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**National Budget for FY 2026-27:
A Focus on Inclusivity and Business-Friendly Initiatives**



Bangladesh

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Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury handed over the Budget of the FY 2026-27 to the Prime Minister Tarique Rahman after approval at the special cabinet meeting on June 11, 2026



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Sectoral distribution of resources in
the National Budget for FY 2026- 27

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Editorial

The presentation of the national budget amounting Tk 9.38 lakh crore by the honorable Finance Minister, Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, on June 11, 2026 before the National Parliament, marked the beginning of Bangladesh's fiscal journey for FY 2026-27. Navigating both domestic and global challenges, the government's sustainable strategies focus on economic stability and comprehensive growth. This journey marks a vital transition towards a truly democratic, humane, and inclusive economy.

Raising healthy, resilient, and well-nurtured children brings peace and happiness to society as a whole. Safeguarding their future demands, constant vigilance against the physical and mental health risks, confronting today's children, a robust preventative measures is a must. In our world, the youth represent our future and our greatest hope.

The theme for World Environment Day 2026 is "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For our Future" alongside the global campaign message # Now For Climate. Environmental distress in any part of the world inevitably impacts the entire planet. The planet does not speak or negotiate, rather it sends strong signals through sea rising, land subsidence, heat waves, melting glaciers. The time has come to boldly address global inequalities and climate crises to pave the way toward a more peaceful world.

The articles compiled in this issue explore these critical themes along with our regular news events. Hope our readers will find these articles both insightful and inspiring.

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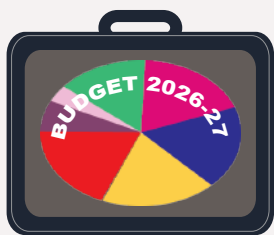


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National Budget for FY 2026-27: A Focus on Inclusivity and Business-Friendly Initiatives

Md. Azgar Ali

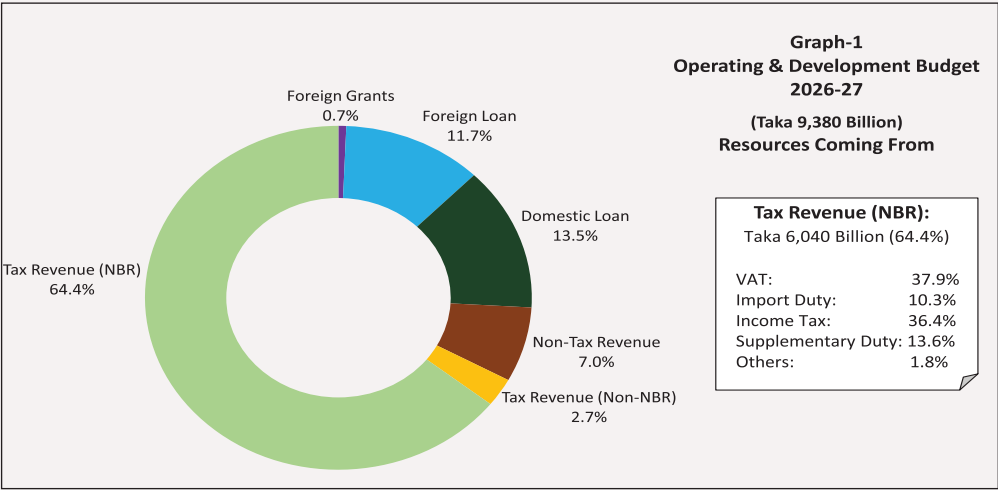
items have been added to the government's income and expenditure sectors. New development expenditure sectors have been added outside the Annual Development Program (ADP). As a result, the development budget has become larger compared to the ADP.

The honorable Finance Minister of Bangladesh Amir Khosro Mahmud Chowdhury has announced the proposed budget of taka 9.38 trillion for the FY 2026-27. First of the government and 55th of the country, this budget is prepared scrutinizing the country's economy in every detail along with a vigilant watch of the global geopolitical context. To strengthen the economic situation of the country the budget has proposed 3R strategy- Recovery and Stabilization, Restoration and Reconstruction for Acceleration.

The first budget of Bangladesh (1972-73) was small in size, amounting to 786 crore taka. And 55 years after, the size of the 55th budget has become much larger and with huge growth. The budget presentation method has also been changed a lot along with the method of publishing budget statistics. New



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman gives approval to the proposed budget of the FY 2026-27 after a special cabinet meeting on June 11, 2026



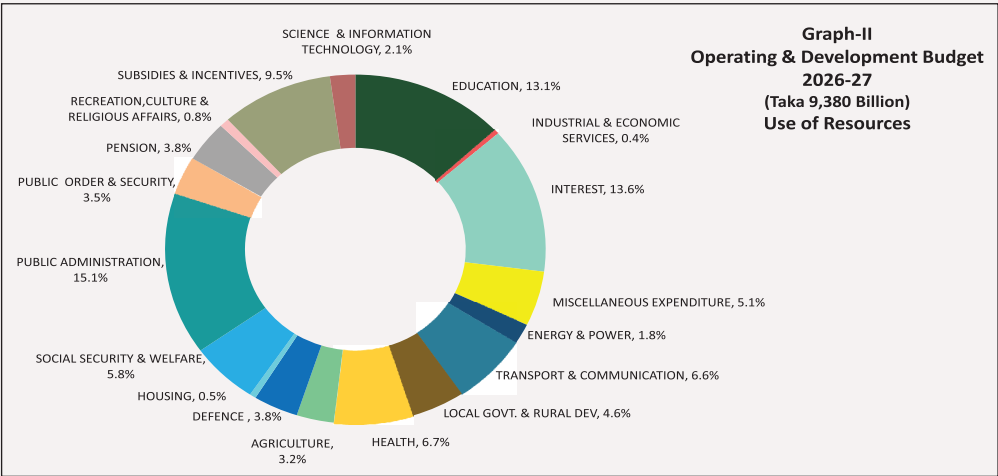
Financing sources of FY 2026-27 budget

Proposed Revenue Income in the Budget

Considering the revenue activities, a total revenue income of Tk 6,95,000 crore has been estimated for the next fiscal year 2026-27, which is 10.2 percent of the GDP. Out of this, it has been proposed to collect Tk 6,04,000 crore through the National Board of Revenue and Tk 91,000 crore from other sources.

Proposed Expenditure in the Budget

A total expenditure of Tk 9,38,000 crore has been estimated for the coming fiscal year 2026-27, which is 13.7 percent of GDP and Tk 1,48,000 crore more than the budget of the previous fiscal year. The annual development program has proposed



Sector-wise resource distribution of the FY 2026-27 budget

an allocation of Tk 3,16,075 crore for development expenditure, including Tk 3,00,000 crore for the Annual Development Programme (ADP), and 6,21,925 crore for operating and other expenditures. And, the total expenditure includes Tk 1 lakh 5 thousand crore for interest payments on domestic debt and Tk 22 thousand 5 hundred crore for interest payments on foreign debt.

Overall expenditure structure in the Budget

In the proposed budget, a total allocation of Tk 2,79,001 crore has been proposed for the social infrastructure sector, which is 29.74 percent of the total allocation. Tk 1,74,988 crore has been proposed for the physical infrastructure sector, which is 18.66 percent of the total budget. Tk 2,45,117 crore has been proposed for the general services sector, which is 26.13 percent of the total allocation.

How will the budget deficit and financing be met?

The significant depreciation of the taka against foreign currencies in the past few years has increased the cost of servicing both the principal and interest on external debt. As a result, the proposed budget for the fiscal year 2026-2027 will have a deficit of Tk 2,43,000 crore, which is equivalent to 3.6 percent of GDP. Of the total deficit in the proposed budget, Tk 1,27,000 crore has been proposed to be financed from domestic sources and Tk 1,16,000 crore from external sources. Of the internal debt, Tk 112,000 crore will be collected from the banking system.

Target to bring down growth and inflation

The government has set a target of bringing down economic growth to 6.5 percent and inflation to 7.5 percent in the next fiscal year. The budget proposal states that one of the main goals of the government is to restore the comfort and purchasing power of the common people by establishing sustainable discipline in the economy.

Sectorial Priority- driven Action Plan and Resource Mobilization

With the determination to lead the country's economy on the path of development and prosperity, the budget framework for the 2026-2027 fiscal year has been formulated keeping in mind 10 main priorities. The budget adopts a priority-based action plan. Moreover, the global and domestic economic context has been given special consideration. The domestic economic situation- particularly high inflation, slow economic growth and a downward trend in exports- as well as the ambition to improve the business environment through good governance and deregulation have been taken into account. The budget also takes into account energy security concerns arising from political instability in the Middle East. Overall, resource allocation has also prioritized in education and human resource development, healthcare, skill-based employment, creative economy, social protection, agriculture and food security, women's empowerment, energy security, infrastructure development, local government and rural development, information and communication technology, and climate change. By giving education sector as the highest priority and considering this sector as a single sector, it has been proposed to increase the allocation for the education sector to 2 percent of GDP in the fiscal year 2026-2027 for the first time, with a total allocation of Tk 1,36,606 crore. While in the fiscal year 2025-26, the allocation for the education sector was Tk 87,206 crore, which is equivalent to 1.39 percent of GDP. Considering the

sector-wise allocation in the budget for human resource development under social infrastructure, a budget of Tk 57,301 crore has been proposed for the Secondary and Higher Education Division in the fiscal year 2026-27. This was Tk 47,563 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. In addition, Tk 46,738 crore has been proposed for the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, which was Tk 35,403 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. The Health Services Division has been proposed to receive Tk 49,387 crore in the budget for the fiscal year 2026-27, which is the second highest allocation by sector. This was Tk 31,022 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. Under Food and Social Security, the budget for fiscal year 2026-27 proposes an allocation of Tk 8,939 crore for the Ministry of Food, which was Tk 8,322 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. On the other hand, the allocation for the Ministry of Disaster Management is Tk 10,350 crore in the FY 2026-27 which was Tk 10,362 crore in fiscal year 2025-26. Under the physical infrastructure Development, an allocation of Tk 40,246 crore has been proposed for the Local Government Division in the fiscal year 2026-27 budget, which is the fifth highest in the sector-wise allocation, and it was Tk 42,433 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. In addition, an allocation of Tk 28,881 crore has been proposed for the Ministry of Agriculture in the fiscal year 2026-27 which was Tk 27,224 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. And an allocation of Tk 10,533 crore for the Ministry of Water Resources in the fiscal year 2026-27. On the other hand, under the Communication Infrastructure, an allocation of Tk 36,918 crore has been proposed for the Road, transport & Highways Division in the FY 2026-27 budget, which is the 6th highest in the sector-wise allocation and it was Tk 38,496 crore in FY 2025-26. In addition, an allocation of Tk 9,940 crore has been proposed for the Railways Ministry in FY 2026-27, which was Tk 11,944 crore in FY 2025-26. And besides, an allocation of Tk 2,908 crore for the Bridges



Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury is presenting the National budget of the FY 2026-27 at the Parliament on June 11, 2026

Division in FY 2026-27. In the budget for the fiscal year 2026-27, an allocation of Tk 42,497 crore has been proposed for the Ministry of Defense, which is the 4th highest in the sector-wise allocation, which was Tk 40,851 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. In addition, an allocation of Tk 31,099 crore has been proposed for the Ministry of Home Affairs in the fiscal year 2026-27, which is the 7th highest in the sector-wise allocation and it was Tk 27,001 crore in the fiscal year 2025-26. The Ministry of Social Welfare is ranked 8th in terms of sector-wise allocation in the budget. A budget of Tk 30,443 crore has been proposed for this ministry in 2026-27, which was Tk 13,991 crore in the 2025-26 fiscal year. In terms of budget allocation, the Ministry of Agriculture is ranked 9th and it has been proposed to keep Tk 28,881 crore for this Ministry in the 2026-27 fiscal year. In the allocation sequence, the Technical and Madrasa Education Division is ranked 10th, and an allocation of Tk 18,457 crore has been proposed in the budget for this division for the 2026-27 financial year, which was Tk 12,678 crore in the 2025-26 financial year. The Ministry of Science and Technology is ranked 11th in the allocation and the allocation is Tk 18,115 crore. On the other hand, the Power Division is ranked 12th in the allocation and Tk 14,996 crore has been proposed for this department in the budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

What's new in the budget for the financial year 2026-27?

The new services added in this year's budget are roughly as follows: Although every budget introduces some innovations, this year's budget includes some surprising things that were beyond the imagination of those included in last year's budget. Free education for girls extended up to graduation, Foreign investors will get visas within 10 days, Free travelling on government owned public transport and 25% discount on metro rail tickets for those over 65 years of age, withdrawal of 300 taka tax on mobile SIMs, completely free income tax on the income of social media content creators. Duty exemption on import of eco-friendly electric vehicles, Tab for primary teachers, Tax-free income limit increased to 4 lakh taka, and returns can be filed throughout the year.

Prices of everyday items that may decrease in the budget

In the budget for the fiscal year 2026-2027, the prices of 60 essential commodities (such as paddy, rice, wheat, potatoes, onions, garlic, ginger, salt, sugar, edible oil, etc.) will be reduced as govt. decides to withhold tax on them. Prices will be decreased for pesticides, herbicides (36 raw materials for production), veterinary medicine, laptops, desktops and computer equipment (servers, printers, monitors), Electric Vehicles (EVs), chargers and equipment, gold jewelry, pharmaceutical raw materials (The price of a heart ring or stent can be reduced by up to 20,000 taka and the price of each intraocular lens for the eye can be reduced by up to 5,000 taka). In addition, there is a proposal to make concessions on nine new types of raw materials used in the manufacture of cancer drugs zero, kidney dialysis services (Dialysis Filters)(It has been proposed to completely withdraw the existing 15 percent value added tax and 5 percent Advance Income Tax (AIT) on the import of dialysis filters, which are important for kidney patients). AIT will be reduced from 2% to 1% on 15 imported products for persons with special physical needs, price will be reduced for imported baby food, locally made mobile phones,

various spices including cumin, cinnamon, imported dates, musical instruments (guitar, piano, etc.), cinematographic cameras and projectors, etc.

The prices of the following products will increase in the budget

The proposed changes in the customs and tax structure in the 2026-27 budget are likely to lead to an increase in the prices of cigarettes and tobacco products, 1200 to 1600 cc luxury vehicles, imported cashew nuts, cosmetics, electronic products, and construction materials (such as rods). Goods and services with price hikes at a glance: fish fillets, honey, coffee, and processed imported foods. In addition, VAT has been proposed on domestic alcohol. There is a possibility of an increase in the prices of imported washing machines, LPG gas cylinders, tiles, sanitary ware, toys etc. Construction and electrical equipment: VAT has been increased at the production stage of rods and import duty on transformers and electrical components.

Tax structure for individual taxpayers

In the budget for the fiscal year 2026-27, the tax-free income limit has been determined to be increased from the existing 3,50,000 taka to 400,000 taka and will gradually be increased in subsequent years. However, for the next fiscal year and the following fiscal year, the annual tax-free income limit for female taxpayers and citizens over 65 years of age has been set at 4 lakh 50 thousand taka. For third gender and taxpayer with disability, the tax-free income limit will be up to 5 lakh 25 thousand taka in the next two fiscal years. On the other hand, the limit of tax-free income of gazetted war-wounded freedom fighters and gazetted July Warrior is up to 5 lakh 50 thousand taka.

The way ahead

Despite the multifaceted challenges and crises in the country's economy, Bangladesh will reach its desired goals and objectives only through the continuous steps taken by the current government to implement the 31-point election pledge, strong steps for economic reforms, bold initiatives and national united efforts. In Bangladesh, where there is immense potential, the doors of opportunity will remain open for everyone. Through the implementation of the first annual national budget of Tk 938,000 crore by the government, the benefits of economic progress will reach the doorsteps of every citizen. The fallen fascist government has left the country on the brink of bankruptcy through unlimited looting and money laundering in the country's banking sector and financial sector. However, the country's economy is facing difficult challenges for good reason. Prime Minister Mr. Tarique Rahman has taken a far-reaching plan and action plan to do everything possible to take the economy to its potential by facing those challenges. I hope the nation will see its reflection in the budget implementation for the fiscal year 2026-27.

Conclusion

Finally, we hope, the budget will meet the aspirations of the people and create a vision of a prosperous future for Bangladesh.

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A Ferris Wheel in a Fair and the Fleeting Memories

Moushumi Mannan



*Let all the voice rings with triumph!
Behold the flag of a new age soars
Amidst the fierce storm winds.
Let all the voice rings with triumph!
Let all the voice rings with triumph!'*

– Kazi Nazrul Islam

I was murmuring this famous poem of Nazrul in my mind on that day while returning to reality after having an amazing holiday of Pahela Boishakh with family. As my vehicle steadily moves forward, my heart grew heavier with each passing mile with the fading far behind me, I found myself journeying away from the piece of my heart, my son. Suddenly I found me in the centre of the battleground of emotions tinged with nostalgia, weighed down by countless traces of sadness and haunted by thoughts of the regular routine that weaving at for the next day. To take a break from the suffocation I lean against the window of the vehicle and gazed at the sky. What a breathtaking sight it was! White clouds drifted lazily across the vast blue canvas above. A storm had swept through the night before. A fierce kalboishakhi, accompanied by torrential rain. Nature seemed to be serene, refreshed and yet radiant passing each mile. The bushes and trees of the roadside looked freshly washed almost like a bride graceful and serene in her newfound purity. This is the essence of Boishakh, the Bengali New Year. Bengalis all over the world celebrates the first day of Boishakh as it is thought to be washed away all the remnants of the old, the dust of exhaustion and time, replaces with the promise of rejuvenation.



People enjoying the program arranged by Chyanaut at Ramna Batamul at the dawn of Pahela Boishakh

As I crossed the Padma Bridge, the sun started to bow on the western horizon. While moving a little further towards the countryside a sudden burst of brightness and noise greeted me. I discovered a huge gathering: seems like overflowed with vibrant colours, echoes and buzzing sounds. It was a Boishakhi fair! During Boishakh, it's the customary to arrange the fair in every nook and corner of the country especially in the countryside. I really don't know why I felt like captivated suddenly and asked my driver to stop for a while. I got down, started to roam around, my mind was really full seeing the cheerful crowds. A gentle happiness washed over me seeing children hand in hand with their parents enjoying colourful stalls, foods and sweetmeats. I visited some of the stalls and found a treasure trove after



Ferries wheel (locally known as Nagordola) is a common ride of Boishakhi fair



Traditional Bengali Boishakhi fair

so many years; it was a tiny drum truck which usually creates drum sound while it was dragging by rope. At one corner installed the Ferries wheel, stood as the crown jewel of the fair which drew the biggest crowd. In reality the Boishakhi mela and the ferries wheel are eternally entwined in our country. Ah, that ferries wheel! The real wonder to me when I was kid! In a fleeting moment, I could see myself drifting back into my childhood roaming around in a Boishakhi fair holding hand



Children enjoying the vibes of Pohela Boishakh

of my father, sometimes my maternal uncle with enthusiasm and excitement! Memories from the songs of innocence, long buried under the layers of responsibilities, files, deadlines and meetings suddenly started to coming back to life. Riding on ferries wheel flashes on my mind as if it was yesterday. I could feel the thrill of rising above and low like a free flying bird. I mean I actually started to feel and depict those days.

Back then life was so simple, free from the agony and happiness was just clinging on to even in the smallest experiences. Now I wonder life is actually a whirlpool of motion-it's ring changes, it's form shifts yet it's never unlovely to see from a bird's eye

view. In Shalil Chowdhury's words, "The restless spinning force, where in every rhythm, colours change again and again!" So in reality it evolved too from time immemorial. Invented by Ferris Jr. in 1893 for Chicago World's Fair, the Ferris wheel instantly became one of the world's most attractive amusements. I really don't know how far it has travelled from the distant western land to evade Bengali culture but the Ferris wheel has become an integral part of the Bengalis Boishakhi Fair. Just like our time and life, even this pure source of joy has been touched by the winds of change over the course of time.



Traditional Bengali Boishakhi fair

Then again much like our lives. The Ferris ride is quite evidently touched and transformed by the technology. It was once crafted carefully from wood with emotion and love; now stand in steel and iron. Once it used to sway with



Traditional Bengali sweetmeats Batasha, Khaja, Goja



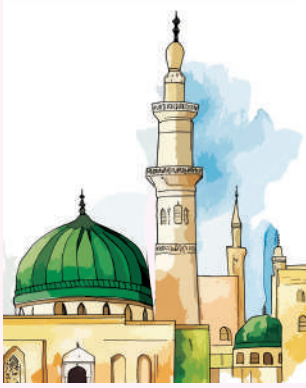
At the Boishakhi fair, products made of bamboo, cane, palm tree are displayed for sale

rhythm and now it is driven by sheer speed with different variations much like the reflection of the rhythm of our modern lives.

As I stood there, amidst the middle of an unknown countryside Boishakhi Fair watching the ferries wheel turn slowly against the evening sky illuminated hundreds of tiny red, green and yellow lights, I once again realized, “The only constant in life is change”. The child who once looked at the ferries wheel in awe, who once was the happiest having some colourful balloons and raja-goza-khoi (local traditional sweetmeats) now matching the balance sheet of professional and personal life. Yet the ferries wheel with a slight change stands still and continuing to spin even in more motion spreading deeper message. Life too, moves in circles. Moving forward doesn’t always mean leaving behind but to move with all the memories to cherish forever. Sometimes taking a pause is deliberately needed to retain certain sights, sounds and experiences to sooth our soul and to awaken the child within us since responsibilities shape our lives and memories enrich them.

The sun was already set and I had to move on. Buying a *nakshi tal patar pakha* (Hand fan made of palm leaves with hand embroidered in it) I settled into the car and resumed my unfinished journey to end. As I move forward, the fair swiftly disappeared from my view but ferries wheel became smaller and smaller until it blended into the horizon. To me, the ferries wheel is nothing but nostalgia itself! So it by turns carries generation after generation, proving that some joys never grow old. I was missing my son earnestly. I wish I could take him there! I wish I could preserve more in our memory box! Maybe somewhere next!

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From Traditional Celebration to Instagram Reels: The New Expression of Eid Fashion

Jarin Tasnim Tuba



Ahead of Eid, generally tailor shops become crowded with customers

The air in Dhaka subtly changes just after the Eid announcement hits the news. A festive atmosphere spreads across the city. For Eid-ul-Adha, the anticipation starts with crowded cattle markets, in the smell of fresh mehendi (henna), in children naming the sacrificial cows with adorable names, in streets glowing with cheap fairy lights and in mothers preparing spice mixes ahead of the big day.

Over the decades, the true meaning of Eid in Bangladesh hasn't changed much. It is still rooted in family bonding, sharing food and through expressing spiritual gratitude. However, the way we express this joy, specifically through what we wear, has changed completely. We had to rely entirely on local tailors before. But at present, it has grown into a massive industry driven phenomena with ready-to-wear boutiques. This has happened because of global trends and high definition digital storytelling on social media. The evolution of Eid fashion also tells us a story about the economic rise of the Bangladeshi people and about our shifting identity.

The Tailor Shop Era and Our Handloom Heritage

We have to look back at the late twentieth century to understand how far our style has evolved. This was an era entirely ruled by the local master saheb, the neighborhood tailor and the classic beauty of local handlooms. Back then, preparing for Eid actually started months in advance. Families would head to crowded fabric hubs like Islampur or Gulistan to buy unstitched fabric.



Rajshahi Silk Sharee

The ultimate decision maker of one's Eid look was a stressed tailor actually. His shop became the center of the neighborhood as the festival neared. A good Eid depended heavily on whether he delivered the clothes on time or not and whether the fit was right or not.

Style in those days was defined by a clean, simple and elegant look. For women, the classic choice was always a beautifully woven saree. Tangail tant, Dhakai Jamdani and Rajshahi silk were in prized possessions that represented regional pride and deep artisan heritage. They still are, some trends are timeless. For younger girls, the shalwar kameez featured modest cuts with subtle kantha stitch

embroidery or simple lace borders. Fashion used to be deeply personal and private back then.

The Panjabi Renaissance

No matter how comfortable a t-shirt and jeans combo might feel or how sharp a western suit might look, a Bangladeshi man will always choose a panjabi on Eid. It is our cultural legacy and that one piece of clothing which defines the festive wardrobe.



Traditional Jamdani Sharee

A classic white panjabi

Historically, the panjabi grew out of a regional adaptation of the traditional South-Asian kurta, slowly changing to fit the hot-humid weather of Bengal. Decades ago, men in this region wore simple white fabrics or traditional wraps. By the middle of the twentieth century, wearing a crisp panjabi on Eid became a true symbol of Bengali identity.

The classic panjabi is very practical according to our geographical position and culture. It is made from clean rectangular fabric pieces with small triangular inserts called gussets stitched into the side seams to give the outfit its shape. The straight sleeves fall easily to the wrist without any western cuffs and the side seams are left open about a foot above the bottom hem so men can move freely during work or the morning Eid prayer in.



In Bangladesh, men usually wear Panjabi on Eid



*The use of various motifs (like birds, leaves) in Panjabis has brought a new dimension to fashion
Courtesy: Zurhem, Luxe Atelier*

The old variants used to have no collars and featured just a simple slit at the front. But the modern look is completely different. The loose fit used to drop well below the knee in earlier days. Now it has been replaced by a sharp, tailored silhouette that sits right at or just above the knee. High stand up Mandarin collars are now the standard look.

This massive shift is the work of a new generation of designers and brands like Samuel H, Mehruz Munir at Zurhem, Alif Iqra Imam at Luxe Atelier and Faisal Robin at Nayro. They were willing to take risks and succeeded to turn the basic panjabi, a predictable garment into a major style statement.

In earlier days, clean white or off white was the only choice for men, with a tiny bit of embroidery on the collar. Today the modern wardrobe is full of variety. Fine cottons, a huge variety of local hand woven khadi and jute cotton offer great breathability for the Dhaka heat at present. Minimalists can choose subtle chikan embroidery where matching thread on light fabric creates an elegant look. Luxury houses use multi thread patterns and detailed handwork.

Even with a basic white panjabi, there are many ways to change up the look for Eid day. For instance, one can wear it over slim fit jeans or clean tapered pants for a relaxed look. One can also add a lightweight or patterned scarf around the neck for a high fashion look. For a classic Bengali look, one can pair it with a classic off white dhoti and leather sandals. And the elegant, timeless style is combining panjabi with a matching loose shalwar and traditional leather Kolapuri sandals.

Using the right accessories makes all the difference actually. Swapping out standard plastic buttons for colorful studs, sterling silver or even diamond pieces can instantly transform a simple morning prayer outfit into an evening party outfit.

The Rise of Ready-to-Wear Outfits

By the early 2000s, a growing urban middle class changed the way women used to shop. The long wait at the tailor shop slowly lost ground to the ease of ready to wear boutiques. Homegrown brands like Aarong, Kay Kraft and Anjan's changed everything by taking traditional skills like block printing, screen printing, tie dye and putting them into contemporary, pre-stitched outfits. Aarong transformed shopping into a massive cultural event, proving one could support rural artisans while looking incredibly chic.

Eid-ul-Adha brings a completely different energy to fashion compared to Eid-ul-Fitr. Eid-ul-Fitr comes after a long month of shopping and is all about wearing one's best clothes for leisure. Eid ul Adha on the other hand demands a real balance between looking good and being practical. Because the Eid morning is dedicated to the sacrificial ritual, the early hours require useful, durable and breathable clothing. Men wear light cotton or linen panjabis that handle the heat and work well, while women choose light, simple shalwar-kameezes or kurtis that make it easy to move around while organizing family meals.

Once the heavy work of the day finishes and evening arrives, the fashion changes completely. Women switch to georgette, chiffon, organza and heavy silk outfits.

They pair it with gorgeous, heavy dupattas that alleviate the whole look. Men change from light morning cottons to premium fabric panjabis. Or they add structured waistcoats and vests to give their evening look a bit of glamour for the family dinners.

The Digital Era

Our fashion world is shaped entirely by the digital space today. The physical rush of shopping at Jamuna Future Park or Bashundhara Shopping Complex now lives side by side with a massive online marketplace. The rise of Facebook pages and independent Instagram boutiques has given everyone access to unique designs, allowing one to buy limited edition collections right from the e-shop without facing Dhaka traffic.



Aarong Eid-ul-Adha 2026 Kids wear

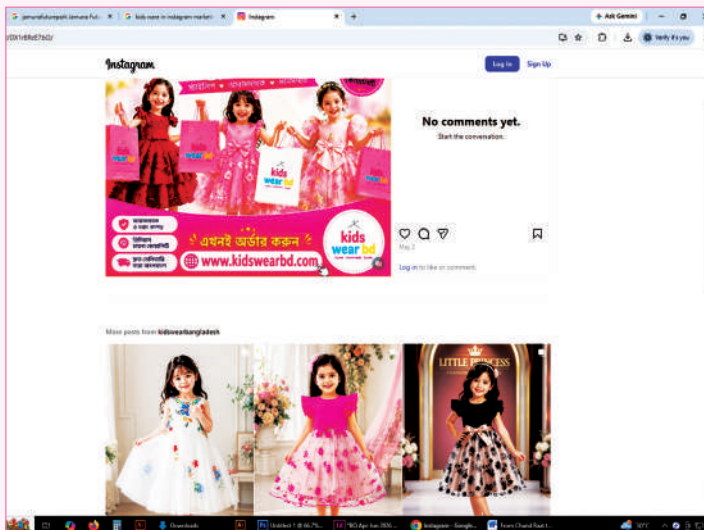


New footwears at the occassion of Eid



Basundhara Shopping Complex crowded with customers ahead of Eid

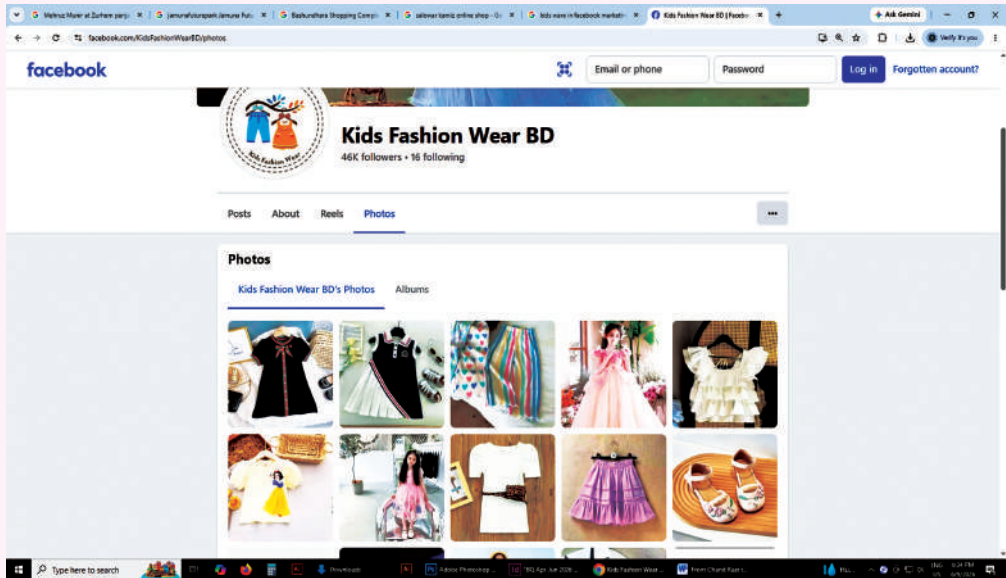
The actual change lies in not what we wear, but how we portray it to the world to be honest. In the past, our Eid outfit was only seen by our family and a few neighbors. But now, our clothes are styled, alleviated, filmed and shared with thousands of people through online. Instagram and TikTok have played a great role here.



Now-a-days online marketplace is becoming popular side by side traditional marketplace

The GRWM (Get Ready With Me) pandemic takes over social media weeks before Eid arrives. Influencers share fabric hauls, styling tips and shoe guides. On the day of Eid, short videos show transitions from casual morning clothes to full festive glamour, set to trending music tracks.

We now choose clothes based on how they look on



Online shopping is becoming popular as its hassle free

screen. We tend to judge through appearance more now. The way a fabric moves on camera, how the colors look against a concrete city background and how the details catch the golden hour sunlight matter more to our generation than the quality. Friends and families also make fun reels together to capture the movement of a dupatta, the sound of glass bangles and the clean look of a panjabi. As social media trends move pretty fast, the idea of having just one Eid outfit has completely disappeared replacing a multi-look plan for every phase of the day.

It is easy to think that the shift from quiet family nights to fast paced digital videos has made Eid feel purely commercial or fake. However, if we observe closely, the real heart of the tradition has not changed that much at all. No matter how much we post online or make grwm videos, the true values of community, family closeness and cultural identity still remain intact.

The evolution of Eid fashion in Bangladesh beautifully portrays how we honor our past while stepping into the future. We still love the feel of a real hand woven Jamdani, we still wait for the scent of fresh mehendi and we still feel proud wearing a beautiful classic white panjabi. We just share that pride with a much larger world now. Our country continues to celebrate with genuine elegance, warmth and a creative spirit that keeps evolving - from the old tailor shops of Dhaka to today's social media feeds.

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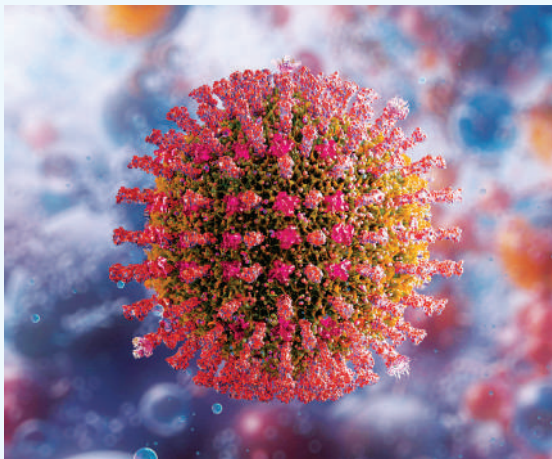
Towards a Measles-Free Future

Dr. Mohammad Hasan Jafri

Little Nurul was a five-year-old boy from a rural village. Like most children of his age, he spent his days running around and playing happily. One day, he suddenly developed a fever. At first, his family thought it was just a common cold or seasonal flu. But within two days, his eyes became red, his cough worsened, and red rashes began to spread across his body.

Some villagers said, “It’s measles. There’s nothing to worry about. Medicines may even make it worse.” Others advised keeping the child in a dark room. As a result, Nurul was not taken to a doctor at the early stages of his illness. Few days later, when his condition became critical, he had to get admitted to a hospital. The doctors explained that the complications had worsened because he had neither received timely treatment nor proper vaccination. Nurul’s story is not unique to

one family. Even today, many children in our society remain vulnerable to measles because of lack of awareness, superstition, and misconceptions regarding vaccination.



Measles Virus

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease, caused by the Measles virus. Although primarily it affects children, people of any age can get infected. The virus spreads rapidly through coughing and sneezing, making transmission extremely easy in crowded communities. The common symptoms of measles



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman inaugurates the measles-rubella campaign at Bogura on April 20, 2026

include high fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, and reddish skin rashes that usually appear few days after the onset of fever.

Many people still consider measles a simple childhood illness that resolves on its own within few days. While this may sometimes be true, measles can also lead to severe and life-threatening complications. One of the major dangers of measles is that it weakens the body's immune system. As a result, affected children become more vulnerable to pneumonia, diarrhoea, malnutrition, eye damage, and even inflammation of the brain. Children, suffering from malnutrition or those with weakened immunity, are particularly at risk, and in some cases, the disease can be fatal. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), thousands of children around the world still die from measles every year, despite the fact that it is entirely preventable.

In recent years, outbreaks of measles have once again been increasing in different parts of the world. Bangladesh has also experienced periodic outbreaks in various regions. One of the main reasons behind this resurgence is the decline in vaccination coverage and the lack of public awareness. Some people still believe that vaccines are unnecessary or more harmful than the disease itself. Misinformation spread through social media often adds to public confusion, causing some families to avoid vaccinating their children. However, one infected individual can easily spread the disease to many others. Therefore, the negligence of a single family may put an entire community at risk.



As measles outbreaks, campaign has been launched to make people aware

Experts believe that to prevent the spread of measles, the majority of children must be brought under vaccination coverage. Unfortunately, the measles situation in Bangladesh is becoming increasingly alarming. According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), by May 20 of this year, the number of deaths related

to measles and measles-like symptoms in Bangladesh had reached 488. Among them, 83 children died from confirmed measles infections, while another 405 died with symptoms suggestive of measles. During the same period, Sudan recorded the second-highest number of deaths, with 371 fatalities, even though Sudan had reported a higher number of infections earlier in the year.

According to WHO reports, new measles outbreaks have also been reported in countries such as India, Pakistan, Yemen, Mexico, Angola, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Sudan, and Cameroon in 2026. Even developed nations like the United States and Canada have witnessed the re-emergence of measles. However, Bangladesh has drawn particular concern because of its comparatively high mortality rate. A recent WHO report titled “Measles and Rubella Global Situation Update” revealed that although Bangladesh ranked lower in total infections compared to many countries, the mortality rate remained alarmingly high. According to health authorities, measles infections have spread across 58 out of the country’s 64 districts, with children under the age of five being the most affected group.

Public health experts believe several factors are contributing to the high death rate in Bangladesh. These include gaps in routine immunization, the long interruption of MR (Measles-Rubella) vaccination campaigns, widespread childhood malnutrition, delayed hospitalization of severe cases, and limited access to healthcare among poor communities. Infectious disease specialists warn that despite a relatively lower number of cases compared to some countries, Bangladesh has become a global concern because of the severity of complications and the high mortality rate associated with measles.

The most effective and safest way to prevent measles is vaccination. Under Bangladesh’s Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), children are provided with free measles and rubella vaccines. Receiving these vaccines at the recommended age helps the body develop immunity and significantly reduces the risk of infection. Vaccination is not only important for protecting individual children but also essential for safeguarding the entire community through herd immunity. When most people in a community are vaccinated, the virus cannot

Serial No.	Criteria	Number of Individuals
1.	Suspected Measles Cases	85,951
2.	Suspected Measles Cases admitted	70,579
3.	Confirmed Measles Cases	10,323
4.	Deaths from Suspected Measles Cases	560
5.	Deaths from Confirmed Measles Cases	92
6.	Released Measles Patients	66,841

Measles situation in Bangladesh (from 15-03-2026 to 14-06-2026). Source: DGHS

spread easily. Therefore, every parent has the responsibility to follow the vaccination schedule and preserve their child's vaccination card. If any scheduled dose is missed, parents should contact the nearest health center immediately.

Creating public awareness about measles is now more important than ever. Families, educational institutions, media organizations, and social groups must work together to address this issue. If a child develops fever and rashes, parents should seek medical advice promptly instead of neglecting the symptoms. Infected children should be kept isolated for a few days to prevent the disease from spreading to others. At the same time, proper nutrition, adequate hydration, and hygiene must be ensured.

Unfortunately, many harmful myths and superstitions about measles still exist in society. Some people believe that children with measles should not bath, should not take medicine, or should not be brought to a doctor. These beliefs are entirely false and dangerous. Modern medical science has clearly proven that timely treatment and proper care can greatly reduce complications. Therefore, people should rely on professional medical advice rather than rumors or traditional misconceptions.

The Government of Bangladesh has taken several important initiatives to eliminate measles. Alongside routine immunization programs, special vaccination campaigns are conducted to ensure that children in remote areas are also vaccinated. Health workers are visiting communities to raise awareness, while campaigns are being carried out in schools and local communities. Television, radio, and social media are also being used to promote the importance of vaccination. In addition to government efforts, various international organizations are supporting Bangladesh in its goal of building a measles-free future. However, government initiatives alone are not enough; active public participation is equally necessary.

In conclusion, measles is a dangerous yet preventable disease. Through awareness, timely treatment, and complete vaccination coverage, countless children's lives can be saved. We must reject superstition and misinformation, embrace scientific knowledge, and encourage others to do the same. A single vaccine can save a child's life, and a single aware family can help build a healthier and safer society.

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Invisible Frontlines of Environmental Collapse: Weaponizing Inequality in Bangladesh

Nadia Fairuz

power often bear the greatest environmental risks, despite contributing the least to environmental degradation. This pattern is evident throughout Bangladesh, where climate change, pollution, and resource depletion intersect with poverty and social marginalization. Rising sea levels threaten coastal communities, arsenic contamination jeopardizes the health of millions through unsafe drinking water, salinity intrusion undermines agricultural productivity and freshwater availability, and severe air pollution continues to erode public health. Collectively, these environmental challenges affect millions of Bangladeshis, yet their burdens are distributed far from equality.

The architecture of vulnerability: How Systems of Inequality Shape Environmental Risk in Bangladesh

Nearly 40 percent of Bangladesh's poorest population relies on climate-sensitive livelihoods including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, aquaculture, livestock

A recent joint study by the Geological Survey of Bangladesh and Germany's Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources reveals that the ground beneath parts of the southern city of Barisal is slowly sinking. Driven by excessive groundwater extraction and rapid, unplanned urbanization, sections of the city have experienced alarming rates of land subsidence. Between 2014 and 2020, Barisal recorded an average annual subsidence rate of 1.66 millimeters, while some areas sank by more than 24 millimeters in a single year. Yet the significance of Barisal's experience extends far beyond a local urban issue. It highlights a fundamental reality of environmental collapse in Bangladesh: environmental disasters are rarely "natural" in their impacts. Rather, their consequences are shaped by political decisions, economic priorities, and deeply unequal access to resources.

What appears to be a localized environmental problem is in fact a warning sign of a broader ecological crisis, which is unfolding across the country. Those with the least economic and social



Man and woman work to repair damaged embankments after Cyclone Yaas struck Bangladesh in May 2021

production, salt cultivation, informal waste management, riverine transport, coastal resource extraction. Environmental degradation and climate-related shocks disproportionately threaten the income security, food access, and social well-being of these already marginalized communities. Marginalized communities often remain dependent on these livelihoods not because of preference, but because of limited economic opportunities, unequal access to education, land ownership disparities, and inadequate social protection systems. This condition of forced dependency, where individuals and communities become economically tied to sectors are highly vulnerable to environmental degradation. They cannot pivot to other sectors and relocate to safer areas or absorb wage losses. One environmental shock cascades into immediate survival insecurity and debt.

According to the World Bank's 2023 Country Environmental Analysis, environmental degradation contributes to approximately 272,000 premature deaths and 5.2 billion days of illness annually in Bangladesh, generating economic losses equivalent to around 17 percent of GDP. Other major assessments reinforce the severity of these findings. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) estimates that air pollution remains among the leading risk factors for death and disability in Bangladesh, contributing to hundreds of thousands of deaths each year through cardiovascular disease, stroke, chronic respiratory illness, and lung cancer. The State of Global Air 2024 report identifies Bangladesh as one of the countries with the highest levels of fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) exposure in the world, with average concentrations remaining several times higher than the World Health Organization's recommended guideline. UNICEF has warned that nearly all Bangladeshi children are exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution, placing them at heightened risk of impaired lung development, respiratory infections, and long-term health complications. Water-related environmental hazards are equally



River erosion reducing arable land and displacing house

alarming. The World Health Organization and UNICEF estimate that millions of Bangladeshis continue to face risks from contaminated drinking water, while arsenic exposure remains one of the largest mass poisoning events in human history. Climate-related impacts are also intensifying. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reports that Bangladesh regularly records hundreds of thousands of new disaster-related displacements each year due to floods, cyclones, riverbank erosion, and other extreme weather events. These statistics reveal that environmental degradation is a multidimensional public health, development, and social justice crisis that affects virtually every aspect of daily life.

The unequal distribution of environmental harm begins with unequal exposure. Wealthier Bangladeshis generally possess greater freedom to avoid environmental risks. They can live farther from industrial zones, purchase bottled water, install filtration systems, access private healthcare, relocate after disasters, or move into neighborhoods with better infrastructure. Poor households often lack these options. Nowhere is this more evident than in Dhaka's informal settlements, where environmental hazards are concentrated and layered upon one another. An estimated four to five million people live in slums and informal settlements across the capital, often in densely populated neighborhoods located near industrial zones, waste disposal sites, polluted canals, major roads, railway corridors, and flood-prone lowlands.

The country consistently ranks among the world's most polluted, with PM2.5 concentrations often exceeding World Health Organization guidelines by more than tenfold. Low-income communities are disproportionately concentrated near brick kilns, industrial zones, waste-burning sites, and major transport corridors, where pollution levels are highest. Lead pollution represents an even more alarming but often overlooked dimension of environmental inequality in Dhaka's slums. According to UNICEF and Pure Earth, approximately 35 million children in Bangladesh have blood lead levels above 5 micrograms per deciliter, the threshold at which health interventions are recommended. Bangladesh is estimated to lose

nearly 6.9 percent of its GDP annually due to lead exposure-related health and productivity losses. Used lead-acid battery recycling has emerged as one of the most significant sources of lead contamination in Bangladesh. Many recycling operations function informally with little environmental oversight, often dismantling batteries in residential areas where workers and nearby residents are directly exposed to toxic dust and fumes. Studies conducted in urban Bangladesh have detected elevated lead concentrations in soil, household dust, food products, and water sources near such facilities. Children living in these environments are especially vulnerable because lead accumulates in the body over time and can permanently damage neurological development. Even low levels of exposure have been associated with reduced IQ, impaired learning ability, and extreme behavioral disorders. The pattern takes the form of a self-reinforcing cycle: poverty increases exposure to environmental hazards, environmental hazards undermine health and livelihoods, and those losses deepen poverty further.

Gendered Vulnerability and the Unequal Burden of Environmental Change

Bangladesh's coastal belt, particularly the districts of Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Barguna, and Patuakhali provides evidence of environmental inequality at global scales. Bangladesh contributes less than 0.5 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and has played a negligible role in driving historical climate change. The UNFCCC report claims that Bangladesh's per-capita emissions are about 1.4–1.5 tonnes CO₂-equivalent, compared to a global average of roughly 6.3 tonnes, meaning the average Bangladeshi emits about four times less than the average global citizen. The country's coastal communities occupy the frontlines of a crisis they contributed little to create. Rising sea levels, cyclones, tidal flooding, and salinity intrusion affect entire communities; and their consequences fall disproportionately on poor households with limited access to land, healthcare, infrastructure, and political influence. Women bear some of the heaviest burdens,



Meri Chitra, sits with her niece, lost her home due to climate disaster

making the coastal crisis as much a question of gender and social justice as of environmental change.

Government and development agency estimates suggest that millions of people in southwestern Bangladesh are increasingly exposed to saline contamination of both drinking water and agricultural land. As freshwater sources become scarce, women and girls are often forced to spend several hours each day collecting water from distant sources, effectively converting environmental decline into unpaid labour. This burden remains largely invisible in economic statistics despite its significant impact on education, income-generating opportunities.

The health consequences are severe. Research conducted in coastal districts has linked prolonged exposure to saline water with higher rates of hypertension, skin diseases, urinary tract infections, reproductive health disorders, and adverse pregnancy outcomes. Studies have further found that women living in highly saline environments face elevated risks of preeclampsia, miscarriage, and other maternal health complications. Yet those most exposed to these dangers often have the least access to healthcare services. Limited reproductive healthcare, inadequate sanitation facilities, and chronic underinvestment in coastal infrastructure combine to intensify the effects of environmental exposure. These impacts reveal how environmental stress reinforces existing gender inequalities. When freshwater becomes scarce, women are expected to secure it. When floods damage sanitation systems, women face heightened risks to their health, hygiene, privacy, and personal safety. When livelihoods are disrupted by salinity, cyclones, or other climate-related shocks, women frequently absorb the consequences through increased unpaid care work, reduced educational opportunities, and diminished economic participation.

More Than a Climate Crisis

The experience of coastal Bangladesh reflects a broader pattern visible throughout the country. From the sinking ground beneath Barisal to the polluted air of Dhaka's informal settlements and the saline waters of the coastal belt, environmental risks consistently follow existing patterns of inequality. Environmental hazards do not become disasters simply because they occur; they become disasters because they intersect with unequal access to resources, healthcare, infrastructure, education, and political power. Understanding environmental vulnerability through this lens shifts attention away from environmental hazards alone and toward the social structures that determine who is exposed to risk, who possesses the capacity to adapt, and who ultimately bears the costs of ecological decline. The central challenge facing Bangladesh, therefore, is not environmental degradation alone but the unequal architecture of vulnerability through which that degradation is experienced. The country's environmental crisis reveals that ecological collapse and social inequality are deeply intertwined. The future of environmental justice in Bangladesh depends not only on addressing pollution, climate change, and environmental degradation but also on transforming the social and economic systems that determine whose lives are placed on the frontlines of environmental risk and whose are protected from it.

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Relay Wheat Cropping Technology: Greening the Coast

Dr. M. G. Neogi

The country has a total area of 147,570 square kilometers. The coastal region of Bangladesh spans approximately 47,201 square kilometers accounting for one-third of the country's total land area. The coastal zone of Bangladesh covers 20 percent of the land area, inhabited by approximately 42 million people lives in these areas and about 64.7 percent of these coastal inhabitants depend on agriculture, of whom about 30% lives below the poverty line.

The adverse impacts of climate change have had particularly severe consequences for coastal farming communities. Looking at the main cyclones/tornadoes that



A farmer Partho Protim Biswas seeding wheat seeds in his standing Aman rice at Rampal coastal saline lands



Relay wheat are growing at saline fallow land

occurred in the Bay of Bengal in last 53 years from 1970 to 2023, we can clearly see that their frequency of two to three times in a year since 2021. It may be noted that most of these cyclones occurred in the month of May (10 times) which is the hottest month in Bangladesh climate whereas 5 cyclones hit during November as the second

highest when the main crop of Bangladesh, Aman rice is in it's ripening stage. Climate risks to agricultural production are expected to increase in coming decades, particularly in low income countries where adaptive capacity is weak.

In Bangladesh, agricultural cultivation of the entire coastal region is being threatened by climate change. Rising sea levels and reduced fresh water flow from upstream rivers have caused saline water to seep into agricultural lands. Soil salinization impairs crop growth and yields and thus limits the types of crops that can be cultivated. All these environmental issues severely affect crop and cropping patterns, leading to decreased agricultural productivity and food insecurity in the area.

Despite advancements in modern science, almost 439,000 hectares of land remain fallow during dry season. Earlier farmers of this region used to cultivate dry season rice (Boro) and other winter crops. But now-a-days, failing to gain optimum yield recurrently due to increased salinity, scarcity of salt-free irrigation water and lack of drainage facilities, farmers abandoned Boro rice cultivation and winter crops cultivation. As a result, most of these land remain fallow in dry season that is from January to June/July. Hence, most of the farm households in the coastal region cultivate only one crop in a year, i.e. long duration local Aman rice in monsoon during July to December.

Experts also highlighted about an increasing rate of annual rainfall due to changed climate which had been observed since 2011. The total annual rainfall of Bangladesh has increased at a rate of +5.53 mm yr⁻¹ from 1958 to 2007. A significant increase in pre-monsoon rainfall at the rate of 2.47 mm yr⁻¹ is also observed over Bangladesh. The rate of increase is approximately 5.5 percent per decade during 1958 to 2007.

Rainfall in pre-monsoon during May, June and July is more than one thousand mm

yr-1 remains, as there is no scope to utilize these rainwater by farmers unused, so, lands remain fallow in these months after harvesting of Boro rice in December. But Bangladesh is a rainy country, receiving on average about 2200 mm of rainfall per year.

On the other hand, Bangladesh has higher population density in the world with more than one thousand people living per kilometer square. Agriculture Census - 2019 reported that Bangladesh's farmland has been decreasing at the rate of 0.19 percent every year. And the country's net arable land has declined to 18.68 million acres (7.562 hectares) in 2019 from 19.09 million acres in 2008. From 1976 to 2000, annually 23,850 hectares (ha) of land went to rural settlements while 30,809 ha of land from 2000 to 2010. The cultivable land is decreasing to give space for development works and housing.

In order to meet the escalating food demand resulting from the continuous population growth in Bangladesh, it is imperative to bring the substantial area of fallow land under cultivation during the dry season. Given the availability of arable land and the absence of viable alternatives, maximizing the use of this land is essential to enhance agricultural productivity and ensure national food security. Thus, major research is necessary to develop and accommodate climate-smart agricultural technologies for the farm households of this region in order to green the fallow saline coastal land during dry season in a profitable way.

To address this issue as well as to develop affordable and most viable technology to cultivate crops on barren saline land during dry season, the ACIAR (Australian



Australian delegates visited field at Kalapara saline lands



Wheat trials at koyra saline soils

Centre for International Agricultural Research) has come and conducted extensive research in barren lands of coastal regions of Bangladesh in dry season under Australia-Bangladesh joint collaborations.

The University of Western Australia (as lead agency) along with our countries Poverty Eradication Program has been implementing a field research on relay wheat cropping technology in

farmers saline land of coastal regions during dry season since 2021. The local government office of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Bangladesh Wheat and Maize Research Institute (BWMRI) and the local office of Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (BINA) also provided necessary co-operations in this prolific research under ACIAR support.

The researchers thought about five major reasons to introduce wheat cultivation research into fallow saline land of coastal regions:

1. Salinity tolerance capacity: Wheat naturally can tolerate some level of salinity and requires minimal water for irrigation. Thus, wheat is a good option to introduce in such a medium saline soil.
2. Minimum irrigation requirements: In the coastal region, water of a suitable quality for irrigation is scarce and wheat cultivation has a low irrigation requirement of only 3-5 light irrigation to complete its life cycle.
3. Changing of food habit: Rice alone cannot meet the food requirements of the country. There is increasing demand of wheat among Bangladeshi people due to their changes in food habit where wheat is becoming a highly desirable food supplement to rice.
4. Importation of Wheat: As dietary preferences are changing so wheat is becoming a highly desirable food supplement to rice. Currently, Bangladesh requires 7.5 million tons of wheat annually but produces only 1.1 million tons annually meaning the rest is imported.
5. Scarcity of available land: Scarcity of available land for wheat cultivation makes difficult to meet the needs. The scope to extend expand wheat cultivation is not possible due to other competing crops, such as potato, maize, etc. The most vital reason is that huge uncultivated land are available in the coastal regions during dry season which may possible to bring under wheat cultivation to meet the nation's demand.

The researchers in their solution found the relevancy of relay wheat cropping technology for wheat cultivation in coastal regions. There are following three important factors in favor of relay wheat cropping in coastal regions to ensure one additional harvests after Aman rice.

1. **Timely planting in mid-November:** In coastal regions, Aman rice mostly harvest in December. Wheat likes cooler weather, growing best at temperature below 15 degree Celsius, particularly in its vegetative growth and head formation stage. Based on the five years research in coastal saline fallow land, it is understood that the optimum planting time of wheat in coastal region of Bangladesh is in mid-November when the rice crop is still standing in the field with its semi-maturing stage. So, it's hard to sow wheat seeds on time, i.e. in mid-November.

Thus to overcome this timing issue, the relay wheat cropping technology proves an excellent alternative. The relay wheat cropping technology is a technology to broadcast wheat seeds directly into the standing Aman rice fields in mid-November, when Aman rice crop is still in maturing stage, prior to harvest, catches the right time for wheat cultivation, as second crop after rice in a timely manner.

Relay wheat cropping enabled wheat cultivation in right time without disturbing the standing rice crop, which proves as the most suited technology for the coastal farm families for their fallow saline belt in dry season. Thus, the relay cropping technology opens a window to cultivate a second crop in same land without disturbing the first crop.

2. **Minimum or no salinity level in mid-November:** In most of the coastal regions, soil salinity levels are normally lower in mid-November than the following months. Thus, salinity level in coastal regions during mid-November, providing a conducive environment for wheat seeds to germinate which helping to get a good harvests.

3. **Availability of soil moisture in mid-November:** Most fields in coastal regions retain sufficient moisture in mid-November, enabling wheat plants to access necessary moisture during this period, which is beneficial for the crops. Thus, mid-November planting of wheat enables crops to fully utilize the residual soil



Fully matured relay wheat in saline fallow land at Daulatpur village of Nilgonj union of Patuakhali district



Relay wheat harvesting at Kalapara saline fallow land

moisture when soil salinity levels are still tolerable.

So, without any further land preparation, farmers are getting good yield from wheat cultivation in favourable soil condition and environment where production cost is less, compared to the conventional wheat cultivation. As such, the above three factors collectively contributed to the remarkable success

of relay wheat cultivation in saline fallow lands of coastal regions.

If farmers seeding the wheat seeds in rice fields in mid-November, they can harvest the crop by end of February or early March using minimum production costs and time.

The land while previously fallow in the dry season, now becomes productive. The relay wheat farmer of Daulatpur village Md. Sarwar Hossain informed that last year, he cultivated wheat under conventional system and received yield seven maunds (280 kg) wheat from one bigha (33 decimal) of land which is around Tk. 14,000 where the total cost was approximately Tk. 6,000.

This year, because of relay wheat cropping, he harvested 10 maunds (400 kg) from one bigha (33 decimal) land, as relay wheat performed better yield than conventional wheat cultivation system. He also expressed that this year, he earned Tk. 20,000 from one bigha, where his cost is around Tk. 5,000, because of relay cultivation system.

He also informed that the village farmers now have enough confidence to grow relay wheat as easy technology. He requested government to provide them seeds and irrigation facilities, so that there land would not be fallow further in dry season.

Dr. Golam Faruque, the Director General of BWMRI visited the wheat fields of relay cropping on 6 March 2023 at Daulatpur of Kalapara which ended with high satisfactions. He committed to provide adequate wheat seeds to farmers as required for relay wheat cropping in coastal regions. Dr. Faruque also confirmed that the BWMRI will work intensively in upcoming years at coastal fallow saline belt with relay wheat cropping.

We hope that the government will critically analyze the relay wheat cropping in saline fallow land in favour of coastal farm families while requesting to ensure irrigation facilities and availability of wheat seeds which could be a revolution to greening the coastal fallow saline land.

Dr. M. G. Neogi, is working in the coastal regions of Bangladesh under Griffith University of Australia, where ACIAR is supporting the program. E-mail: mgneogi@gmail.com



Child Safety Online: Needs Immediate Comprehensive Action

Khadiza Akhter

Children's access to smartphones, social media, and artificial intelligence-driven platforms is expanding faster than society's ability to protect them. In Bangladesh, online child safety must now be understood not merely as a technology issue, but as a public health, mental health, and child rights crisis. For the sake of child and youth online safety, it is inevitable to create widespread awareness across the country.

On February 10, people across the globe came together to mark Safer Internet Day with the theme 'AI Aware: Safe,



Proper use of device should be maintained for the children

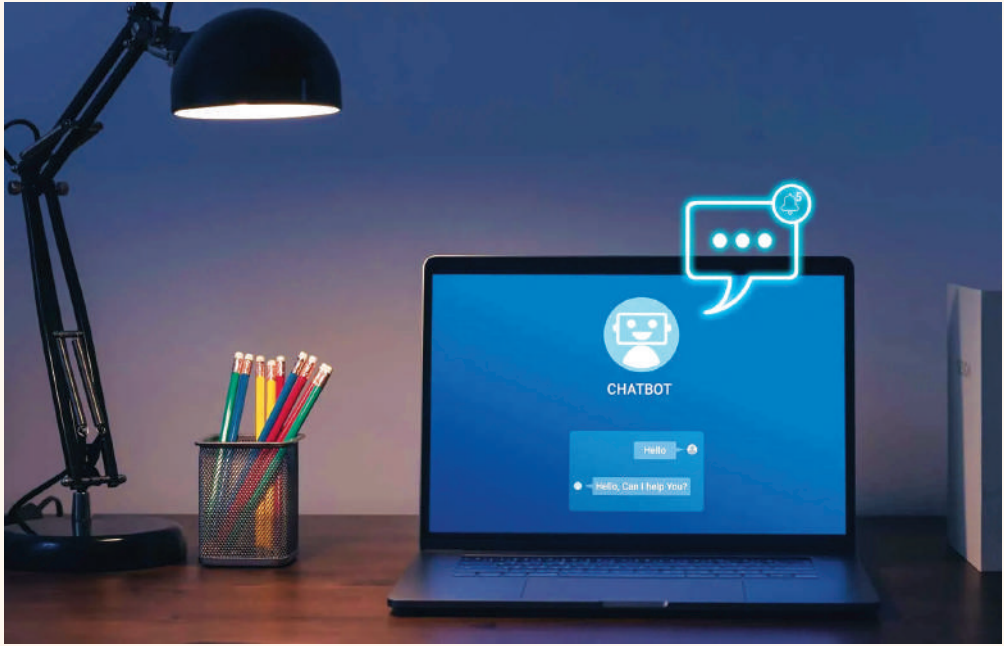


Excessive use of smartphone is harmful for our health

Smart, In Control'. This annual initiative is dedicated to promoting digital safety and empowering people of all ages to navigate the online world with confidence and care as a from of learning platforms to creative tools or online interactions, AI is embedded across the digital ecosystem.

Over the past two decades, Bangladesh has achieved remarkable digital growth. According to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), the country now has approximately 130 million active internet connections and 187.6 million mobile subscriptions. Bangladesh's digital future will be judged not only by connectivity and innovation, but by how well it protects its most vulnerable users-its children and youth. However, cheap smartphones and affordable data packages have placed powerful digital tools in the hands of children and youngsters often without adequate regulation, digital literacy, or parental oversight.

At the same time, children's online behavior is changing rapidly. A recent study by the Bangladesh Institute of ICT in Development (BIID) shows that teenagers and young adults in Bangladesh spend an average of five to eight hours daily on social media. Another study revealed that 23 percent of children in Bangladesh face severe risks on online platforms, with Facebook identified as the most unsafe space for young users. Online gaming has also surged, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Children commonly spend long hours on games such as



School going children are becoming addicted to online gaming

PUBG, Free Fire, Roblox, Minecraft, Pokémon GO, and FC Mobile and so on, often replacing outdoor play, social interaction, and family time.

The social consequences of online addiction is already visible. Ilham bin Reja, a nine-year-old class four student of a Dhaka school, returns home from school early in the afternoon while her parents work until evening. During those hours, she plays online games and interacts with AI chatbots. Gradually, she has begun to prefer digital companions over surrounded people, showing reduced interest in offline friendships and family interaction. Her parents, like many others, are increasingly alarmed by her growing isolation. This is no longer an isolated story; it reflects a broader pattern emerging in urban areas in Bangladesh even also in villages where internet is available.

Medical research shows that adolescents who spend more than three hours a day on social media face significantly higher risks of depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, and suicidal thoughts. Pediatricians and psychologists warn that children's developing brains are especially vulnerable to addictive design features such as infinite scrolling, autoplay videos, push notifications, and algorithm-driven content feeds designed to maximize user engagement and profit making rather than child well-being.

Even more alarming is the rise of AI-powered chatbots and so-called 'companion' systems. Many children and teenagers like Ilham now turn to chatbots for

emotional support, companionship, and entertainment. She is focused with 'grow a garden' or '99 Nights in the Forest' of Roblox game. These gaming systems can easily gain a child's trust but lack genuine empathy, accountability, and ethical judgment. Ilham's cousin Raihan, a high school student spends long hours with online gaming in group where he doesn't know with whom he is playing. This interactive game sometime harm youths. They do not reliably check facts, may generate false or harmful information, and can expose young generation to sexual, violent, or manipulative content. AI-powered toys and digital assistants are increasingly marketed to children, despite minimal safeguards.

These concerns are not unique to Bangladesh. Many countries have already enacted laws to protect children from digital hazards. Twelve countries have already banned gaming site Roblox due to child safety concerns, inappropriate content, and potential addiction. In a High Court order PUBG and Free Fire are banned in Bangladesh. However, Roblox still occupy child attention hours after hours like Ilham. When parents keep her away from online gaming, ilham voiced that all her school friends played online and she was feeling left out/bored.

Bangladesh still has a crucial opportunity to act early. Policymakers should urgently consider child-centered regulations, including limits on screen time, mandatory age verification, parental consent requirements, platform and app store accountability, and default high-privacy settings for minors. Schools should adopt device-free policies, particularly at the primary and secondary levels. Government can block URL of harmful and unethical websites. Campaigns must be started for creating public awareness about the psychological and physical risks of excessive screen use and AI dependency of children and young generation.

A comprehensive, minor friendly approach is crucial to identify what really works to protect children/ youth's rights and safety in a digital world. In Bangladesh where family ties are very strong, parents have important responsibility to help keeping their child safe from online dangers/addiction. They can only allow their children to play in open area of house instead of isolated place. So that members of his/her family can understand the conversation and the screen. Furthermore, our parents need to know what threats they face and what one can do to remove or reduce them. Necessary training, consultation and designed program on parental control would also be helpful in this regard. Like parents, teachers also have vital responsibility to educate children about meaningful internet use and dangerous effect of unethical site. It is also essential to modernize and strengthen the online complain-response system. Enhancing cyber investigation capacity is also essential for safe online platform. Educators, law enforcers and tech experts and leaders should immediately unite to promote digital safety and AI awareness for children and young generation in Bangladesh.

The writer is Deputy Principal Information Officer, Press Information Department



Khadimnagar Rainforest - an Important Biosphere of Bangladesh

Md. Ziaul Haque Howlader

Having enough biospheres in a country is considered to be enormous blessing for its human being and prosperity. To stave off the onslaught of climate change, the immense importance of biosphere is a widely-discussed issue. Generally, a biosphere is comprised of various elements and valuable resources. According to the Unacademy research, “A biosphere comprises all of the planets ecosystems, biomes, and creatures. Everything from bacteria to people is found in the biosphere, which is a relatively thin layer or ozone life. The biosphere is a universal ecosystem consisting of living organisms (biotic) and non-living (abiotic) components that help them with power and nutrients.” The biosphere is termed as the link between healthy lives of living species and their all interactions. With the increase of population and hedonism, many

of our important biospheres are at stake. Sundarbans - the world’s single largest mangrove forest located in Bangladesh and partly India is matchless to any other mangrove or bio-sphere in the world in terms of size, flora and fauna. Another one



Entry gate of the Khadimnagar National Forest



Tourists explore different places of Khadimnagar rainforest

is Lawachhara forest at Kamalganj in Moulvi Bazar district. Apart from the Sundarbans and Lawachhara forest, Bangladesh possesses some important biospheres, of which Khadimnagar in Sylhet is note-worthy. The geographical location and climatic conditions of Sylhet can be attributed to create such as an important biosphere.

Khadimnagar Rainforest, previously known as Khadimnagar Reserve Forest appears one of the most important natural reserves or biosphere reserve in Bangladesh since long, especially from 1950. This rainforest national park is located at Sadar upazila in Sylhet district, which is in the north-east of the country. It is about 10 km away from Sylhet district town, on the Sylhet-Jaflong highway. This rainforest was declared as national park by the Bangladesh government

on 13 April 2006 under the Bangladesh Wildlife (Preservation) Amendment Act of 1947. In fact, in the year of 1885 during the British colonial rule, this area was cleared for extensive tea plantation. Later in 1950, tree plantations of teak, Garjan, Bamboo, Champa, Agar, Akashmoni, Eucalyptus and Accacia Mangium etc. were started by the then Forest Department. In fact, tree plantations were made in phases at different patches in different years until 1994 by the Department of Forest. In 2008 and 2009, full areas of the present Park were planted by the Forest Department. The park remains green round the year, however, it appears more lush green during monsoon. The spring offers the forest a festive mood with new tree leaves. Tourists love to visit this rainforest round the year irrespective of summer, rainy season or winter. Khadimnagar Rainforest is called the lungs of Sylhet.

The total area of this Rainforest Park is approximately Six Hundred and Seventy Nine hector. The park is located mainly on the hills and is surrounded by some tea-states such as- Kalagool, Bhurjan and Goolni. It is extended upto ten km from east-west and about one km wide from south to north. It is divided into six forest working circles. The overall exterior view of the forest is various clusters of artificial plantations of different ages.

The rainforest area is much undulating and dissected by streams and hill spurs. The highest peak of the hill is about fifty-meter from the sea level. The soil condition is loamy, clay and sandy loam at various places of the forest. The climate is generally found humid and warm.

A total of 352 plant species belonging to 81 families have been identified from the Khadimnagar National Park. Among families, 29 represented by one species, 13 represented 2 species, 8 represented by 3 species and 31 represented by 4 to 39 species. Seven most common families are Poaceae, Moraceae, Euphorbiaceae, Cyperaceae, Fabaceae, Rubiaceae and Mimosaceae etc. Scientists have made plant species into different habit groups or life forms. Among the species, 116 belong to trees, 52 shrubs, 116 herbs, 8 epiphytes and 60 climbers.

The rainforest vegetation can be divided into three vertical layers including canopy, middle/bush and ground layers. The tall trees are dominated in the top layer of vegetation. The ground layer is ornamented by plants of a good number of families. Maximum families are dominated by shade lover plants. Khadimnagar National Park also possesses a good number of medicinal plants such as Menda, Udal, Sarpagandha,



Staircases leading to the higher area of the park



Hanging Bridge of Khadimnagar rainforest



Tea leaves harvesting from the Khadimnagar tea estate

Bohera, Chailta, Horitaki, Arjun, Lazzabati etc.

A number of wildlife supporting plant species are found in the Park. Such plants play an important role in conservation of biodiversity. There is also found a good number of species of plants that have already been listed as endangered by IUCN. However, the forest department of Bangladesh is putting in much effort to safeguard the endangered plants. The Department of Forest undertakes various programmes to take care of the forest under GoB Fund. Around the Park in the villages such as Faringura, Paikpara, Darabazar and Kushirgul, there also dwell some ethnic communities – Patro, Mahali, Bhumij etc. These ethnic

communities are also part of preserving the forest.

Khadimnagar Rainforest National Park is a famous eco-tourist destination. There are three different trekking trails in the park - walking, cycling and sight-seeing within the park and in the surroundings tea-estate. A small trekking one or two hours will bring the opportunities to tourists to see wild animals. The park possesses a very good feature for nature conservation. This Park is an important place for education and research. Here, tourism is an important source for the livelihood of the ethnic communities and local people. Tourists can easily visit this important national park. First, tourists need to go to Sylhet and then by local transports or rent-a-car. It requires only maximum forty minutes to reach the national park. There is a small entrance fee. Tourists are advised not to disturb the animals and any harm to the plants. Like the Sundarbans, Khadimnagar Rainforest is our important national resource that help can to keep the country safe from any danger of climate calamities and change and also global warming.

The writer is GM (Planning) of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation



A New Wave of Champions: The Rise of Bengal Tigresses

Adiba Saleha

A revolutionary moment was being celebrated in July 2025 at Hatirjheel in Dhaka. The Bangladeshi women's football team celebrated triumph with a vibrant audience. Proud to have done something that no Bangladeshi football team (men's or women's) had managed in 45 years: qualify for the AFC Women's Asian Cup.

Afeida Khandaker addressed the eagerly waiting crowd, "This is a moment we will never forget. Our dream is not limited to South Asia. We want to take Bangladesh to the global stage."

The captain was not speaking metaphorically, rather she was making a declaration.

Women's football was formally introduced in Bangladesh in November 2007, when the country's first women's tournament was staged under the AFC's Vision Asia programme. Within a year, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) had launched a school football tournament under Vision Bangladesh. This was basically the foundation of the Bengal Tigresses in the making.



Bangladesh team secured SAFF Women's Championship in 2024



The Bangladesh women's football team made history securing qualification for the AFC Women's Asia Cup

In 2022, the Bangladesh women's national team won their first major international trophy, the SAFF Women's Championship. Two years later, in 2024, they defended the title, defeating Nepal in the final. Then in July 2025, Bangladesh became the first team to qualify from the AFC Women's Asian Cup qualifiers. This brilliant achievement gave Bangladesh a chance to showcase its talent on a giant stage alongside powerful teams like China, Japan, South Korea and many more.

The story of our women's football team was not very glamorous or one of sudden brilliance. These players

made their journey before an international audience while managing social scepticism and institutional neglect. Women athletes perform within a system that often demotivates them. There are multiple complaints regarding thin financial support and poor training facilities that remain unsolved. A round-table organised by the Daily Sun in March 2026, titled "Rise of Women's Sports," brought together current and former national athletes who spoke openly about these structural, financial, and institutional barriers.

Most of our players come from humble backgrounds and their statements often reflect how dedicated they are to representing their home and bringing victory. Sanjida Akhter (Midfielder, from Kolsindur) says, "Our dreams started on the village field. Now when I wear the national jersey, it feels like I carry the hopes of my entire village." It also represents how sports have become a phenomenal opportunity for people from rural communities to get higher education, employment and international recognition. For many Bangladeshis, our team has become a powerful symbol of social change and women's empowerment. The influence can be seen in younger players. Bangladesh won the 2025 SAFF U-20 Women's Championship held on home soil in Dhaka, claiming their fifth title in the competition's six editions. This dominance is so consistent that it has become expected rather than celebrated. The Under-20, Under-17, and Under-15 national teams have each competed in AFC-level tournaments, giving a generation of young women exposure to continental competition they had never previously received.

Sport has always carried the capacity to communicate what formal diplomacy

cannot. And in Bangladesh today, women's sport could be used like that as a soft-power tool too. The Bangladesh government plans to take advantage of that as the Youth and Sports State Minister Aminul Haque states in his speech at the inauguration of the Notun Kuri Sports mega-project in Sylhet. He indicated that they plan to leverage sporting exchange with Asian and European countries to build ties and address infrastructure weaknesses. He also indicated the future representatives of the sports diplomacy framework may include Barrister Zaima Rahman, daughter of Bangladesh's current Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, who could be seen at sport-related events to motivate and advocate for young Bangladeshi female athletes. Her involvement in sports diplomacy could help raise awareness of women's sport and strengthen Bangladesh's image through sporting engagement.



The Bangladesh Women's football team was felicitated after qualifying for the AFC Women's Asia Cup

Development of a sport and a team that is still relatively young requires huge efforts. Our players need longer and more competitive league seasons, stable funding from the federation and sponsors and overall consistent support from their country. Since Bangladesh now has a genuine opportunity to compete on a stage far bigger than SAFF, a long-term plan is not a luxury. It is the only way to honour what these women have already built.

But something has shifted in Bangladesh that cannot be easily undone. A country is learning to see its women differently. Because girls from rural communities like Kolsindur decided to dream big, get on a stage and play despite many challenges. A girl from the hills of Rangamati who lost her father and her brother and still plays every match as a tribute to both became an image of resilience. Sabina Khatun, who led this generation through all of it, offered simple advice for young players: "Work hard, believe in yourself, never give up."

Bangladesh longs to see the Tigresses win!

The writer is Undergrad Student, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST)



Flowerpeckers: The Smallest Bird Group of Bangladesh

Professor Dr. A N M Aminoor Rahman

It has been nearly 25 years since the incident took place in Mulghar, a quiet village in Fakirhat Upazila of Bagerhat district, where life moved at a calm and simple pace. Clusters of ripe, crimson-red lychees were hanging temptingly from a tree. As I stood admiring them, a tiny bird suddenly darted in from nowhere. Perching delicately on a lychee, it began peeling and eating the fruit with astonishing skill. Within moments, the juicy flesh was gone, leaving only the brown seed dangling behind. Then, just as quickly, the little bird flew away—only to return moments later to attack another lychee nearby. I had never seen such a tiny bird before.

Two years later, while in Canada for higher study, I saw a species of hummingbird—the smallest bird in the world. Surprisingly, the tiny bird I had seen in Bangladesh was not much larger. Since then, I have encountered this miniature jewel many times in different parts of the country. Most recently, in November 2025, I spotted it again at Gazipur Agricultural University campus.

That little bird is the smallest birds of Bangladesh—the Pale-billed Flowerpecker, locally known as *Chhoto Fuljhuri*.

A Bird Smaller Than Our Palm

The Pale-billed Flowerpecker measures only 8 centimeters (cm) in length and weighs a mere 6.3 grams (g). For comparison, the world's smallest bird—the Bee Hummingbird of Cuba—is only 4.9 centimeters long and weighs about 1.75 g.

Bangladesh is home to eight species of flowerpeckers, all belonging to the family *Dicaeidae*. These birds are tiny, stout-bodied, short-tailed, and equipped with small but effective beaks. Across South and Southeast Asia and Australia, flowerpeckers are important residents of forests, orchards, and gardens. Globally, around 50 species are known. Among the eight species found in Bangladesh, I have personally observed four. Here, I briefly describe four of the most remarkable flowerpeckers.

1. Pale-billed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*)

It is also known as Tickell's Flowerpecker, this is the smallest bird in Bangladesh.



A pale-billed flowerpecker feeding on lychee in Baya village, Paba, Rajshahi

Though fairly common, it is extremely shy and cautious, making it difficult to spot. Besides Bangladesh, it occurs in India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar.

This common resident of Bangladesh is a tiny bird with olive-grey upperparts, slightly darker on the head and wings. Its underparts are pale olive with a faint yellowish wash around the throat, while the belly is light brownish. The short bill resembles the color of raw flesh, and the legs are dark grey. Males and females look almost identical.

The species can be found almost everywhere—villages, cities, orchards, and forests. It usually moves alone, in pairs, or in small groups in search of food. Although not capable of true hovering flight like hummingbirds, sunbirds, or flowerpeckers of the Americas, it sometimes attempts brief hovering movements. Unlike hummingbirds, it cannot fly backward.

Its favorite foods include ripe fruits such as sapodilla, custard apple, banana, papaya, guava, and lychee. While feeding, it often buries itself



A pale-billed flowerpecker chick on a banyan tree at Bottola Police Line, Rajshahi City

inside the fruit so completely that only the shaking fruit reveals its presence. Watching one hang delicately from a tiny fruit while feeding is an unforgettable sight. The bird also drinks nectar and helps disperse seeds, playing an important role in plant regeneration. Its sweet, repetitive calls sound like “chik-chik-chik---” or “sip-sip-sip---”.

The breeding season lasts from January to September, during which the pair may raise up to 3 broods. The female usually builds a tiny hanging nest 5–10 meters above the ground on a slender tree branch. The nest resembles the shape of a goose egg and takes 3–5 days to complete. Constructed from soft fibers, it remains remarkably neat and clean. Unlike sunbird nests, flowerpecker nests lack a projecting porch above the entrance.

The female lays 2–3 dull white eggs, which hatch within 10–14 days. Both parents share the responsibility of feeding and caring for the chicks, which fledge after about 14 days. Its estimated lifespan is approximately 5 years. As a tiny, highly active passerine, this bird has a fast metabolism, similar to hummingbirds, which often limits the lifespan of small wild birds to a few years.

2. Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum cruentatum*)

This is the second-smallest bird in Bangladesh. It measures 8.5–9.0 cm in length and weighs around 7–8 g. Its Bangla name is ‘*Lalpith Fuljhuri*’. It is also a common resident of the country. Besides Bangladesh its global range extend from the Himalayan foothills to Southern China, mainland Southeast Asia, Sumatra and Borneo.

It is a small bird with a short tail, which exhibit sexual dimorphism. The male bird is stunningly beautiful. It looks distinctive with bright red upperparts, blackish head-/breast-sides and blue-blackish wings contrasting with the mostly white



A male scarlet-backed flowerpecker on a coral tree at Satchari National Park, Habiganj



A female scarlet-backed flowerpecker at Satchari National Park

underparts. Female is a drab brown with a bright red rump and uppertail-coverts. Juvenile resembles female but has a red-pink based lower mandible and uniform upperparts with orange-tinged uppertail-coverts.

This species is widely distributed across Bangladesh, especially around forests and wooded areas. It is active during the day and spends most of its time among tree branches, making it difficult to observe. Unlike the Pale-billed Flowerpecker, this species frequently feeds on nectar, although it also eats insects, spiders, and fruits. It sometimes hovers briefly while feeding from flowers. Its metallic call sounds like “chip-chip-chip...”.

From March to August, the female builds a small, smooth nest from soft fibers high in a tree. The nesting habits are similar to those of the Pale-billed Flowerpecker. Female lays a clutch of 2–4 small, unglossed, greyish-white eggs, which are sometimes faintly and sparsely flecked with brownish markings. The egg hatched after 10–14 days of incubation. Both parents are responsible for incubating the eggs and rearing the chicks together. The species generally has an estimated lifespan of approximately 4–6 years in the wild.



3. Orange-bellied Flowerpecker (*Dicaeum trigonostigma*)

An orange-bellied flowerpecker at Karamjal, Sundarbans

The Orange-bellied Flowerpecker is



An orange-bellied flowerpecker singing on a tree at Karamjal, Sundarbans

Bangladesh's third-smallest bird and considerably rarer than the previous 2 species. I first saw this bird in Penang, Malaysia, in 2008. In Bangladesh, I encountered it for the first time in July 2019 at Karamjal in the Sundarbans. Its Bangla name is "*Komola-neel Fuljhuri*". This uncommon resident of Bangladesh is also found in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

The tiny bird measures approximately 9 cm in length and weigh 8–9 g. Females are slightly heavier than the male. Adult males are striking, with dark slate-grey heads and wings. Upper-breast and throat are a lighter greyish blue; from the lower breast to the vent is a gradient from fiery orange (on the lower breast) to yellow (on the vent). It has a fairly thin and short bill that is slightly curved downwards at the tip. Female is much duller, and is mostly drab olive brown overall, except for its pale orange rump and yellow belly.

This species inhabits the mangrove forests of the Sundarbans and the evergreen forests of southeastern Bangladesh, especially around Teknaf. They often remain hidden among parasitic plants growing high in the forest canopy. Their diet includes fruits, nectar, leaves of mistletoe-like plants, and insects. Interestingly, they rarely descend to the ground for water, instead drinking droplets collected on leaves. Their harsh metallic call sounds like "*jit-jit - jit ---*".

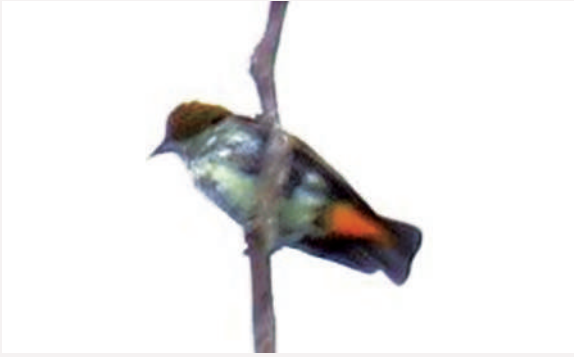
Breeding occurs from April to May. The birds construct tiny pear-shaped nests beneath leafy parasitic plants using grass, moss, and spider webs. The female lays 2–3 white eggs speckled with dark spots. The eggs hatch after about 14 days, and the chicks take another 14 days to learn flying. Information on the specific, absolute lifespan of the species is not explicitly documented in standard databases. As a small, active, tropical passerine (songbird), it likely shares a relatively short lifespan characteristic of similar species, typically estimated in the range of 2–5 years in the wild, similar to related flowerpecker species.

4. Yellow-vented Flowerpecker (*Pachyglossa chrysorrhea*)

The Yellow-vented Flowerpecker is a tiny arboreal passerine bird found across South and Southeast Asia. Best known for its bright yellow vent (undertail coverts) and olive-streaked plumage, this elusive canopy-dweller is an important disperser of mistletoe seeds, playing a quiet but vital role in maintaining forest ecosystems. The species occurs in at least 15 countries, including Bangladesh, India, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Its Bangla name is "*Holde-tola Fuljhuri*".

In Bangladesh, it is considered uncommon and seldom seen. The author first observed the species in 2014 at Kaptai National Park, Rangamati and later in 2015 at Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary, Habigonj. Because both sightings were made from a considerable distance, only documentary photographs could be obtained. Though tiny and easily overlooked, the species remains one of the hidden jewels of Asia's forests, quietly supporting the health and renewal of woodland ecosystems.

Measuring only 9.0–10.5 cm in length and weighing around 9–10 g, the Yellow-vented Flowerpecker is among the smallest birds of the region. It is easily recognized by its golden-olive upperparts, creamy-white underparts heavily streaked with blackish markings, and its distinctive yellowish-orange vent beneath the tail. The



A yellow-vented flowerpecker at Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary, Habiganj

bird also features a noticeable white loreal stripe, a slightly decurved dark bill, and striking orange to ruby-red eyes. Males and females appear largely similar, although females may show slightly duller undertail coverts. Juveniles resemble adults but are generally duller, with greener upperparts and finer streaking below.

The species inhabits tropical and subtropical forests, plantations, orchards, and wooded gardens,

usually below 870 meters in elevation. Highly active and agile, it spends much of its time foraging high in the canopy, often hanging upside down among mistletoe clumps and tangled vines. Its diet consists mainly of mistletoe fruits, along with nectar, berries, and small insects. By dispersing mistletoe seeds from tree to tree, the bird contributes significantly to forest regeneration and ecological balance. It is more often heard than seen. Its thin “swit---” notes and rapid “tzit-tzit-tzit---” calls frequently reveal its presence among dense foliage.

Breeding seasons vary across its range, occurring from April to August in Bangladesh, while juveniles have been recorded in May and September in Peninsular Malaysia. Both sexes work together to build a delicate hanging nest shaped like a small pouch, woven from moss, spider webs, and fine plant fibers. The nest is usually suspended from a slender branch less than eight meters above the ground. Females typically lay 2–3 white eggs, and both parents share incubation and chick-rearing duties. The species is estimated to live for around 2.5 years.

Rare and Elusive Flowerpeckers

Among Bangladesh’s eight flowerpecker species, several are extremely rare. Birdwatchers occasionally report sightings of the Plain Flowerpecker and Thick-billed Flowerpecker, but recent records of the Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker or Fire-throated Flowerpecker are scarce.

Tiny Birds, Big Importance

Despite their size, flowerpeckers play a crucial ecological role. By feeding on fruits and nectar, they disperse seeds and assist in pollination, helping forests regenerate naturally. Sadly, habitat destruction and deforestation threaten many of these tiny birds. Their survival depends on preserving forests, orchards, and natural habitats across Bangladesh. May these miniature wonders continue to brighten our forests and gardens for generations to come.

The writer and photographer of this article is a Wildlife Biologist, Veterinarian and Professor of Gazipur Agricultural University, Gazipur-1706

Major National Events

April-June

4 April, 2026

PM convene first PSAC to improve business climate

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on April, 4 convened Bangladesh's first Private Sector Advisory Council (PSAC), creating a formal platform for the country's business representatives.

The council would provide timely, candid, and structured feedback to the highest levels of government on the business climate, investment environment, and reform priorities.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman chairs the first meeting of the Private Sector Advisory Council at his Tejgaon office in Dhaka on April 4

At the first meeting of the PSAC, held at the Prime Minister's Office, the Prime Minister also discussed the challenges faced by the country's businesses and the major bottlenecks hindering investment.

According to the meeting participants, the discussed areas of the meeting were regulatory environment, energy, improving human capital like education and artificial intelligence, modernisation and rationalisation of the tax environment and National Board of Revenue, logistics and transportation, export diversification, re-branding Bangladesh, foreign direct investment, and banking and finance. *Source:*

The New Age



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman chairs the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) at the Secretariat in the capital on April 6

6 April, 2026

High-powered body formed to cut wasteful dev spending

The government has formed a high-powered committee to review the ongoing projects under the development budget, aiming to cut wasteful expenditures and ensure proper utilisation of public funds.

The committee was formed at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on April 6 in a bid to check the wastage of tax money, said Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury.

“Under the directive of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, a special committee has been formed to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of ongoing development projects, aiming to eliminate wasteful spending and ensure alignment with the national interest,” the Minister said. *Source: The Financial Express*

14 April, 2026

Pahela Boishakh celebrated across Bangladesh

The Bengali New Year 1433 was celebrated across the country on April 14 with festivity through cultural programmes, community events and social gatherings.

A large number of people joined the festivities to mark the day, commonly known as Pahela Boishakh or Nababarsha.

Various socio-cultural and political organisations as well as educational institutions



Pahela Boishakh 1433 festively celebrations on April 14

organised programmes in the capital Dhaka and elsewhere across the country to celebrate the occasion. The day was a public holiday.

The opening event in the capital began at Ramna Batamul, hosted by cultural organisation Chhayanaaut, followed by the traditional procession on the Dhaka University campus.

Chhayanaaut started its traditional cultural event with a chorus song titled ‘Jago Alok

Logone’, performed by Mirajul Jannat Sonia, Aishwarja Samadder, Priyontu Deb, and Samudra Shuvam. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman hands over a Farmer Card replica to a beneficiary as he inaugurates the Farmer Card programme at Shaheed Maruf Stadium in Tangail on April 14

14 April, 2026

PM opens pre-piloting Farmer Card

Prime Minister, Tarique Rahman, on April, 14 inaugurated the ‘Farmer Card’

distribution in 10 districts across Bangladesh in the pre-piloting phase as part of the implementation of the ruling BNP's election pledges.

On the occasion of the Pahela Boishakh-1433, the Premier digitally launched the programme by pressing a button on a laptop at the inaugural ceremony at Shaheed Maruf Stadium in Sadar Upazila of Tangail.

With a press of a button, each of the 22,065 farmers received Taka 2,500. A total of 1,453 farmers in Tangail received this money.

Later, Tarique Rahman directly handed over a 'Farmer Card' and saplings of trees to 15 farmers. *Source: The New Age*

15 April, 2026

PM Tarique Rahman among TIME's 100 most influential people

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has been named in the TIME magazine's list of the 100 Most Influential People in the World for 2026, in recognition of his leadership, courage and contribution to restoration of democracy.

The list published by the New York-based weekly on April 15

also contains the names of US President Donald Trump, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Pope Leo XIV, Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah and New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani. *Source: The Financial Express*

15 April, 2026

BD welcomes Japan-led energy initiative for Asian region

Bangladesh on April 15 welcomed a Japan-led initiative to deal with energy issues in an efficient way in the Asian region, noting that all countries need to come together as no country can solve it alone.

"We need to come together to build a cooperation framework that will support all of us in this crisis, in particular in Asia," Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir told reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman joined the online meeting at the invitation of Japanese Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman places in the TIME Magazine's list of the 100 most Influential People in the World for 2026



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman joins the Asia Zero Emission Community Plus online summit from his parliament secretariat office in the capital on April 15. Officials from the member states, including the Japanese Prime Minister, took part in the event.

The Japanese Prime Minister announced the launch of “Partnership on Wide Energy and Resources Resilience (POWER Asia),” a new cooperation framework consisting of both emergency responses and structural ones with mid-to-long-term perspectives.

The leaders of the participating countries said they will collaborate to address the current challenges together. *Source: The Financial Express*

16 April, 2026

Independence Award- 2026 conferred on 15 individuals and 5 institutions

Amid an ongoing global energy crunch, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has called on citizens to exercise restraint in fuel consumption, urging moderation from state ceremonies to household use.

Speaking on April 16 at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium during the Independence Award ceremony, the Premier said, the government was working to keep the situation stable despite mounting external pressures.

During the event, Tarique Rahman formally handed over the Independence Award -- the country’s highest civilian honour -- to 15 individuals, including former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, and five organisations for their outstanding contributions to the country’s independence and national achievements.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman poses for a group photograph with recipients at the Independence Award- 2026 ceremony held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital on April 16

The Premier handed over the country's highest national civil award at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

Former three-time Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia (posthumous) was given the award for her comprehensive contributions to independence, democracy, women's education, and nation-building.

On behalf of late Begum Khaleda Zia, her granddaughter Barrister Zaima Rahman received the award from the Prime Minister.

Besides, the five Independence Award- 2026 winning institutions are: Faujdarhat Cadet College (Liberation War), Dhaka Medical College Hospital (Medicine), Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) (Rural Development), SOS Children's Village International in Bangladesh (Social Service), and Gonoshasthaya Kendra (Social Service). *Source: The Financial Express*

17 April, 2026

78,500 pilgrims to perform Hajj this year

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman inaugurated the Hajj flights at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) on April 17.

The Prime Minister formally opened the first Hajj flight at 11:57pm, which was scheduled to depart the Dhaka airport at 12:20am for King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, carrying 418 pilgrims.

Earlier, Tarique Rahman arrived at the airport around 11:30pm and went straight inside the aircraft.

At that time, he was seen talking to each of the pilgrims onboard and shaking



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman handed over some gifts to the pilgrims after inaugurating Hajj flight in this year on April 17

hands with them. The Prime Minister joined a munajat (prayer) inside the aircraft, seeking blessings of Almighty Allah for the successful accomplishment of the Hajj rituals.

Later, addressing the pilgrims, the Prime Minister sought doa from them for the country and its people and his government as well.

Earlier, the Prime Minister visited the Ashkona Hajj Camp in the city and exchanged pleasantries with the Hajj pilgrims.

Bangladesh, one of the world's largest Hajj pilgrim-sending countries, is expected to send around 78,500 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia this year. Of them, 4,565 pilgrims will perform Hajj under government management, while 73,935 under private agencies. *Source: The Daily Star*

21 April, 2026

PM reaffirms strong commitment to press freedom

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, during a meeting with members of the Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (NOAB) on April 21, expressed his government's strong stance on ensuring press freedom.

"He (Prime Minister) said, his government believes in press freedom. He also



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman poses for a photo with a delegation of the Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (NOAB) after a meeting at the Ministry of Public Administration in the capital on April 21

expressed his government's firm stance in favour of press freedom," said his Additional Secretary Atikur Rahman Ruman.

He said, the Prime Minister also told NOAB members that he regularly reads newspapers and watches television.

The Prime Minister said, he keeps track of how the country is portrayed in the media and, when necessary, gives instructions to the relevant authorities to look into the issues, Ruman added.

He said, Tarique Rahman listened patiently to the views of NOAB members and said such meetings with NOAB members will be held regularly after a specific time.

The meeting between the Prime Minister and NOAB members was held at the Cabinet Division conference room in the Secretariat. The meeting began at 2:20pm and ended around 3:30pm. *Source: The Financial Express*

23 April, 2026

Shanto ton, Mustafiz five-for seal series win for Tigers

Najmul Hossain Shanto scored a century and Mustafizur Rahman claimed 5-43 as Bangladesh beat New Zealand by 55 runs in the third one-day international to clinch the series 2-1 on April 23.

Shanto hit 105 off 119 balls, smacking nine fours and two sixes for his fourth ODI century to lift New Zealand from early trouble to 265-8 after being invited to bat first in Chattogram.

The win is significant as it gives Bangladesh their first ODI series triumph over



Players of Bangladesh pose with the ODI series trophy after winning the third match against New Zealand at the Bir Sreshtho Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium in Chattogram on April 23

New Zealand in 12 years, while also setting a new record for their biggest victory by runs against the Kiwis. Their previous highest margin was a 43-run win in Mirpur back in 2013.

Mustafizur, who returned from injury after missing the first two matches, then ripped through the New Zealand batting to help bowl out the opposition for 210 in 44.5 overs.

The performance took Mustafizur's tally to six five-wicket hauls in ODI cricket, the most by any Bangladesh bowler and level with Wasim Akram (Pakistan) and Trent Boult (New Zealand) among left-arm quicks. *Source: The Financial Express*

26 April, 2026

ECNEC okays 14 projects worth Tk 13,445 crore

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council on April 26 approved 14 development projects with a total estimated cost of Tk 13,445.41 crore.

These projects aim to improve infrastructure, healthcare and economic stability across the country.

Presided over by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, the decision was made at an ECNEC meeting held at the Cabinet Division conference room in Dhaka.

Of the projects, five are new, five have been revised and four have been given more time to complete.

Out of the total cost, Tk 8,089.56 crore will come from government funds, Tk 5,340.26 crore from loans and Tk 15.59 crore from the organisations involved.

Source: The New Age

29 April, 2026

PM unveils plan for a cleaner, greener Dhaka

Crammed Dhaka is set to undergo a major transformation under a multidimensional government plan on internal ecological uplift and decentralization of facilities to turn the capital into a cleaner and greener metropolis.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on April 29 unveiled in parliament the development blueprint that includes modern transport systems and circular economy-based waste management with foreign investment.

Responding to a written question from treasury bench MP Md Abul Kalam, the Prime Minister outlined a series of initiatives targeting pollution control, urban greening and sustainable waste management.

The Prime Minister said, authorities in Dhaka South City Corporation had launched tree-planting programmes across road medians, traffic islands and open spaces.

A plan is also underway to convert the Matuail landfill to an integrated circular economy-based waste-management and energy-production facility with investment from a South Korean private company, aiming for “zero waste”.

In the north of the city, Dhaka North City Corporation is expanding urban



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman answering different queries of the MP's at the parliament on April 29

afforestation through Miyawaki forests and green coverage across open median spaces, he mentions, adding that officials have set a target of planting 500,000 trees over the next five years. *Source: The Financial Express*

3 May, 2026

Deliver on govt pledges to build people's-welfare country

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman asks deputy commissioners to play a proactive role in implementing government's promises made to the people with a spirit of progress, accountability, transparency and efficiency in building a people-friendly administration.

He also forbids compromise on professionalism in their work that directly involves the people and execution of government policy decisions.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman speaks at the opening ceremony of the four-day Deputy Commissioners' Conference 2026 at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital on May 3

"I hope that, with your talent and competence, you will be able to play a vital role in efficiently implementing every promise made by the government to the people," he said while inaugurating a four-day DC Conference 2026 at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka on May 3. *Source: The Financial Express*

7 May, 2026

'Govt committed to media freedom, not regulation'

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon said, the current government is committed to ensuring a free and fair media environment rather than exerting control over the press.

"In the modern world, no state can remain outside the flow of information and accountability. Therefore, the formation of an independent and consensus-based Media Commission to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders has become a pressing necessity," he said.

He made the remarks while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the



Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon speaking at the International Cable TV, Broadcasting and Communication Technology (ICBC) Expo 2026 at the International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB) in the capital on May 7

‘International Cable TV, Broadcasting, and Communication Expo 2026’ as the chief guest at the International Convention City Bashundhara in the capital on May 7. *Source: The Financial Express*

10 May, 2026

Police administration does not belong to any party, says PM

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on May 10 asked the police administration to remain neutral and operate strictly in accordance with the law so that police stations can be trusted by people as reliable support centres in times of need.

My message is clear: the police administration does not belong to any political party, and it must be run in accordance with the law. It is your responsibility to ensure that no innocent person becomes a victim of harassment, he said.



The Prime Minister made

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman speaks as the chief guest at the inauguration of “Police Week-2026” at Rajarbagh Police Lines in the capital on May 10

the remarks while addressing the “Welfare Parade” organised as part of Police Week-2026 at the Bangladesh Police Auditorium in the Rajarbagh Police Lines.

Source: The Financial Express

11 May, 2026

Govt plans to privatise state-run silk factories for revival, says PM

The government is considering handing over the state-owned silk factories to the private sector as part of its efforts to revive Rajshahi’s traditional silk industry, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has said.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman meets a delegation of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at his office at the Bangladesh Secretariat in the capital on May 11

The issue came up during the Prime Minister’s meetings with leaders of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at the secretariat in the capital on May 11.

Speaking to The Financial Express after the meeting,

BKMEA President Mohammad Hatem said the Prime Minister had emphasised restoring the past glory of the country’s silk industry through private-sector participation. *Source: The Financial Express*

13 May, 2026

ECNEC approves multipurpose Padma Barrage project

Decades of wait is all but over now as the government on May 13, adopted the multipurpose Padma Barrage project meant to mitigate water-scarcity impacts in vast areas and facilitate irrigation, pisciculture and hydropower generation, officials say.

The 65-year-long-stalled water-management infrastructure’s first phase with an estimated cost of Tk 334.74 billion was endorsed at the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) meeting on 13 May. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman poses for a photograph with leaders of the Editors' Council after a meeting at the Secretariat in the capital on May 16

16 May, 2026

Repeal, amend undemocratic legal provisions to secure media freedom

Print-media editors have demanded of the government to repeal and amend undemocratic provisions in the existing laws to ensure media freedom, among other demands placed before the Prime Minister .

The demands were placed at a meeting held on May 16 between Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and members of the Executive Committee of the Editors' Council in the Public Administration Conference Room of the Cabinet Division at Bangladesh Secretariat.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon, State Minister Yeaser Khan Chowdhury and Prime Minister's adviser on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Dr Zahed Ur Rahman, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Saleh Shibly and additional press secretary Atikur Rahman Ruman were also present.

Source: The Financial Express

18 May, 2026

Tech-driven land management to ease suffering: PM

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on May 18 said, the government wanted to build a modern, technology-based and citizen-friendly land-management system so that people no longer face harassment or have to make unnecessary visits to government offices for land services.

"There is no alternative to a transparent, accountable and people-friendly land management system for building a just and modern state," he said while inaugurating the three-day nationwide "Land Service Fair-2026."



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman speaks at the inaugural session of the “Land Service Fair-2026” at Bhumi Bhaban in the capital’s Tejgaon area on May 18

The Prime Minister also said providing services for citizens was not an act of charity but a responsibility of the state.

“Our goal is to build a land management system where people will no longer have to go from office to office unnecessarily to receive land services, nor will they have to suffer from corruption or harassment,” he said.

Tarique Rahman also said the government aimed to establish a corruption-free, harassment-free, technology-driven and citizen-friendly land management system that will further accelerate the country’s sustainable development.

He inaugurated the fair by pressing a button at the “Bhumi Bhaban” at Tejgaon at 11:05am. The fair is being held simultaneously in districts and upazilas across

the country from May 19 to 21. Source: *The Financial Express*

20 May, 2026

Tigers whitewash Pakistan again

Bangladesh whitewashed Pakistan for a second consecutive time as the hosts completed a 78-run win in the second Test in the final morning session to clinch the series 2-0.

Having already whitewashed Pakistan



Bangladesh players pose with the tournament trophy after winning the second Test cricket match between Bangladesh and Pakistan at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in Sylhet on May 20

in the away series, Bangladesh completed a historic home win at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in Sylhet on May 20. *Source: The Financial Express*

28 May, 2026

Bangladesh celebrating Eid-ul-Azha with religious fervour

Holy Eid-ul-Azha, the largest religious festival of Muslims, is being celebrated in Bangladesh with religious fervour and festivity on May 28.

The main Eid-ul-Azha congregation was held at the National Eidgah at 7:30am, with the participation of President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman.

Eid congregations are being held at other Eidgahs and mosques across the country. Religious scholars and khateebis are delivering sermons focusing on the significance of Qurbani and the values of sacrifice, compassion, and obedience in Islam.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, have greeted the nation on the occasion.

In a video message on May 27 evening, the Prime Minister said, holy Eid-ul-Azha has once again arrived at the doorsteps of the Muslim Ummah with the message of sacrifice, piety and self-purification.

“I extend my greetings on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Azha to Muslims in Bangladesh and across the world. I also wish all people of the country, regardless of political belief, religion or ethnicity, a happy Eid. Eid Mubarak,” he said. *Source: The Financial Express*



President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman offered holy Eid-Ul-Azha prayers along with hundreds of devotees at National Eidgah on Eid Day Morning

2 June, 2026

Bangladesh assumes UNGA presidency

PM greets Khalilur on being elected 81st assembly president

Bangladesh assumes the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly with

Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman being elected President of the 81st UNGA Session, in a major diplomatic victory for the country.

He happens to become only a second Bangladeshi to hold one of the highest offices in the United Nations system.

Dr Rahman was elected in a vote held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on June 2, defeating the candidate from Cyprus in a closely watched contest among member-states.

According to the election results, all 190 member-states present participated in the vote. Dr Rahman secured 91 votes to win the election, marking a significant achievement for Bangladesh's diplomacy and elevating the country's profile on the global stage, officials say.

Following the announcement of the results, UN Secretary-General António Guterres congratulated Dr Rahman on his election and expressed confidence that the United Nations would benefit from his extensive diplomatic and political experience. *Source: The Financial Express*

5 June, 2026

Visit first step to elevate ties to strategic level, says Fidan

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan has said his visit to Bangladesh marks the first step towards elevating Dhaka-Ankara relations to a strategic level as he caps his Dhaka mission with a call on Prime Minister Tarique Rahman.

The meeting at the Prime Minister's Office on June 5 was the final engagement during Fidan's three-day official visit to Bangladesh. *Source: The Financial Express*



Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman has been elected as the President for the 81st session of the UN General Assembly on June 2



Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan meets Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at his office in the capital's Tejgaon on June 5

5 June, 2026

FTA, investment in textiles, defence industry figure high

Bangladesh and Türkiye intensify efforts to deepen economic and strategic ties with focus on a possible free-trade agreement, increased Turkish investment in sectors like defence industry and textiles.

The accord featured talks between the foreign ministers of the two countries in Dhaka on June 5.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, who arrived in Dhaka on 4 June, had bilateral talks with Bangladesh's Foreign Minister, Dr Khalilur Rahman, on June 5.

Both the ministers addressed a joint press conference after the meeting, briefing what transpired at the talks. *Source:*

The Financial Express

9 June, 2026

ECNEC clears 8 projects worth Tk 2,266.41cr

The Executive Committee of



Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan speaks at a joint press conference with his Bangladesh counterpart Dr Khalilur Rahman in the city on June 5

the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on June 9 approved eight development projects with an estimated cost of Tk 2,266.41 crore.

The approval came from the 12th ECNEC meeting of the current fiscal year (FY26) held at the Cabinet Division Conference Room at Bangladesh Secretariat here with ECNEC Chairperson and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in the chair.

Of the total project cost, Tk 2,229.13 crore will be financed from the government's own resources, while the remaining Tk 37.28 crore will come from the implementing agencies' own funds.

Among the approved projects, three are new, three are revised and two have received tenure extensions.

According to the Ministry of Planning, the approved projects cover a wide range of sectors, including water resources, transportation, public administration, health, defence, education and energy. *Source: The New Age*

10 June, 2026

Govt modernising armed forces, police: PM

Stressing that future peacekeeping missions must be more modern, visionary, and technology-driven, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on June 10 said his government is modernising the armed forces and police to perform their duties in UN peacekeeping missions and other international assignments.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman hands over honorary awards to the wives and family members of Bangladeshi peacekeepers who were killed while serving in a United Nations Peacekeeping mission in Sudan in 2025, at a ceremony held at Dhaka Cantonment on June 10

‘The government is gradually implementing initiatives to modernise the armed forces and police to prepare them for performing responsibilities in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions and other international assignments,’ he said.

The Prime Minister made the remarks at a programme at Senakunja in Dhaka Cantonment on 10 June, marking the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. *Source: The Financial Express*

11 June, 2026

Largest budget focuses on social safety, edn, health

The government on June, 11 announced an expansionary national budget worth Tk 9.38 lakh crore for the 2026-27 financial year with an ambitious revenue target, putting aside hefty allocations for debt servicing, pay hike for government employees, and growing subsidy amid the global economic uncertainties.

Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, who placed the first budget of the new government in the Jatiya Sangsad titled ‘Journey Towards a Democratic, Humane and Inclusive Economy’, also projected a challenging borrowing target from domestic and overseas sources. *Source: The New Age*

13 June, 2026

PM urges every citizen to plant tree to ensure clean environment

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has urged every citizen of the country to plant at least one tree sapling to build a clean and pollution-free environment for the next generation.

‘Thinking about your children’s future and keeping in mind that they should be



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury enter the National Parliament ahead of placing the National Budget for the FY 2026-27 on June 11



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman presents a Tk 2.0-million family savings certificate to the family of July Uprising martyr Md Wasim at Pekua in Cox's Bazar on June 13. His wife, Dr Zubaida Rahman, was also present

able to breathe freely in a beautiful environment, please plant at least one tree sapling wherever possible from today,' he said.

The Premier made the call after formally inaugurating a nationwide programme to plant 250 million (25 crore) trees by planting a garjan sapling at the Malumghat Reserved Forest in Dulahazara on June 13.

'Let us give our future generations a guarantee that we will build a clean and pollution-free environment where they can live in healthy surroundings,' he said.

Source: The Financial Express

16 June, 2026

ECNEC okays Chinese EPZ

The government on June 16 approved a project to establish a Chinese Export Processing Zone at Anwara in Chattogram with the mandatory integration of renewable energy and waste management into the zone.

Presided over by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the secretariat, the ECNEC attached priority to addressing environmental issues and incorporating sustainable energy solutions into the project design while approving the 'Supporting Infrastructure Project for Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone' project.

Once implemented in 2031 at a cost of Tk 4,189.45 crore, the project will create at least 1,00,000 direct and indirect jobs and attract approximately \$500 million in foreign investment.

Of the total project cost, the government will provide Tk 1,722.19 crore, while Tk 2,467.262 crore will come from project loans from China.

The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority and state-owned Chinese company-- China Road and Bridge Corporation -- will jointly build the EPZ on some 800 acres of land at Anwara upazila of Chattogram under a government-to-government initiative. *Source: The New Age*

18 June, 2026

Govt committed to ensuring press freedom: Information Minister

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon has categorically said the government is committed to ensuring press freedom.

He said for the first time in the country's history, all stakeholders in the media sector have been brought together on a single platform.



Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon speaking as the chief guest at a workshop, held at a city hotel on June 18 to formulate the outline of the proposed National Media Commission

This initiative has created significant opportunities to ensure press freedom and to form an independent National Media Commission, he added.

The Minister was addressing a workshop organised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting at a hotel in the capital on June 18 to formulate the outline of the National Media Commission.

In his speech, the Information Minister said in this reform process, the government will only act as a 'supporting' and cooperative partner on behalf of the state. *Source: The Financial Express*



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman poses for a photograph with members of the Special Security Force (SSF) marking its 40th founding anniversary at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the capital's Tejgaon on June 18

18 June, 2026

PM asks SSF not to isolate him from people in the name of security

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on June 18 urged the Special Security Force (SSF) to ensure that security arrangements do not isolate him from ordinary citizens, saying public trust and love remain his greatest source of strength.

“As the head of government, my greatest reliance is on the trust and love of the people. Therefore, I urge you, as a sophisticated force, to ensure that the security cordon does not push the head of government away from the people,” he said, while speaking at a programme marking the 40th anniversary of the SSF at Shapla Hall of the Prime Minister's Office in Tejgaon. *Source: The Financial Express*

20 June, 2026

PM urges primary students to excel in studies along with sports

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on June 20 urged students to focus not only on sports but also on academic and creative activities.

“Besides sports, you must also excel in your studies and cultural activities. However, it is important that you participate in different kinds of sports,” he told at the prize-giving ceremony of the Primary School Gold Cup Football Tournament followed by the final matches of boys and girls at the Bangladesh Army Stadium.

The premier said his government mulls organising this Gold Cup Football Tournament at the secondary school level from next year.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman meet with the players of the Primary School Gold Cup Football Tournament at the Bangladesh Army Stadium on June 20

“We plan to introduce the Prime Minister’s Cup from next year,” he said.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said, “Before the election, we promised that if elected, we would promote sports throughout the country. We are working to fulfill that commitment.”

The programme began with a display of documentary accompanied by patriotic songs. *Source: The Financial Express*

22 June, 2026

Bangladesh and Malaysia pledge to take bilateral ties to new highs

Bangladesh and Malaysia pledge to elevate bilateral relationship to a new level in broad agreements on expanding cooperation across trade, investment, labour migration, technology, defence and regional diplomacy, as Prime Minister Tarique Rahman concludes his first foreign visit since taking office.

During the bilateral meeting held in Putrajaya on June 22, Tarique Rahman and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim agreed to deepen a partnership that both leaders described as being rooted in shared values, mutual respect and decades of people-to-people ties.

The new government in Dhaka to signal continuity in regional engagement while pursuing what it has called a “Bangladesh First” foreign policy.



Bangladesh and Malaysia signed one MoU and exchanged two instruments after bilateral talks between the two countries at the Malaysian Prime Minister's Office, Perdana Putra Building, in the administrative capital of Putrajaya on June 22

Bangladesh and Malaysia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cultural cooperation and exchanged two bilateral documents following the talks. Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim witnessed the signing.

Also, the two sides exchanged a document on cooperation in research and capacity building in counter-terrorism and another bilateral document related to investment.

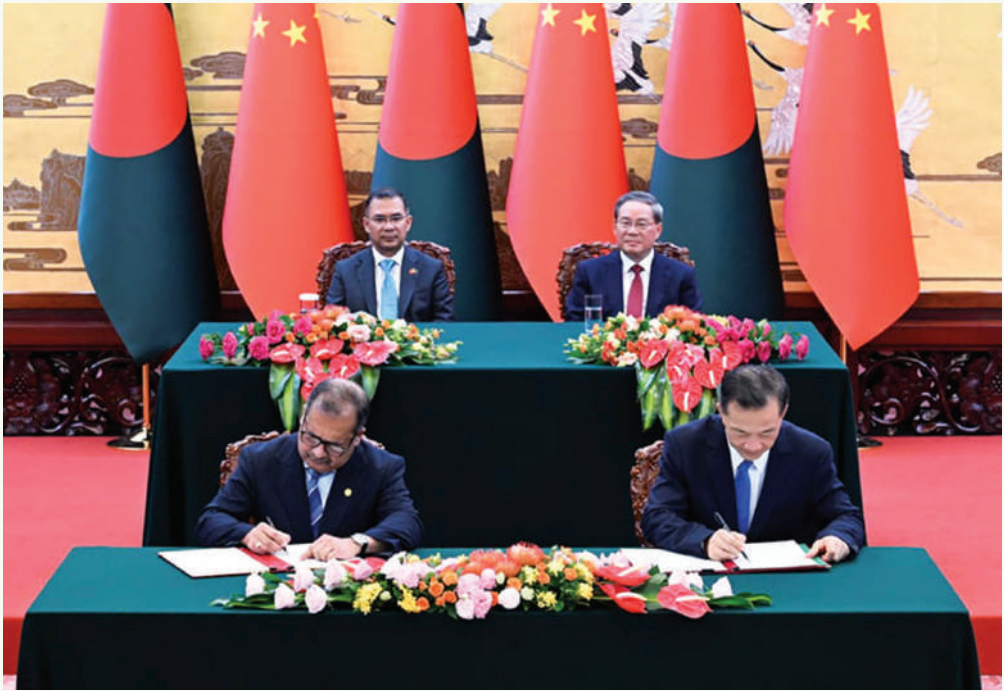
Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman and Malaysian Foreign Minister Utama Haji Mohamad bin Haji Hasan exchanged the documents on behalf of their respective governments. *Source: The Financial Express*

25 June, 2026

BD, China sign four MoUs on media tie-up

Bangladesh and China signed four memoranda of understanding (MoUs) on June 25 to strengthen bilateral cooperation in media sector and promote the use of modern technologies.

According to a statement of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Chinese Premier Li Qiang witnessed the signing of the MoUs at Beijing's historic Great Hall of the People.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and his Chinese counterpart Li Qiang watching the signing of a MoU at the Great Hall of the People in China on June 25

It said Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon and the heads of China's state news agency Xinhua and China Media Group (CMG) inked the deals.

According to the statement, the MoUs would expand opportunities for bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and China in news and information exchange.

Source: The Financial Express

26 June, 2026

Tarique, Xi agree to build China-BD 'Shared Future' partnership

Bangladesh and China have agreed to build "China-Bangladesh community with a shared future in the new era" in a significant expansion of strategic cooperation encompassing trade, infrastructure, connectivity, water management, defence, technology and regional diplomacy.

The decision was announced on June 26 following talks between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing during Rahman's first official visit to China as Prime Minister.

A joint communiqué issued after the meeting says the two countries agreed to upgrade their comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and deepen



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman holds a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on June 26

cooperation across a broad range of sectors while maintaining regular high-level political dialogue. *Source: The Financial Express*

30 June, 2026

Jatiya Sangsad passes Tk 9.38 lakh crore FY 2026-27 budget

The Jatiya Sangsad on June 30 passed the national budget worth Tk 9.38 lakh crore for the 2026-27 financial year.

The budget, the first of the current five-year tenure of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party-led government, has been made implementable following the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2026 in the JS on the day.

Earlier on the day, Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury placed the bill seeking authorisation of public expenditure amounting to Tk 15.15 lakh crore in FY 2026-27.

On June 11, the Minister placed the FY 2026-27 national budget and the Finance Bill 2026, projecting an overall revenue of Tk 6.95 lakh crore for the new financial year.

The appropriation bill was passed by voice vote after discussions on allocations to 36 ministries and divisions during cut motions moved by 43 members of parliament from the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party.

Unlike previous occasions, the House decided to discuss as many as 69 demands.

However, the decision was later changed, and the discussion was limited to 36 ministries and entities. *Source: The New Age*

Report Compilation: Mazharul Hoque, Mamun Hossain



In the presence of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury is presenting the National Budget of the FY 2026-27 at the Parliament on June 11, 2026



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