes: "They knew what we wanted to do and where we wanted to play the ball, and they did what I always call forward thinking. They anticipated where the ball was going and started moving before we played it. That's why they intercepted so many passes."

Bangladesh may improve its chances of winning the SAFF title by recruiting more players of Bangladeshi origin. But competing beyond South Asia will require technically sound, tactically aware home-grown footballers. There is no shortcut to building that foundation.







Bangladesh's Tawhid Hridoy raises his bat and helmet after reaching his century against South Africa on the opening day of the first Test at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg yesterday. The right-hander, who scored an unbeaten double century against West Indies in the previous Test at home, was dismissed off the final delivery of the day for 137 as Bangladesh reached 327 for six after electing to bat first.

PHOTO: **AFP**

BNP plans busy December to stay on streets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP will have a series of political and organisational programmes in December, the month of victory, to stay on the streets and prevent any attempts to disrupt peace and order in the country.

Party sources said the leadership had also decided against organising neighbourhood patrols similar to those the AL used to in an attempt to obstruct BNP programmes when it was in power.

However, the party will not organise counter-programmes against the Awami League, whose activities have been banned, or set up neighbourhood patrols to prevent its activities.

The decision was made during a nearly two-hour meeting between BNP Chairman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and senior leaders of the party and its three affiliated organisations at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday.

At the meeting, Tarique instructed the BNP, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, Jubo Dal and Swechchhasebak Dal to draw up separate programmes, according to party sources.

The programmes will also involve BNP-backed professional organisations and are expected to include protest marches, processions, demonstrations, and cultural events.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a BNP leader who attended the meeting said, "Our objective is neither to organise

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Iran strikes US base in Bahrain

Manama intercepts several Iranian drones; Saudi coalition downs missiles over Riyadh

AGENCIES

Blasts rang out over Bahrain early yesterday as Iran's Guards said they attacked a US military base in the Gulf nation, which has been heavily targeted during the Middle East war.

Sirens sounded and authorities posted several alerts on social media urging residents to seek shelter, their first warnings since September. After a lull in attacks Bahrain, which hosts a major US naval base, has been targeted twice in three days.

Bahrain's military said it intercepted several Iranian attacks, "preventing them from reaching their intended targets". The foreign ministry said air defence systems shot down Iranian drones, reports AFP.

Iran's Guards Navy also said two tankers had suffered explosions and were on fire after striking naval mines in the Strait of Hormuz.

Meanwhile, the Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said yesterday it had intercepted two Houthi ballistic missiles launched towards the Saudi capital Riyadh and three drones in the kingdom's oil-rich Eastern Province.

The Houthis, who control most of the populous parts of Yemen, have intensified attacks on the Saudi capital in recent days. A Houthi attack last week damaged an administrative building of the state oil company Saudi Aramco in Riyadh's financial hub.

Yemeni forces fighting for the internationally recognised Saudi-backed government said yesterday that they were withdrawing from an area overlooking the strategic Bab el-Mandeb Strait, leaving the Iran-aligned Houthis in control, reports Reuters.

In a separate development, Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi has dismissed nine officials following an investigation into allegations of oil smuggling in the Jurf al-Sakher area, a stronghold of the pro-Iran Kataeb Hezbollah group.

"In light of the investigation's findings," Zaidi "ordered that all individuals accused of involvement in oil smuggling operations be referred to the judiciary," his military spokesman Sabah al-Numan says, without identifying the suspects.

Iran's Ambassador to India Mohammad Fathali has said Tehran welcomes India's initiatives and diplomatic efforts to help establish peace in the region, IRNA reports.

Yemen forces pull back near Bab el-Mandeb ⋮ Tankers on fire after hitting mines in Hormuz ⋮ Iraq PM sacks officials over Iran-linked oil smuggling

Tarique, Erdoğan talked about defence industry investment: Kobir

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Türkiye held extensive discussions on expanding bilateral cooperation, including defence industry investment, during the recent meeting between Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on the sidelines of the UN climate summit in Antalya.

"The meeting with Erdoğan was extremely cordial. We are moving towards a new level of cooperation and a comprehensive partnership," State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir told a press briefing at the foreign ministry yesterday on the outcomes of the prime minister's visit to Türkiye for COP31.

He said the two leaders also discussed ways to boost trade and investment, strengthen cooperation in the energy and mineral resources sectors, and advance efforts to repatriate Rohingya refugees.

Humaiun noted that Erdoğan held bilateral meetings with only a limited number of heads of government during the summit, which, he said, reflected the importance Türkiye attached to its relationship with Bangladesh.

"It is rare for the host of a multilateral summit to hold bilateral meetings. One

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Nine more RMG units adopt 'no work, no pay'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine more garment factories were shut yesterday following the "no work, no pay" policy, taking the tally of shuttered factories since the labour unrest began in industrial zones to 64.

Earlier on Saturday, the leaders of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at a press briefing announced that they will enforce Section 13(1) of the Bangladesh Labour Act (BLA) from the following day if they cannot run their units for labour agitations.

Declaring factories closed under Section 13(1) of the Labour Act fuels further resentment among workers, said Khairul Mamun Mintoo, legal affairs secretary of the Bangladesh Garments and Sweaters Workers Trade Union Centre.

This provision can provoke further agitation because workers do not receive any wages while factories remain closed under this section.

"The absence of wages could make workers even more aggrieved. We want discussions on wage determination to continue while industrial production also resumes," he added.

The shutdowns come even though the situation has remained relatively calm in the industrial belts around Dhaka.

Of the factories shut yesterday, more than 50 were in the industrial belt of Savar and Ashulia, and the factory owners have shuttered those for various reasons, said Mohammad Mominul Islam Bhuiyan, superintendent of police of Ashulia Industrial Police-1.

"The absence of wages could make workers even more aggrieved. We want discussions on wage determination to continue while industrial production also resumes."

KHAIRUL MAMUN MINTOO, local labour leader

There are around 800 garment factories in Savar, Ashulia and Dhamrai, which fall under Industrial Police-1, and most were operating as usual.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

BRING DATA, DISCIPLINE TO GARMENT WAGE SETTING -- B1

NEWS IN FOCUS

8-year-old's body found in madrasa toilet

Director sent to jail, his 13-year-old brother-in-law to juvenile centre

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Thakurgaon*

A Dinajpur court yesterday sent a madrasa director to jail and his 13-year-old brother-in-law to a juvenile centre in a murder case filed over the death of an eight-year-old student.

The body of Safayet Hossain was recovered from a toilet at Madrasatus Sunnah in Biral upazila on Saturday night.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Asif Uddin passed the order after the two were produced before the court, said Court Inspector Sohel Alam.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

2 killed after being 'pushed off' bus in Rangpur

Driver, helper arrested



OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Lalmonirhat*

Two passengers were killed and another injured after a bus supervisor and helper allegedly pushed them off a moving bus following a fare dispute in Rangpur's Taraganj upazila yesterday.

The deceased were Mukul Mia,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Labourers wait with their tools in Gazipur's Tongi, hoping to be hired for the day. They allege that although they are supposed to earn around Tk 800 a day, they receive at least Tk 200 less after paying commissions to contractors who arrange work for them. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**