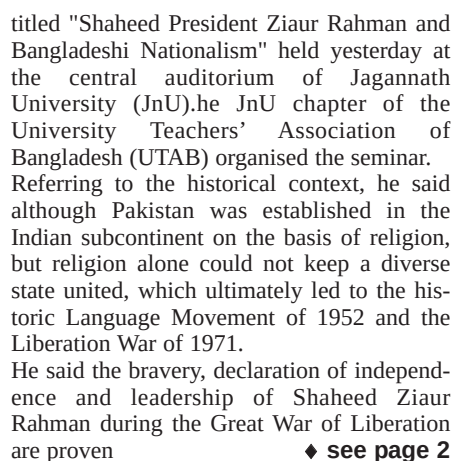




Ashtula Elevated Expressway Construction Project (2nd revised). Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry obtained approval for two projects: Power Distribution System Development Project for Sylhet Division(3rd revision) and a project to drill one appraisal-cum-development well (Begumganj-5) and two exploratory wells (Begumganj-6 and Sunetra-2). The Health and Family Welfare Ministry's project(2nd revision) to upgrade existing kidney dialysis centres at medical college hospitals to 50-bed facilities and establish 10-bed dialysis centres at

◆ see page 2

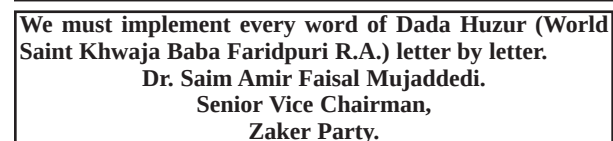
A mobile court on Wednesday fined Ashwin Foods Limited Tk 3 lakh for multiple violations of the Safe Food Act, 2013, during a joint enforcement drive by the Kaliganj Upazila Administration and the Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA) in Gazipur. MapsZakia Sarwar Lima, Assistant Commissioner (Land) and Executive Magistrate of Kaliganj led the drive. Farzana Yasmin Sonia, Food Safety Officer at BFSA's Gazipur office and Kaliganj

♦ see page 7

Owner Mr. Haji Abdul Al Mamun told The Daily Bangla Sky.I started with great effort from a small 1.5-acre pond. After 15 years of hard work, Alhamdullillah, I have now reached close to 115 acres. This achievement is a gift from Almighty Allah after a lot of hard work.Currently I have 250 officers and employees. But due to the rising prices of fish feed and necessary medicines, along with natural disasters, I am facing many obstacles in fish farming right now.Excessive rain and drought create unfavorable conditions for fish farming. Sometimes we also have to

◆ see page 7

The US military carried out its 11th consecutive night of airstrikes on Iran early Wednesday, as fighting across the Middle East continued to overshadow diplomatic efforts in Pakistan to revive a collapsed interim ceasefire agreement. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) said the latest strikes targeted aircraft hangars and drone storage facilities. The attacks followed President Donald Trump's indication that the US campaign against Iran would intensify. Ahead of the latest strikes, Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni visited Pakistan, which has been acting as a key mediator in the conflict, in an effort to revive diplomatic talks. However, it remained unclear whether a new agreement could be reached to end the war, which has increasingly focused on control of the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial route for global energy supplies. Executive Branch Speaking from the Oval Office on Tuesday, Trump expressed little optimism about negotiations, saying the US had "no interest in meeting." He also suggested that US forces could soon strike an area near one of Iran's main uranium enrichment sites. With diplomatic efforts stalled and shipping through the Strait of Hormuz largely disrupted, both sides have increasingly targeted civilian infrastructure across the region that supports millions of people. Despite repeated US airstrikes, Iran has maintained control over the Strait of Hormuz, through which about one-fifth of the world's crude oil and natural gas passed before the conflict began. The



Hold those liable for Milestone tragedy

The findings of the official investigation into the Milestone School and College tragedy are a grim reminder of systemic failures on several fronts, particularly the continued allowance of schools, residential buildings, and other structures within a flight path designated by the civil aviation authority. The probe commission concluded that the crash of the Air Force training aircraft FT-7BG1 resulted from human error stemming from inadequate training and supervision. According to the commission's unpublished report, obtained by this newspaper, the investigators also warned about the well-known risks posed by densely populated establishments near airport runways. Regrettably, those risks remain unaddressed, as there has been no visible official action to remove such hazards. The commission rightly called for action against those responsible—not only within the Air Force but also among the authorities entrusted with urban planning, land use, and enforcement of building regulations. It is regrettable that the report, submitted to then Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on November 4 last year, has not been made public. Its release would have enabled the victims' families and the public to assess whether the government has taken meaningful corrective measures and ensured accountability.

There have been several accidents involving Air Force training flights in the past, but none had occurred over a densely populated civilian area. Consequently, previous investigations remained largely confined to the Air Force's internal administrative processes. The Milestone School and College crash of July 21, 2025, was the first Air Force training flight accident to cause mass civilian casualties, claiming 36 lives, including 28 school students.

A separate report by BBC Bangla cited observations by the Fire Service and Civil Defence Department that the Haider Ali Building, into which the aircraft crashed, was itself unsafe. Given its occupancy and intended use, the building required three staircases but had only one. Its corridors were also two feet narrower than the minimum required width of six feet. The commission further noted that the school authorities failed to produce documents proving that the building had received official approval. Although the authorities had reportedly pledged to demolish the Haider Ali Building and seek approval for other unauthorised structures, they continued to use them.

The probe report was equally critical of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), noting that despite being aware of unauthorised buildings at the school and the illegal use of some structures as dormitories, Rajuk failed to take action. The commission also noted Rajuk's failure to regulate land use around the airport effectively, which is the result of abuse of power and the influence of vested interests. This culture of impunity must end. Rajuk should immediately remove all unauthorised structures, particularly those identified by the civil aviation authorities as posing risks to the safety of both commercial and military aviation.

The government must act without further delay to hold accountable all those responsible for this tragic loss of life. It must also ensure that building codes, land use regulations, and safety standards are enforced rigorously and impartially, free from political pressure or undue influence. Only through meaningful accountability and strict enforcement can similar tragedies be prevented in the future.

Rethinking Bangladesh's health sector reform after SWAp

Md. Neyamul Hossain

Ironically, the end of SWAp has also exposed its value. The abrupt discontinuation of the health sector programme created uncertainty in planning, financing and procurement. Procurement of essential medicines, vaccines, contraceptives and medical supplies experienced delays as established financing and approval mechanisms were dismantled. Critical public health programmes, including immunisation, TB control, NCD control, family planning, maternal health and nutrition faced implementation challenges during the transition.

involving ministries, planning agencies, and development partners. While these processes strengthened accountability, they reduced flexibility, making it often difficult to respond quickly to emerging health challenges. More importantly, integration remained incomplete: although sector planning became unified, the country continued to separate development and operating budgets, the latter remaining outside SWAp. As a result, infrastructure investments did not always get matched with adequate staffing, maintenance or operational resources. Planning became integrated on paper, but implementation remained fragmented. Donor harmonisation was also partial. While pooled financing reduced transaction costs, several bilateral agencies and UN organisations continued operating through parallel funding mechanisms with separate reporting and procurement systems, limiting full government ownership.

SWAp was also largely confined to the health ministry, despite the country's increasingly pluralistic health system. Local governments, private providers and NGOs, despite being key contributors to service delivery, remained largely outside sector planning, limiting the programme's ability to govern the health system as a whole. Although disease-specific programmes for maternal and child health, communicable and non-communicable disease (NCD) control, tuberculosis, family planning, immunisation, and nutrition achieved important gains, they often operated in silos. The number of OPs expanded from 22 under HPSP to 38 under HNPSF, before being reduced to 32 and 31 in the subsequent programmes, reflecting persistent programme fragmentation. Similar and sometimes overlapping OPs existed between the Directorate

discussion on the issue in Parliament.

Government sources dismissed opposition demands for the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, describing them as politically motivated. They maintained that the government acted promptly after the alleged leak came to light.

Protests over the controversy entered their third consecutive day on Wednesday. Demonstrations continued despite clashes between protesters and police on Monday, during which authorities said dozens of police personnel were injured.

Addressing the issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for the toughest possible action against those responsible for the alleged paper leak.

Quoting the prime minister after the NDA Parliamentary Party's 'Mangal Milan' meeting, Rijiju said Modi urged alliance partners to remain united in ensuring the smooth functioning of Parliament and appealed to opposition parties to cooperate constructively.

According to Rijiju, the prime minister said that although political differences are natural, all lawmakers share a collective responsibility to work for the country's future and safeguard the interests of its youth.

PM forms committee to

Press Secretary Hasan Shiplu.During the meeting, the BTMA leaders discussed the current state of the textile industry, its export potential and a range of challenges.They highlighted the textile industry's contribution to the national economy and sought the government's support for its sustainable growth.They also urged the Prime Minister to provide policy support to strengthen the sector's competitiveness in the global market.Prime Minister Tarique Rahman praised the textile industry's contribution to industrialisation, employment generation and export earnings and assured the industry leaders of the government's continued support for the sector's development. BTMA President Shawkat Aziz Russell, Vice-President Shamim Islam, former President A. Matin Chowdhury, former Director Syed Enayet Kabir, Engineer Rajib Haider, Directors Chowdhury Mohammad Hanif Soyeb and Badsha Mia, Amanat Shah Group Chairman Helal Mia and Munnu Fabrics Managing Director Samiul Islam were present at the meeting.

Awareness meeting held in

school and environmental cleanliness.The meeting was organized at the hall of Amtoli Police Station at 11 am on Wednesday at a joint initiative of Amtoli ADP, World Vision Bangladesh and NSS.Along with village police working in various unions of the upazila, members of law enforcement agencies, journalists, human rights activists and representatives of civil society participated in the meeting.Police Inspector (Investigation) of Amtoli Police Station Anwar Hossain was present as the chief guest at the meeting. Bibhudan Biswas, Area Program Manager of World Vision Bangladesh, Amtoli ADP, presided over the meeting. The program was moderated by Mridul Sarkar, Program Manager of NSS.Amtali Police Station Sub-Inspector Nasrin Sultana, World Vision Bangladesh Amtali ADP Child Protection and AP Sponsorship Officer Churchill Das and Sujan - Citizen for Good Governance, Amtali Upazila Branch General Secretary and Journalist Abu Jihad spoke as special guests.The speakers said that child labor, child marriage, malnutrition and hunger are not only one of the biggest obstacles to a family but also to national development. These social problems disrupt the normal physical and mental development of children and make their educational life uncertain. A child dropping out of school is not only a personal loss for him or her, but also a major challenge to the human resource development of the country.The meeting also said that since village police are directly involved with the people at the grassroots level, they can play an important role in ensuring child protection, preventing child marriage, preventing child labor, motivating students to ensure attendance at school and creating a clean environment.In his

General of Health Services (DGHS) and the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), particularly in areas such as maternal and child health and health information systems. As a result, patients with multiple health needs continued to navigate fragmented rather than integrated services.Institutional fragmentation was reinforced by SWAp itself. Line directors managed development-funded OPs, while permanent directors remained responsible for routine functions under the operating budget. This created parallel management structures with separate reporting, planning and accountability systems, often blurring responsibilities and complicating coordination between development activities and routine service delivery.

Ironically, the end of SWAp has also exposed its value. The abrupt discontinuation of the health sector programme created uncertainty in planning, financing and procurement. Procurement of essential medicines, vaccines, contraceptives and medical supplies experienced delays as established financing and approval mechanisms were dismantled. Critical public health programmes, including immunisation, TB control, NCD control, family planning, maternal health and nutrition faced implementation challenges during the transition. Development partners accustomed to working within a common planning framework also had to adjust to new financing arrangements, creating coordination gaps.

This experience offers an important policy lesson. While institutional reform is necessary, abrupt institutional disruption carries real costs. The challenge now is to preserve what worked while addressing what did not. Future reforms should move beyond programme management towards institutional transformation. Planning should become genuinely inclusive by bringing together government and private healthcare providers, local government institutions, professional bodies, civil society, and patient representatives. Decision-making should also become more decentralised. Equally important is the reform of the financing process. Bangladesh can no longer sustain a system where development investments and operational expenditures are planned separately. Improved coordination between these financing streams would improve both efficiency and accountability while strengthening service delivery. Finally, success should be measured not by the number of projects completed or budgets spent, but by whether people receive timely, affordable and quality healthcare. Bangladesh's health challenges have changed profoundly since SWAp was introduced 28 years ago. Rapid urbanisation, ageing population, the growing burden of NCDs, climate-related health risks, and increasing public expectations demand a healthcare system that is more integrated, resilient and people-centred than the one designed in the late 1990s. SWAp solved many of yesterday's problems by bringing order to a fragmented aid environment. The next generation of reforms must go further. In addition to a planning framework, the country needs stronger institutions capable of delivering high-quality healthcare regardless of who finances, manages or provides the service. That should define the future of health sector reform.

speech as the chief guest, Police Inspector (Investigation) Anwar Hossain said that ensuring a safe childhood for children is a joint responsibility of the state and society. Child labor and child marriage are punishable crimes. He urged the village police to inform the administration immediately if any information is received about such incidents. At the same time, he emphasized on playing an active role in preventing crimes by increasing social awareness.In his speech as the president, Bibhudan Biswas said that World Vision Bangladesh has been working for a long time to establish children's rights, ensure education, health, nutrition and a safe environment. Their goal is to build a safer and more discriminatory society for children in cooperation with various government departments, law enforcement agencies and local people.The village police present at the meeting were given detailed guidelines on child protection, prevention of child marriage, school-oriented child growth, combating malnutrition, building a hunger-free society and protecting environmental cleanliness. In addition, strategies to increase awareness in rural areas and inform the general public about the law were also discussed.The event was attended by officials and employees of Amtali Police Station, village police from various unions of the upazila, journalists from various media outlets, human rights activists, representatives of civil society, and members of various social organizations.At the end of the meeting, information-rich leaflets were distributed among the marginalized communities to raise awareness about child rights, prevention of child marriage, elimination of child labor, continuing education, hygiene and environmental cleanliness, and the prevailing laws and regulations of the country.The organizers expressed the hope that such awareness activities will play an important role in raising social awareness at the grassroots level and protecting children's rights.

Teachers should educate students

a view exchanging meeting on the responsibilities of officials for ensuring quality primary education at the PTI auditorium in Mirpur here. He said the government is working sincerely for the development of primary education and called upon teachers, guardians and education officials to work together for improving the sector.The minister stressed the need for advanced training to enhance teachers' skills and said young people should be encouraged to stay away from mobile phone and drug addiction through joyful learning and sports. He said preparations are underway to organise the Prime Minister's Gold Cup football competition across the country, which is expected to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister from Chattogram on August 9.Dr Milon said the government will provide free school uniforms to attract children to schools and is implementing programmes including mid-day meals. State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajjaj, ministry Secretary Md. Sakhawat Hossain and Director General of the Directorate of Primary Education Shaheena Ferdousi, among others, attended the programme.

Upay, NRB Bank partner

Micro DPS, remittance disbursement and credit card bill payments, said a press release yesterday.The two organisations said the initiative reflects their shared commitment to delivering secure, seamless and customer-centric financial solutions while accelerating digital financial inclusion.The agreement was signed by Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of UCB Fintech Company Limited (Upay) Shyamol B Das and Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NRB Bank Tarek Reaz Khan on behalf of their respective organisations.The partnership aims to make digital financial services more accessible, convenient and secure for customers by leveraging the strengths of both organisations. It also reinforces their commitment to supporting Bangladesh's growing digital financial ecosystem and advancing a more inclusive digital economy.

ECNEC clears 8 projects involv

district hospitals was also approved.The ECNEC meeting was also informed about 11 projects each involving less than Tk 50 crore. These include projects related to establishing three regional offices of the National University, setting up the Barishal Textile Vocational Institute at Gournadi, installing a mobile network at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport's Third Terminal, upgrading sections of regional and district highways, developing power transmission infrastructure for the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, expanding the eastern grid network and establishing six BITAC centres in different districts.

Outgoing Navy chief pays

Secretary said.Following the meeting, the Prime Minister hosted a luncheon in honour of the outgoing Navy chief.Admiral Nazmul Hassan assumed office as Chief of Naval Staff on July 24, 2023.Commissioned in the Bangladesh Navy on July 1, 1986, he has served in a wide range of command, staff and instructional appointments during his long career. He previously served as Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Operations), Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Personnel), Director of Naval Operations and Naval Intelligence, Director General of the Civil-Military Liaison Directorate at the Armed Forces Division, and commanded four naval warships, including the training ship BNS Omar Farooq.

Philosophy of Bangladeshi

historical facts. However, even after independence, an identity crisis persisted as a language-based identity alone was not equally acceptable to all communities of the country, he noted, saying in that context Shaheed Zia presented the philosophy of citizen-based 'Bangladeshi nationalism'.

Zahir Uddin Swapon said the philosophy of Bangladeshi nationalism leaves no identity crisis for Chakma, Marma, other small ethnic communities or people of different faiths. It also offers no scope to deny one culture in an attempt to establish another.'Bangladesh first, Bangladesh last' - this philosophy has united all citizens under a common national identity with equal dignity, and has served as the main driving force in preserving the country's territorial integrity," he said.bout foreign relations, the minister said, "Everyone is our friend, but we will practice friendship on the basis of Bangladesh's interests. Beyond the country's interests, Bangladesh has no alternative destination."He warned that any thinking that deviates from this philosophy could weaken national unity.Speaking as the special guest in the seminar, Dhaka-7 constituency lawmaker Hamidur Rahman Hamid said Shaheed Ziaur Rahman was the architect of modern Bangladesh. After assuming responsibility following the Sipahi-Janata Revolution on November 7, 1975, he guided the fragile state structure in the right direction and transformed it into a prosperous state.JnU Vice-Chancellor Professor Rais Uddin addressed the seminar as the keynote speaker.

Chaired by UTAB JnU chapter President Professor Dr Mohammad Nasir Uddin, the seminar was also attended as special guests by UTAB central committee Senior Vice-President and JnU Vice-Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Dr Shamsul Alam, JnU Treasurer Professor Dr Sabina Sharmin and acting President of the JnU Teachers' Association Professor Dr Muhammad Manjur Murshed Bhuiyan. Professor Dr Nasir Ahmad, general secretary of the UTAB JnU chapter, presented the keynote paper, while JnU Teachers' Association General Secretary Professor Dr Imranul Haque delivered the welcome address.

BB streamlines foreign

issuance of dual-currency freelancer cards and expands the use of Mobile Financial Service Providers (MFSPs) and Payment Service Providers (PSPs), thereby widening access to convenient and efficient digital payment channels.

In addition, freelancers in ICT sectors may retain up to 50% of their export earnings in foreign currency accounts, commonly known as Exporters' Retention Quota (ERQ), while other service exporters may retain up to 30%, providing greater flexibility in managing international business expenses.

Market participants view the move as a timely and forward-looking step, aligning the regulatory framework with the evolving nature of digital trade and freelance work. By simplifying procedures and expanding access to formal payment channels, the circular is expected to encourage greater formalization of service export earnings, improve transparency, and strengthen foreign exchange inflows. As per business insiders, the initiative is expected to enhance ease of doing business for freelancers, promote formal remittance channels, and further integrate Bangladesh's service exporters into the global digital economy, while also supporting the country's broader ambition of building a robust knowledge-based and digitally driven export ecosystem.

India's 'Cockroaches' movement

reportedly compared some unemployed young people to "cockroaches." The remark triggered a backlash on social media, leading Boston University student Abhijeet Dipke to launch the Cockroach Janta Party, or Cockroach People's Party.

Many young people embraced the label as a symbol of resilience, rapidly turning the movement into a social media phenomenon. Supporters shared satirical content criticizing the government over unemployment, limited job opportunities and economic challenges.The campaign moved from online platforms to the streets in June when Dipke returned to India and organized demonstrations in several cities and university campuses. Protesters are demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, reforms to the examination system and compensation for families of students who died by suicide following alleged exam paper leaks.Initially drawing only a few hundred participants, the protests have since attracted thousands. The movement gained further attention after activist Sonam Wangchuk joined the demonstrations and launched a hunger strike lasting more than three weeks before police transferred him to a hospital.

As the campaign has expanded, it has evolved beyond student concerns to reflect wider public frustration over government accountability, unemployment and confidence in institutions, including the education system, political leadership, judiciary and media.The protests have also drawn support from professionals, families and volunteers across the country, many of whom have contributed through donations and social media campaigns rather than traditional political organizations. The Indian government initially dismissed the protesters' demands. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said authorities had addressed the examination controversy by ordering fresh tests and accused demonstrators of acting against national interests.

However, the government's stance softened after police used tear gas and batons to disperse protesters attempting to march to Parliament earlier this week. The crackdown triggered public criticism and prompted government representatives to hold talks with protest leaders, although no breakthrough was reported.The movement has also received backing from opposition leader Rahul Gandhi and several rights groups, who describe it as a broader campaign for democratic accountability and the right to peaceful protest.Political observers say the decentralized youth movement presents an unusual challenge for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, particularly as India's large population of young voters could play a decisive role in future elections.

Govt set for fresh talks with

protests over the alleged NEET paper leak, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Wednesday that the Centre is prepared for a comprehensive



‘Bangladesh First’ policy to guide foreign relations: Khalilur

Staff correspondent

Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman today said the government's "Bangladesh First" policy will guide the country's external relations as he held

separate bilateral meetings with his Chinese, Russian and US counterparts in Manila. The meetings took place on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in the Philippine capital, said a

foreign ministry's press release here. Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir accompanied the Foreign Minister during the engagements. The meetings covered a broad spectrum of

◆ see page 7

WFP country director meets Dr Zahid

Staff correspondent

World Food Programme (WFP) Country Director in Bangladesh Coco H. Ushiyama yesterday met Women and Children Affairs and Social Welfare Minister Prof. Dr. A Z M Zahid Hossain at his office at the Secretariat here. Women and Children Affairs Secretary Yasmeen Parveen was present during the meeting. They discussed social safety programmes, Family Card, food security, mid-day meals for primary school students, education, health, nutrition, climate change impacts and technical cooperation. The minister thanked WFP for its continued support and said the government has started implementing the Family Card initiative, one of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's election pledges, from the first month after forming the government. He said 41 lakh families will receive Family Cards in the current fiscal year. He said the government

◆ see page 7



10,000 stranded as Teesta embankment breaches flood villages in Rangpur

Staff correspondent

Around 10,000 people have been stranded after breaches in two embankments along the Teesta River flooded several villages in Gangachara upazila of Rangpur. The breaches developed at the volunteer-built embankments in Ward No. 8 of Nohali Union following a sudden rise in the Teesta's water level, allowing floodwater to enter nearby villages. A visit to the area found that nearly 150 metres of the embankments have already been washed away by the river. Vast tract of cropland have gone underwater, while floodwater has inundated villages, disrupting normal life. The erosion has also put more than

100 homesteads, educational institutions, mosques, a temple, roads and other infrastructures at risk. Residents of Char Bagdhogra, Char Kachari, Chilakhal, Binbinia and Mukutpara said families, particularly children, elderly people and livestock, are facing severe hardship, with many taking shelter at relatives' houses. Monayem Hossain, a local resident said hundreds of people lose their homes to river erosion every year but no permanent solution has been implemented. "The embankment has already lost about 150 metres to the river. If the main embankment is breached, thousands of people will lose their homes. A few thousand geo bags will not be

◆ see page 7

Bangladesh, Russia discuss expanding cooperation in energy sector

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh and Russia yesterday discussed ways to strengthen their existing bilateral cooperation, particularly in the energy sector, as the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to further deepening ties. Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov led their respective delegations at the bilateral meeting held in Manila, the Philippines, said a foreign ministry's press release here. Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir accompanied the Bangladesh Foreign Minister at the meeting. During the talks, the two foreign ministers reviewed

◆ see page 7



Awareness Workshop by Red Crescent Held in Feni

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

Proper application of international law and humanitarian guidelines is essential to reunite families separated due to disasters, conflicts, or migration—with this theme in mind, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society organized a day-long awareness training workshop in Feni. The workshop on the 'Restoring Family Links (RFL)' program of the Red Crescent was held on Wednesday morning at the conference room of the Feni Municipality. Chaired by Zia Uddin Mistry, Chairman of the Feni District Red Crescent Society, and moderated by Secretary Salauddin Mamun, the event was attended by Professor M A

◆ see page 7

Eviction Drive in Chhagalnaiya: Illegal Structures Clear Footpaths, Local AL Office Demolished



staff Reporter

In an effort to ease traffic congestion and restore pedestrian access, the Chhagalnaiya Upazila administration conducted a drive to remove illegal structures occupying footpaths and public roads in the municipality area on Wednesday (July 22). During the operation,

an unauthorized office of the banned Awami League, built illegally on the sidewalk at the municipality's Zero Point, was demolished using an excavator. The eviction drive was carried out on both sides of the main road, including Zero Point, led by Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Md. Omar Faruk. Key municipal personnel and law enforcement officers were present during the operation, including Municipal Executive Officer Tajel Hossain Howlader, Sub-Assistant Engineer Mizanur Rahman, and Market Inspector Mozammel Haque Buli. Local sources reported that numerous permanent and temporary illegal shops had encroached upon the footpaths and main thoroughfares in the primary market area. This encroachment frequently caused severe traffic gridlocks during peak hours and light rain. Without accessible sidewalks, pedestrians were forced to walk on the main road at considerable risk of accidents. Following the clearance, local traders and commuters expressed relief over the restored access

◆ see page 7



Ctg Zilla Parishad to work on rehabilitation of flood victims

Staff Correspondent Chattogram

The Zilla Parishad will initiate efforts to rehabilitate individuals from various upazilas of the district who were recently impacted by flooding. The newly-appointed administrator of Chattogram Zilla Parishad, Md. Mahbub Rahman Shamim, announced it today. Discussions are currently taking place regarding how to assist in the rehabilitation of the affected regions, including Banshkhal, Satkania, and Chandanaish within the district. This matter will also be presented to higher government authorities

Excess funds from canal excavation projects returned to state treasury in Natore

Staff correspondent

Nearly Taka 22 lakh in unspent funds from the excavation of seven canals in the district has been returned to the state treasury after the successful completion of the projects. The canal excavation programme, implemented by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, covered 11.65 kilometres of canals across four upazilas. According to the office of the District Relief and Rehabilitation officer, the Khalishadanga Canal in Lalpur upazila, measuring three kilometres, was allocated Taka 1,28,78,000, while the actual expenditure stood at Taka 1,28,53,000, leaving a surplus of about Taka 25,000. Another project in Lalpur, the 2.5-kilometre Chandana Canal, had an allocation of Taka 1,03,03,000. The excavation was completed at a cost of Taka 1,02,95,000, resulting in savings of around Taka 8,000. In

◆ see page 7

Staff correspondent

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) on Wednesday launched its online income tax return filing service for individual taxpayers for the 2026-27 tax year, urging taxpayers to submit returns early to avail incentives and avoid additional tax. It also announced that individual taxpayers who submit their returns between July and September for the 2026-27 tax year will receive a 5 per cent rebate on their net payable tax, subject to a maximum benefit of Tk 25,000. Returns submitted after September will not qualify for the incentive, while returns filed after December will attract additional tax, the NBR said, urging taxpayers to



file their returns within the stipulated time-frame. The revenue authority said the e-Return service has been introduced as part of its efforts to make tax services easier, faster and more transparent. According to the NBR, the online return filing system has gained widespread popularity since its introduction in 2021. During the

◆ see page 7

Teesta nears danger level; rising waters spark flood fears in Lalmonirhat

Staff correspondent

The Teesta River was flowing just 1 centimetre below the danger level at the Dalia point on Wednesday morning following heavy upstream flow and persistent rainfall, raising fears of flooding as water began entering several low-lying areas of Lalmonirhat. According to the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), the river's water level was recorded at 52.14 metres at the Dalia point at 9 am on Wednesday, against the danger level of 52.15 metres. MapsAs the water level continued to rise, floodwater began entering low-lying areas in Lalmonirhat Sadar, Aditmari, Kaliganj, Hatibandha and Patgram upazilas. To manage the situation the authorities have kept all necessary gates of the Teesta Barrage open. Shamsul Haque, a resident of Mahishkhocha Union in Aditmari upazila, said water has already started entering low-lying areas. "If the river continues to rise, there is a risk that more low-lying areas will be inundated," he



said. Sunil Kumar, executive engineer of the Lalmonirhat Water Development Board, said Teesta has been flowing 1 centimetre below the danger level since 9 am yesterday. The water level is fluctuating due to ongoing rainfall. Rising water levels in major rivers and forecasts of heavy rainfall may trigger flash-flood in at least 16 districts, according to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) bulletin. Water levels in the Teesta, Dharla, and Dudhkumar rivers have risen significantly over the past 24 hours and are expected to continue increasing for the next two days, said the FFWC bulletin issued on Monday. These rivers could cross the danger level within 24 to 48 hours, triggering flood in low-lying areas

◆ see page 7

বাংলাদেশ পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড

আলোকিত গ্রাম, উন্নতির বাংলাদেশ

৮০ টি পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি

বিদ্যুৎ বিল নিয়ে অভিযোগ আছে?

বিদ্যুৎ বিল সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো অভিযোগ জানাতে আমাদের অফিসিয়াল চ্যানেলের মাধ্যমে যোগাযোগ করুন।

অভিযোগ জানান আমাদের অফিসিয়াল হেল্পলাইন

হেল্পলাইন নম্বর ১৬৮৯৯ (সারা দেশে ২৪/৭)

সরাসরি উপস্থিত হোন সংশ্লিষ্ট পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ অফিসে আপনার অভিযোগ সর্বোচ্চ গুরুত্ব সহকারে সমাধান করা হবে

গ্রাহক অভিযোগ নিরসনে আমরা সদা তৎপর

সর্বোচ্চ গ্রাহক সেবা নিশ্চিত আমাদের বন্ধপরিকর

বিদ্যুৎ আছে, উন্নয়ন আছে আলোকিত হোক প্রতিটি ঘর



15-case fugitive Enamul Haq Rubel arrested in Chhagalnaiya

staff Reporter

Police have arrested Md. Enamul Haq Rubel (35), a listed criminal and fugitive wanted in multiple cases and arrest warrants, in Chhagalnaiya, Feni. Rubel, who faces at least 15 charges including attempted murder, illegal arms, and narcotics offences, had been absconding for a long time. According to police sources, a special operational team led by the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Chhagalnaiya Police Station, under the direction of the Superintendent of Police (SP) of Feni, conducted a raid based on secret information to apprehend him. The

◆ see page 7

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bilateral relations, including trade, investment, energy and connectivity, alongside key regional and international issues.During the talks, the Bangladesh side underlined that the "Bangladesh First" policy would remain the guiding principle of the country's external relations, reflecting the government's emphasis on safeguarding national interests in its engagement with international partners.In the bilateral meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, the two sides resolved to advance their comprehensive cooperative partnership towards jointly building a China-Bangladesh Community with a Shared Future.

The two foreign ministers discussed further cooperation on the repatriation of forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals, multimodal transport corridors, trade and investment, and energy.During a separate Bangladesh-Russia bilateral meeting, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov congratulated Khalilur on his election as President of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).The two sides also discussed existing Bangladesh-Russia cooperation and agreed to further enhance collaboration in the energy sector.Later in the afternoon, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio received the Bangladesh Foreign Minister for talks focusing on ways to further strengthen Bangladesh-US bilateral relations.During the meeting, Khalilur invited Rubio to visit Bangladesh.The US Secretary of State also congratulated the Foreign Minister on his election as President of the 81st Session of the UNGA.The separate high-level engagements with China, Russia and the United States underscored Bangladesh's efforts to broaden cooperation with major global powers while pursuing its national interests under the "Bangladesh First" foreign policy approach.Khalilur is leading the Bangladesh delegation to the 33rd ASEAN Regional Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting and events marking the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

WFP country director

is providing training and seed money to help poor people engage in income-generating activities and become entrepreneurs. Coco H. Ushiyama praised the Family Card initiative, particularly the decision to issue cards in the names of women, saying the approach is clear, timely and realistic.She assured WFP's support for technical and experience sharing assistance for the programme. She also informed the minister about WFP's welfare activities worldwide and highlighted its emergency relief support during the recent flood situation in Chattogram.

10,000 stranded as Teesta

enough. A permanent embankment project is urgently needed," he said. Abdul Karim, another resident, said several houses have already disappeared into the river before their eyes."My house could be the next. If I lose my homestead, I will have nowhere to go. If no one gives me a place to relocate, I will have to move to Dhaka with my family and earn a living by pulling a rickshaw," he said.City & Local GuidesMominul Islam, another affected resident, said repeated erosion has already washed away homes, farmland, a mosque, a madrasa and schools."We do not want relief. We want a permanent embankment to protect us," he said.

Executive Engineer of the Rangpur Water Development Board (WDB) Robiul Islam said 4,500 geo bags have already been allocated to protect the embankment, and dumping work is underway."More geo bags will be supplied if necessary. We are treating the matter with utmost importance," he said. Gangachara Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Mosammat Jesmin Akter said the affected area has been inspected and the Water Development Board has been requested to take immediate measures to prevent further erosion.

Eviction Drive in Chhagalnaiya:

and improved road conditions.?Speaking after the drive, Assistant Commissioner (Land) Md. Omar Faruk stated:?"This initiative was taken to facilitate smooth public movement, reduce traffic congestion, and maintain the aesthetic appeal of the town. No individual or organization will be permitted to occupy footpaths or government land illegally. Such enforcement drives will continue in the future

Ctg Zilla Parishad to

for necessary support. The proposals submitted by the Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) for the execution of various development projects under the District Council will be given serious consideration. He made the statements while addressing a meeting of the committee established to facilitate the District Council's operations, held in the conference room of the Chattogram District Council this afternoon.

He emphasized the importance of ensuring public service in collaboration with the administration, stating that collective efforts are essential to develop the District Council into a cohesive institution.

The meeting, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Zilla

Parishad, Chowdhury Rowshan Islam, included the participation of Executive Officer Khondaker Md. Ikhtiar Uddin Arafat, Acting Assistant Engineer S.M Khalequzzaman, Civil Officer Anis Uddin, and officials from various departments, including UNO, Local Government, and Social Services.

Bangladesh, Russia discuss

existing cooperation between Bangladesh and Russia, with particular emphasis on collaboration in the energy sector. Both sides also exchanged views on ways to further enhance bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest.Lavrov congratulated Dr Khalilur Rahman on his election as President of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).The Russian Foreign Minister also welcomed the newly formed Bangladesh-Russia Parliamentary Friendship Group, appreciating the initiative as a means to institutionalise legislative cooperation between the two countries. Both sides agreed to further strengthen Bangladesh-Russia cooperation and advance the longstanding bilateral relationship through continued engagement.

Awareness Workshop by

Khalek, Administrator of the Zila Parishad, as the chief guest.?Md. Didarul Alam, Deputy Director of the Local Government Division, Feni, and Administrator of Feni Municipality, delivered a speech as the special guest.?Data Administrator Engr. Md. Nazmul Huq served as the keynote speaker and subject-matter expert. In his discussion, he elaborated on effective strategies under international humanitarian law to trace individuals separated from their families during disasters and crises and facilitate their reunification.?Among others present at the event were:Muhammad Rashid, DIO, District Superintendent of Police Office?Md. Mahbub Alam, District Relief and Disaster Management Officer?S M Al Amin, District Information Officer?Additionally, Feni District Red Crescent Society members Al Imran, Shariful Islam Opu, Nur Tanjila Rahman, and Mezbah Uddin Miyaji, along with local media professionals and representatives from various walks of life, participated in the workshop.

Excess funds from canal excava

Bagatipara upazila, excavation of a 1.05-kilometre canal from Dumrai to the Baral River was completed at a cost of Taka 26,81,000 against an allocation of Taka 27,07000, generating savings of approximately Taka 27,000.Similarly, excavation of the 1.35-kilometre canal from Pukurpar to the Baral River cost Taka 32,04,000 compared with the allocated Taka 32,22,000 million, leaving about Taka 19,000 unspent.

In Gurusdaspur upazila, excavation of the 1.35-kilometre canal from Shidhuli Canal to Airmari Bridge was completed at a cost of Tala 51,26,000 million against an allocation of Taka 51,53,000, saving Taka 27,000.In Natore Sadar upazila, excavation of the 750-metre Bhaturia Canal cost Taka 25,62,000 against an allocation of Taka 25,79,000, leaving a surplus of around Taka 14,000.

The largest savings, however, came from the two-kilometre Helencha Canal in Natore Sadar. Although Taka 77,28,000 had been allocated for the project, the actual expenditure was Taka 56,82,000, resulting in savings of approximately Taka 20,46,000.Chairperson of the Bhaturia Canal Project Implementation Committee and Administrator of Halsa Union Parishad Monjira Parveen said the five-member committee—including the Upazila Agriculture Officer, Upazila Engineer, Assistant Engineer of the Department of Public Health Engineering, and the Upazila Project Implementation Officer—closely monitored the excavation work to ensure quality standards.

Local farmer Abdul Majid said the increased depth of the Bhaturia Canal would help retain sufficient water, enabling farmers to use it for irrigation and improve agricultural production.

Upazila Project Implementation Officer Md. Saidur Rahman said the excavation work was carried out mainly using excavators, while labourers were engaged in embankment protection, tree plantation and other ancillary works.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer A.K.M. Shaha Alam Molla said the department had completed the excavation work within a short time and at lower cost than many other agencies while maintaining high quality standards.He attributed the savings to close supervision and coordinated efforts at every stage of implementation.

Out of the total allocation of Taka 4,45,74,000 million for the seven canal projects, the actual expenditure amounted to Taka 4,24,09,000, leaving Taka 21,65,000 in surplus, which has been returned to the state treasury

NBR opens online income

2025-26 tax year, a record nearly 4.7 million individual taxpayers successfully submitted their income tax returns through the e-Return platform.The NBR has also made online filing mandatory for all regular individual taxpayers through a special order.However, paper returns will still be accepted from taxpayers aged 65 years or above, physically challenged or persons with disabilities upon submission of supporting documents, Bangladeshi taxpayers residing abroad, representatives filing returns on behalf of deceased taxpayers and foreign nationals working in Bangladesh. MapsIn addition, individual taxpayers who are unable to register on the e-Return system due to technical or registration-related problems may submit paper returns with approval from the Additional or Joint Commissioner of Taxes concerned.Through the NBR's e-Tax platform, taxpayers can pay taxes online using bank transfers, debit or credit cards, bKash, Rocket, Nagad and other mobile financial services. They will also be able to obtain instant acknowledgement receipts and income tax certificates after successfully filing their returns. The NBR said its officials will provide assistance through the call centre (09643717171) and other electronic channels during office hours on working days to resolve any issues related to online return filing.

15-case fugitive Enamul

arrestee, Rubel, is the son of Md. Obaidul Haq Member, hailing from West Debpur village (Ward No. 1) under Mahamaya Union in Chhagalnaiya Upazila.?Chhagalnaiya Police Station officials confirmed that Rubel faces 15 serious criminal cases across Chhagalnaiya and Parshuram police stations, involving charges under the Arms Act, Narcotics Control Act, Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, Attempt to Murder, Theft, and the Speedy Trial Act. Even while in hiding, he allegedly continued to coordinate various criminal activities in the local area and surrounding regions.?Confirming the arrest, the OC of Chhagalnaiya Police Station stated that Rubel was successfully apprehended through a targeted raid following a intelligence tip-off. "He is being produced before the court today (Wednesday) following necessary legal procedures," the OC added, warning that special drives against crime will continue under the police's zero-tolerance policy

Teesta nears danger level; rising

of Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Gaibandha, and Kurigram.

Gold prices rise again in

ver ornaments, jewellers cannot charge it separately from customers.

The association added that its existing rules on exchange and repurchase of ornaments, excluding specified VAT, making charges and stone costs, will remain unchanged.

The previous adjustment came on the morning of July 21, when Bajus raised the price of 22-carat gold by Tk 1,633 per bhori to Tk 2,21,441, inclusive of VAT.

So far in 2026, the price of gold has been revised 93 times in

the domestic market, increased on 45 occasions, decreased on 47, and adjusted once for VAT. Alongside gold, the price of silver was also raised.The rate of 22-carat silver went up by Tk 175 per bhori to Tk 4,782. Similarly, 21-carat silver is now selling at Tk 4,549 per bhori, 18-carat at Tk 3,907, and traditional silver at Tk 2,974 per bhori. Silver prices have been adjusted 57 times so far this year, with 29 increases and 28 decreases.

District Information Office to

Pirojpur. Awareness miking was conducted in three upazilas of Pirojpur district today, Tuesday.This program will be conducted with the support of UNICEF as dengue incidence has increased in Sadar Upazila, Bhandaria and Nesarabad of Pirojpur.The District Information Office said that this program will be conducted in various hot spots and educational institutions involving the youth community. In addition, as part of this, 'Risk Communication and Community Engagement' meetings will be held with the district administration, civil society and media personalities, dialogues with guardians, various community leaders and other networks at the field level, and awareness activities will be conducted in schools and colleges. In addition to conducting campaigns in different areas, leaflets will also be distributed.Assistant Director of District Information Office Saifuddin Al Madani said that since the beginning of the monsoon season, Pirojpur District Information Office has been conducting awareness road campaign to the people about what to do to combat dengue in various upazilas including the district headquarters. In addition, video messages related to the Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Tarique Rahman are being displayed in various populated places. Regular awareness posts are also being made on the Facebook page of District Information Office, Pirojpur.According to the Civil Surgeon's Office, the total number of dengue patients in Pirojpur till July 21 is 870. 818 have been discharged after treatment. One person has died. Of these, 423 people have been reported to be infected with dengue in Pirojpur headquarters, 160 in Nesarabad, 149 in Bhandaria, 61 in Kaukhali, 50 in Nazirpur, and 27 in Mathbaria. The number of dengue patients in Pirojpur is the highest in Barisal division.It is worth noting that a coordination committee is working under the leadership of the Deputy Commissioner to prevent dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases in Pirojpur. The committee is holding regular meetings and reviewing the progress of the implementation of various steps taken to prevent dengue. The committee has laid emphasis on transforming the prevention program into a mass social movement. In addition, it has been decided to surveys and mapping in all areas of the district and take coordinated preventive activities accordingly. Three sub-committees have been formed from the meeting to make the prevention program successful.

Gazipur food factory fined Tk

Upazila Food Safety Inspector were present.During the inspection, officials found that the company provided inaccurate and incomplete information on product labels and failed to ensure proper labelling and storage of food additives, said a press release.The factory also failed to produce laboratory test reports or shelf-life study documents to support the 30-day expiry period declared for its bread products.Inspectors found uncovered food products and the presence of flies inside the factory, indicating poor hygiene standards.In addition, the company failed to maintain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and Certificates of Analysis (CoA) for food additives, provide evidence of the proper use of food additives in production, or preserve invoices and purchase records for food products.

Food samples were also collected from the factory for laboratory analysis, officials said.

Demand for Relocating

continuous programs if their demands are not met. However, emergency services, including ambulances and fire service vehicles, will remain outside the purview of the strike.?Among others present at the press conference were Implementation Committee Coordinator and former President of Bhujpur Thana Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal Nurul Amin, Baganbazar Union BNP President Abul Khair, and Fatikchhari Uttar Upazila Shramik Kalyan Federation President A. B. M. Siddique, along with representatives from various political and student organizations.?Background:On July 1, the National Implementation Committee for Administrative Reorganization (NICAR) approved the formation of the new upazila named 'Fatikchhari Uttar', designating the area adjacent to Bhujpur Police Station as its headquarters. Following this, local residents launched demonstrations demanding a review of the decision based on geographical reality. Earlier, a complete strike was observed in various parts of Northern Fatikchhari on July 16 over the same issue.

Success in Mixed Fish

face floods. Overall, both I and other fish farmers in the Mirsharai Muhuri Project Area are not doing very well at the moment.

US completes 11th straight

US continued its attacks into Wednesday as Iranian air defence systems were activated near Tehran. Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported explosions in Bushehr, East Azerbaijan, Hamadan, Hormozgan, Khuzestan, and Sistan and Baluchistan provinces.The latest strikes came a day after Iran attacked a tanker in the Strait of Hormuz, forcing its crew to abandon the vessel. Iran also continued attacks on US allies in the region, launching strikes against Bahrain, Jordan and Kuwait.The escalating conflict pushed global energy prices higher, with benchmark crude oil trading above \$92 a barrel on Wednesday and the average price of regular gasoline in the United States reaching \$4 per gallon.As the US prepares for midterm elections later this year, opinion polls have shown growing public dissatisfaction with the war, driven by rising fuel prices and increasing American casualties in a conflict that had appeared to be easing only weeks ago.A US official told The Associated Press that the number of wounded American troops in the Iran conflict has exceeded 500. The figure is higher than the Pentagon's official count of 482 injured personnel listed in its Defense Casualty Analysis System.The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly, said the reporting system has a significant delay in recording injuries due to its design rather than any deliberate effort to underreport casualties.

Houthis open new front in the Red SeaMeanwhile, Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen have expanded the conflict by announcing a naval blockade of Saudi Arabia in the Red Sea, threatening global oil supplies and international trade. With the Strait of Hormuz blocked, Saudi Arabia has relied on a pipeline to the Red Sea to export millions of barrels of oil.The Houthi-run SABA news agency reported Tuesday that six ships in the Red Sea changed course after receiving warnings from the group. The Associated Press could not immediately verify the claim.Three Houthi officials, speaking anonymously because they were not authorised to brief the media, said the group had warned international shipping companies on Monday against using the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the southern gateway to the Red Sea.Pakistan renews diplomatic effortsDuring his visit to Islamabad, Momeni met Pakistan's army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, according to two officials familiar with the closed-door talks. He later held talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. ExecutiveBranch In a statement, Sharif expressed deep concern over the recent escalation between the US and Iran and urged all parties to



Mirsarai correspondent

Another transformer has been stolen from the north side of Taju Fokir Para in East Khoiyachhara Village, Ward No. 12 Khoiyachhara Union, Mirsharai Upazila, The transformer theft occurred last night.

show restraint and avoid further actions that could destabilise the region.Pakistan's civilian and military leadership had helped broker last month's interim agreement between Washington and Tehran and has since been trying to bring both sides back to the negotiating table.Trump, however, said Iranian officials "want to desperately meet," but added that the US had "no interest in meeting" until they were prepared for meaningful negotiations. He also said the US could soon target the area around Pickaxe Mountain, a heavily fortified underground site near one of Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities.Iranian military leaders warned that any attack on nuclear or other sensitive facilities would be viewed as a major escalation, according to Iranian state media.Relations between the two sides remain deeply strained. Iran was hit by surprise attacks in June 2025 and again in February while nuclear negotiations with the US were underway. The interim ceasefire later collapsed after Iran resumed attacks on vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, which was supposed to reopen under the agreement.Tanker attacked in Strait of Hormuz The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said a tanker was attacked early Tuesday in the Strait of Hormuz off the coast of Oman, forcing the crew to abandon the ship.Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard claimed responsibility for that attack as well as two other strikes on ships in the strategic waterway on Monday.The shipping route close to Oman's coast has been the corridor recommended by the US military to help commercial vessels avoid Iranian-controlled waters. CENTCOM said on X that, as of Tuesday, US forces had redirected eight commercial ships and disabled one vessel as part of efforts to enforce the blockade in the Strait of Hormuz.

China always stands by Bangladesh in times of disaster, humanitarian need: Ambassador Yao

Staff correspondent

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen on Wednesday said China has consistently extended support whenever Bangladesh has faced disasters or humanitarian crises.The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Bangladesh donated USD 100,000 to the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) to support its ongoing emergency response for communities affected by the recent floods and landslides across the country.The humanitarian contribution was officially handed over by the Ambassador at a ceremony held at the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society National Headquarters in Dhaka.The donation was received on behalf of BDRCS by its Chairman, Barrister Md Abdus Salam.Speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Yao said the recent heavy rains in Bangladesh have triggered severe flooding, claiming many lives, leaving millions of people stranded, and causing extensive damage to farmland and infrastructure. GeographicReference“The Chinese people deeply sympathize with the people of Bangladesh during this difficult time,” he said.On behalf of the Red Cross Society of China, the envoy said they are handing over USD 100,000 in emergency cash assistance to the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society. “This contribution reflects the sincere concern and solidarity of the Chinese Government and people with the people of Bangladesh.”The Ambassador said China has been supporting Bangladesh's disaster preparedness capacity through annual training programmes and the provision of flood response equipment.Last year, China donated emergency response equipment to the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, which is now being effectively utilized in the ongoing flood response.The Ambassador also reaffirmed China's commitment to continuing humanitarian assistance and providing training for BDRCS volunteers whenever needed.Speaking on the occasion, BDRCS Chairman Barrister Abdus Salam expressed his sincere gratitude to the government and people of the People's Republic of China and the Red Cross Society of China for their continued humanitarian support."We sincerely thank the Government and people of China for standing beside the people of Bangladesh during this difficult time. Our dedicated volunteers are already working in some of the hardest-hit and most remote areas," he said.With this generous support, he mentioned that they will be able to further expand their emergency response, including the distribution of emergency food assistance, safe drinking water, temporary shelter, hygiene kits, and medical services.The Chairman said it is in times of crisis like these that true friendship is demonstrated. “On behalf of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, we once again express our heartfelt gratitude to the Government and people of China. We assure you that every dollar of this generous contribution will be utilized efficiently, transparently, and where it is needed most.” GeographicReferenceHighlighting the long-standing friendship between Bangladesh and China, he said, “The late President Ziaur Rahman initiated the bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and China, which was further strengthened by former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. Following the recent visit of the Prime Minister to China, we are confident that bilateral cooperation in humanitarian, economic, and development sectors will continue to grow stronger.”During the programme, BDRCS presented an overview of its emergency response activities carried out up to 21 July. The presentation highlighted that BDT 3.39 million had been released for emergency operations.In addition, BDRCS has distributed more than 2,500 food packages, evacuated and rescued over 22,000 people, provided medical assistance to more than 2,000 people, distributed over 37,000 litres of safe drinking water, mobilized 12 Red Crescent Units, and deployed more than 3,500 volunteers to support the emergency response.The programme was attended by Professor Dr. Md. Rafiqul Kabir, Vice Chairman of BDRCS; Dr. Abu Md. Mofakhkharul Islam Rana, Treasurer; Dr. Kabir Md. Ashraf Alam, ndc, Secretary General of BDRCS; senior officials of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); officials from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China; representatives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement; and other guests.



Trump approves nuclear deal that could let Saudi Arabia enrich uranium

International Desk

US President Donald Trump has approved a nuclear cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia that could eventually allow the kingdom to enrich uranium for its civilian nuclear energy programme, according to two people familiar with the decision. The agreement, which has not yet been formally announced, could be made public as early as Wednesday, the sources said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly. Expected to remain in force for 30 years, the agreement would involve US companies in developing Saudi Arabia's civilian nuclear sector. It also envisions the possible construction of a uranium enrichment facility in the kingdom after a joint US-Saudi feasibility study. The proposal will be submitted to the US Congress for review, where it is likely to face scrutiny from lawmakers concerned that permitting Saudi Arabia to enrich uranium could increase the risk of nuclear proliferation and trigger a regional arms race. Saudi Arabia is a member of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy while monitoring member states to ensure they are not pursuing secret nuclear weapons programmes. However, one of the sources said the agreement is not expected to include the IAEA's Additional Protocol, which provides inspectors with expanded authority to verify that nuclear activities remain exclusively peaceful. The development comes amid heightened regional tensions following military operations by the United States and Israel targeting Iran's nuclear capabilities. Tehran

maintains that its uranium enrichment programme is intended solely for peaceful purposes. The White House and Saudi authorities did not immediately comment on the reported agreement. The Wall Street Journal first reported the decision. Both Trump and former President Joe Biden had sought a civilian nuclear agreement with Saudi Arabia that would allow the kingdom to benefit from American nuclear technology. Non-proliferation experts, however, have warned that domestic uranium enrichment could provide Saudi Arabia with the technical foundation for a future weapons programme. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has previously suggested the kingdom would seek nuclear weapons if Iran were to acquire them. US Energy Secretary Chris Wright visited Saudi Arabia last year and held discussions with Saudi officials on expanding the kingdom's commercial nuclear power sector. The US Department of Energy did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Saudi Arabia has also strengthened security ties with nuclear-armed Pakistan. Analysts note that any future enrichment capability in the kingdom is likely to draw increased international attention given the region's security dynamics. While uranium enrichment alone does not enable a country to build a nuclear weapon, it is considered a critical step in the nuclear fuel cycle and can significantly shorten the path to developing weapons-grade material if a country chooses to do so. The United Arab Emirates, by contrast, built its Barakah nuclear power plant under a so-called "123 agreement" with the United States without pursuing domestic uranium enrichment—a model widely regarded by non-proliferation experts as the international benchmark for civilian nuclear cooperation.



Rubio warns ASEAN that Iran's Hormuz demands could threaten global shipping

International Desk

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday warned that Iran's demand to control and collect tolls from ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz could set a dangerous global precedent and threaten freedom of navigation. Speaking at the opening of the annual Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) foreign ministers' meeting in Manila, Rubio said allowing any country to control an international waterway and charge ships for passage would pose risks not only in the Middle East but also in the Indo-Pacific region. "If a country is allowed to control an international waterway, charge tolls and attack ships that refuse to pay, it would create a dangerous precedent that could be repeated in other parts of the world, including this region," Rubio said. His remarks came as ASEAN members voiced concern over the renewed conflict in the Middle East, which has also affected economies in Southeast Asia. Despite the US focus on the Middle East, Rubio assured ASEAN leaders that Washington remained fully committed to the regional bloc. On the sidelines of the meeting, Rubio also joined his counterparts from the Quad grouping — the United States, Australia, India and Japan — to discuss cooperation on technology, humanitarian assistance, disaster response, maritime security and transnational security. In a joint statement, the four countries reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening maritime security and maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, amid growing concerns over China's expanding influence in the region. "The Quad remains a priority, and we will meet again later this year," Rubio wrote in a post on X. The Trump administration has repeatedly criticised China's increasingly assertive actions in the South China Sea, particularly those affecting smaller claimant countries such as the Philippines, a long-standing US treaty ally. The South China Sea disputes, involving China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines, are among the key issues being discussed during the three-day ASEAN meetings in Manila. Rubio also held talks with Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, where they discussed regional security, the conflict involving Iran and efforts to finalise an interim trade agreement aimed at reducing tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump on Indian goods. ExecutiveBranch According to US State Department spokesperson Tommy Pigott, both sides agreed on the importance of completing the interim trade deal, which is nearing completion. Rubio was also scheduled to meet Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the ASEAN meetings.

Iran fires missiles at Jordan as regional tensions escalate

International Desk

Iran launched missiles at Jordan on Wednesday, prompting air raid sirens in the port city of Aqaba, as renewed hostilities across the Middle East continued to overshadow diplomatic efforts aimed at restoring a collapsed interim ceasefire. Jordan's military said it intercepted four Iranian missiles, while two others landed in uninhabited areas without causing reported casualties. Videos recorded from the nearby Israeli city of Eilat showed plumes of smoke rising over Aqaba. The latest attack came after the US military said it had completed its 11th consecutive night of strikes on targets inside Iran. Iranian air defence systems were activated around the capital, Tehran, while the state-run IRNA news agency reported explosions in Bushehr, East Azerbaijan, Hamadan, Hormozgan, Khuzestan, and Sistan and Baluchistan provinces. According to the US military, the strikes targeted aircraft hangars and drone storage facilities. On Tuesday, Iran also attacked a tanker in the Strait of Hormuz, forcing its crew to abandon the vessel. Tehran has simultaneously expanded its military operations against US allies in the region, launching attacks on Bahrain, Jordan and Kuwait. The renewed violence has further complicated diplomatic efforts to end the conflict. Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni visited Pakistan, which has been acting as a mediator, in an attempt to revive negotiations. However, there has been no indication of progress toward a new ceasefire agreement. ExecutiveBranch Speaking from the Oval Office on Tuesday, US President Donald Trump expressed little optimism about renewed talks, saying Washington had "no interest in meeting." He also indicated that US forces could soon strike areas near one of Iran's principal uranium enrichment sites.

Ukraine reshuffles military leadership amid war with Russia

International Desk

Ukraine pressed ahead with its war effort against Russia on Wednesday under a new military leadership after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy overhauled the country's top defence command following days of political turmoil. The changes came after Zelenskyy dismissed Commander-in-Chief Gen Oleksandr Syrskyi, responding to mounting public pressure and criticism over the military leadership. The reshuffle also saw Defence Minister Mykhailo Fedorov leave office, marking a significant overhaul of Ukraine's defence establishment. The leadership changes, announced late Tuesday, followed a week of political tensions that drew attention both at home and abroad, with Russian officials publicly welcoming the developments. Maj Gen Mykhailo Drapatyi, 43, was appointed as the new commander-in-chief. Considered part of a younger generation of Ukrainian military leaders, Drapatyi first gained prominence in 2014 during Russia's annexation of Crimea and has since built a reputation for his leadership on the battlefield. Zelenskyy said the new military leadership has been tasked with presenting an updated defence strategy that includes continued reform of the army's corps structure, faster delivery of weapons and drones, stronger air defence capabilities, and a clearer mobilisation plan. The future role of former defence minister Fedorov remains uncertain. The 35-year-old, widely credited with advancing Ukraine's drone technology, had reportedly been at odds with



Syrskyi over military reforms. His dismissal prompted protests in Kyiv and several other cities, where demonstrators demanded his reinstatement and called for Syrskyi's removal. Following the reshuffle, Zelenskyy said he had offered Fedorov a senior government position aimed at strengthening Ukraine's technology sector, though it remains unclear whether the former minister has accepted the proposal. ExecutiveBranch Fedorov had earlier indicated that he had received job offers from several international defence technology companies after leaving office. He welcomed Drapatyi's appointment, describing it as a symbol of change and expressing hope that the new commander would strengthen Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression. Before his dismissal, Fedorov had publicly criticised Syrskyi, accusing him of obstructing military reforms and arguing that changes in the army's leadership were necessary to sustain Ukraine's resistance against Russia.

US identifies third service member believed killed in Iranian attack on Jordan base

International Desk

The US military has identified a third service member believed to have been killed in last week's Iranian attack on a military base in Jordan as Sgt. Angel S. Rampersad, 28, of New York. The confirmation raises the number of US service members killed since the war began to 18. Earlier, the Pentagon identified 1st Lt. Tyler James Feehan, 25, of Ewa Beach, Hawaii, and Pvt. Isabella Gonzales, 19, of Carrollton, Texas, as the two other soldiers killed in Friday's missile and drone attack on the base in Jordan. The soldiers died in Iranian ballistic missile and drone strikes, marking the first US troop deaths from direct Iranian fire since the early days of the conflict. They had been deployed as part of a US mission against the Islamic State group, according to a US Central Command statement. Following the attack, US Central Command said two service members had been killed and another was missing. A day later, it announced that unidentified human remains had been recovered and that efforts were underway to confirm their identity. The Pentagon now believes those remains are Rampersad's. Her official status has been changed to "Duty Status—Whereabouts Unknown," and she is considered "believed to be deceased." Rampersad served in the same unit as Gonzales — the 10th Army Air & Missile Defense Command based in Ansbach, Germany. Separately, the military identified another US soldier killed in Iraq as Sgt. Michael Emmanuel Swinton, a 30-year-old father from North Carolina, who died during the controlled detonation of an Iranian drone, according to a military statement released Tuesday and his family.

Congo Ebola death toll nears 1,000 as outbreak spreads rapidly

International Desk

The death toll from the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has climbed to 999, according to the latest official figures, underscoring the severity of what health authorities have described as the fastest-spreading Ebola outbreak on record. Data released by Congo's Ministry of Health showed that, as of Sunday, the country had recorded 2,473 confirmed and suspected Ebola cases since the outbreak was declared on May 15. Of those, 999 people have died. The current outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus, for which there are currently no approved vaccines or specific treatments, making containment efforts more challenging. Health officials say the outbreak is spreading at an unprecedented pace. Previous outbreaks, including the 2013-2016 West Africa epidemic that claimed more than 11,000 lives, took around eight months to reach 1,000 deaths. The current outbreak has reached that milestone in a significantly shorter period. Ebola is a highly infectious viral disease transmitted through direct contact with bodily fluids such as blood, vomit and semen. It often causes severe illness and can be fatal. Authorities have expressed concern that about 80 percent of newly reported infections are linked to unknown transmission chains, indicating that the virus is spreading faster than health teams can identify and isolate cases. The outbreak is centred in Ituri province but has also spread to four other provinces, prompting authorities to intensify surveillance and response efforts. Response operations have been hampered by insecurity in some affected areas. Attacks on health facilities and medical teams have forced aid workers to suspend operations in certain locations, while some healthcare workers have staged strikes over unpaid salaries since the outbreak began. Speaking at the Africa Health Summit in Ghana on Tuesday, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) Director-General Dr. Jean Kaseya urged stronger international support to contain the outbreak. "If we do not stop this outbreak yesterday, it could become one of the worst Ebola outbreaks the world has ever documented," he warned.

Palestinian siblings separated by war reunite in Israel after losing parents in Gaza

International Desk

A Palestinian family divided between Israel and Gaza has reunited after nearly two years of war, displacement and personal tragedy. Mais al-Gharam, 23, had not seen her seven younger siblings since leaving Gaza for Israel shortly before the war began. During the conflict, an Israeli airstrike destroyed the family's home in central Gaza, killing her parents and one of her brothers. Earlier this month, Mais waited outside Israel's Kerem Shalom crossing, searching the crowd for her surviving siblings as they emerged from Gaza. "We never stopped being a family," she said. "But every day I wondered whether I would see them again." After years of legal efforts, Mais was finally able to bring her brothers and sisters, aged 8 to 22, to Israel. The siblings reunited at the border crossing and then travelled together to Nazareth, where relatives welcomed them with hugs and home-cooked meals. The reunion brought both relief and grief. Although the family was together again, they were also mourning the loss of their parents and younger brother. Their grandfather, Faraj al-Gharam, described the moment as "coming back from the grave."

The family's story began in 2002 when Murad al-Gharam, a resident of Gaza, met Amal Karim, a Palestinian citizen of Israel from Nazareth, while working in Israel on a temporary permit. After marrying, the couple moved permanently to Gaza, where they raised eight children in Nuseirat refugee camp.



Life changed dramatically after the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel on October 7, 2023, which killed about 1,200 people and led to Israel's military campaign in Gaza. Mais had already returned to Nazareth, where she married and found work. Her seven siblings, who were born in Gaza, were eligible to apply for Israeli citizenship through their mother, but their father was not. The family initially decided to remain together in Gaza rather than leave without him. As fighting intensified, they were displaced multiple times before returning to their home in Nuseirat. On July 10, 2024, an airstrike struck the house, killing Murad, Amal and their 11-year-old son, Maisara. The surviving children were injured but managed to reach Al Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, where doctors confirmed the deaths of their parents and brother. The Israeli military did not immediately comment on the strike.



Movie review: 'The Dink' serves up light-hearted laughs with pickleball at the center

Entertainment Desk

The Dink, a new sports comedy arriving on Apple TV this Friday, mixes underdog humour with a familiar redemption story, using the fast-growing sport of pickleball as its backdrop. The film follows Dusty, played by Jake Johnson, a former tennis prodigy whose promising career ended early after a loss to a young Andy Roddick. Now working as a tennis coach at his father's exclusive club, Dusty spends more time talking about his past than building a future. His father Chuck, played by Ed Harris, raised him with dreams of becoming a tennis champion and has nothing but contempt for pickleball. Dusty shares that attitude until a wrist injury forces his doctor, played in a brief but funny appearance by Ben Stiller, to recommend pickleball as part of his recovery. Reluctantly taking up the sport, Dusty finds himself playing alongside a lively group of older women, including characters played by Mary Steenburgen, Cleo King and the late Lynne Marie Stewart. As he spends more time with them, he gradually changes his view of both the sport and himself. Jake Johnson delivers another strong performance as an imperfect but likable underdog. Mary Steenburgen adds warmth and humour, while Ed Harris is convincing as Dusty's demanding father.

The supporting cast includes Patton Oswalt as an enthusiastic pickleball player, Chloe Fineman as Dusty's unpredictable former girlfriend and Chris Parnell as a tennis professional. Directed by Josh Greenbaum and written by Sean Clements, the film balances comedy with emotional moments without making pickleball or its players the target of constant jokes. One standout comedy sequence, involving minor characters rather than the main storyline, is described as one of the film's funniest moments. Greenbaum, known for directing Barb and Star Go to Vista Del Mar and the upcoming Spaceballs sequel, continues to establish himself as a dependable comedy director at a time when big-screen comedies have become increasingly rare. The review also notes that although audiences still enjoy going to cinemas, many mainstream comedies are now being released directly on streaming platforms instead of theatres. While films like The Dink and Kevin Hart's 72 Hours continue the tradition of straightforward comedy, the reviewer suggests something is lost when audiences cannot share the experience of laughing together in a movie theatre. The Dink begins streaming on Apple TV on Friday. The Motion Picture Association has given the film a PG-13 rating for strong language and sexual material. It runs for 102 minutes and receives two-and-a-half stars out of four.

Kona's sweet love song 'Mon Dao'

Entertainment Desk

Singer Dilshad Nahar Kona has appeared with a new song. The video of her new song 'Mon Dao' was released on Rangan Music's YouTube channel recently. The lyrics of the song were written by Jamal Hossain. Sajeeb Das has sung along with Kona. At the same time, he has also been composed melody and gave music direction of the song. The video was produced by Saikat Reza. Alongkar Chowdhury is seen as the model in it. Regarding the new song, Kona said, "It's a very sweet song. Even though the World Cup is in full swing, the audience is still listening to the song. I'm getting a good response. I've sung to Sajeeb's tune before. The lyricist Jamal Bhai wrote it beautifully.



The habit that Jaya can't change

Entertainment Desk

Jaya Ahsan is equally vibrant on the silver screen of both Bangladesh and India. She constantly impresses the audiences of Dhallywood and Tollywood with her skillful acting skills. Bangladesh Business Analysis Her new movie 'Aajo Ardhangini' has recently been released on the big screen. Once again, the well-known magic of Kaushik Ganguly, Churni Ganguly and Jaya Ahsan has emerged on the screen. However, amidst the discussion of movies and acting, this Dhallywood actress has revealed a personal and strange habit of hers – one that she has been unable to change despite her best efforts. Recently, in an interview with the Indian media outlet The Wall, Jaya revealed her 'bad habit'. The actress said that she loves to eat Paan (betel leaf). And this habit has its roots in her childhood. Reminiscing about her childhood, Jaya said, "Whenever my grandmother prepared Paan (betel leaf), she would give me a little bit in my mouth. This is how I developed the habit of eating paan since childhood." Explaining the depth of the habit, the actress said, "I am trying to change this habit but nothing is happening. Whenever I remember my grandmother, I drink paan. Although, looking at me, you wouldn't know that I drink so much paan. Sometimes, I even went to award ceremonies with a Paan (betel leaf) can." Jaya added that she is unable to break this addiction despite pressure from her family, "My family members keep telling me to change this habit, but I never change it. However, I myself want to stop drinking so much. But I can't break this habit at all."

'Godzilla' actress Kaylee Hottle dies in Maryland car crash at 18

Entertainment Desk

Kaylee Hottle, the deaf actress known for her role as Jia in the recent "Godzilla" films, has died in a car crash in the US state of Maryland. She was 18. According to the Frederick County Sheriff's Office, the crash occurred shortly before 3 a.m. Tuesday in Ijamsville when the vehicle carrying Hottle and two others veered off the road and struck a culvert. Hottle was airlifted from the scene but died before reaching the hospital. Authorities said the 19-year-old driver suffered non-life-threatening injuries, while the third passenger declined medical treatment. Investigators believe excessive speed was a contributing factor, and the crash remains under investigation. A native user of American Sign Language (ASL), Hottle came from a deaf family. Her parents, Joshua and Ketsi Hottle, shared emotional messages on social media expressing their grief. Her father said the family was devastated by the loss and thanked supporters for their sympathy. He also publicly forgave the driver involved in the crash, urging him not to let the tragedy define the rest of his life. Hottle gained international recognition for portraying Jia, an orphaned girl who communicates with Kong through sign language, in "Godzilla vs. Kong" (2021) and "Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire" (2024). Her performance earned praise for bringing authentic deaf representation to a major Hollywood franchise.



Tributes poured in from colleagues and members of the entertainment industry. Her "Godzilla" co-star Millie Bobby Brown wrote on Instagram that she was devastated by the news and would deeply miss Hottle. Actor Alexander Skarsgård, who learned ASL while filming with Hottle, had previously praised her professionalism and ability to quickly adapt to the director's guidance.

In a 2024 interview with The Associated Press, Hottle said she had not been familiar with monster movies before being cast in the franchise and credited her father for introducing her to the genre. She also described her parents and sisters as her greatest role models. Besides the "Godzilla" films, Hottle appeared in a 2021 episode of "Magnum P.I." and was set to appear in the upcoming film "What Doesn't Kill Us." Her co-star in the upcoming film, deaf actress Alauqua Cox, expressed heartbreak over Hottle's death, while Academy Award-winning actors Marlee Matlin and Troy Kotsur also paid tribute, remembering her talent and urging people to cherish their loved ones. The Texas School for the Deaf, where Hottle studied, announced her death and said counseling and support services would be made available to students and staff as the school community mourns her loss.

Do what your heart desires: Keya Payel

Entertainment Desk

Popular TV actress of this generation, Keya Payel is always busy with acting. She has dramas coming up throughout the year. But despite being so busy, Keya Payel never fails to give herself time. Whenever she gets free time, she goes to different countries. For example, she visited the Maldives a few days ago. Keya Payel has completed an exciting journey to the land of blue clear waters. The actress has made a video with some of her moments and she shared it on Facebook. In the video, she can be seen enjoying the fresh air, running on the beach, and parasailing. The actress has also scuba dived into the sea. Keya Payel has collected some memorable memories of her life on this exciting journey. In the caption of the video, the actress wrote, "Do whatever your heart desires. Life is only one." Many people agree with her comment. However, some have made the opposite comment, saying that financial solvency is also necessary for the fulfillment of such desires. Keya Payel has shared many pictures and videos of her trip to the Maldives in the past few days. However, another video was leaked from a different source. In which it can be seen that the actress and a young man are sitting side by side in an elite restaurant in the Maldives. The actress was serving food to the young man. The video went viral. Rumours arose that Keya Payel is in a love relationship with the young man. Although the actress has not said anything openly about the matter.



Voice of Bangladesh

5 artistes to judge, Tahsan to host show

Entertainment Desk

He announced his retirement from singing last year. Although he has already signed up for songs and concerts, Tahsan's name has not been found in any news about any new songs or dramas. However, he hosted a programme titled 'Family Feud' organised by OTT platform Bongo. He is coming on stage as the host of another show. Tahsan will host the Bangladesh episode of the Eurovision Song Contest 'Voice of Bangladesh'. Musicians Fahmida Nabi, Hamin Ahmed, Bappa Mazumder, Shouquat Ali Imon and Ankhi Alamgir will serve as judges for the competition. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has been organising the Eurovision Song Contest, the world's largest and longest-running live music competition, every year since 1956. The 70th edition of the contest was held in Vienna, Austria, on May 16. Bulgaria won the title for the first time this year. Bulgarian pop star Dara won the top spot with 516 points. Israel (singer Noam Bettan) came in second with 343 points, and Romania (singer Alexandra Kapitanescu) came in third with 296 points. According to the rules, Bulgaria, as the winner of 2026, will host the 71st Eurovision Song Contest in 2027. Canada will officially participate in the main competition for the first time next year as a new country. In addition, the inaugural edition of Eurovision Song Contest Asia will be held in Bangkok, Thailand for the first time outside Europe. Bangladesh is going to officially participate in the Eurovision Song Contest for the first time. For that purpose, 'Voice of Bangladesh' competition has been organised in Bangladesh. The winner of this competition will participate on behalf of Bangladesh in the new regional version of this international franchise, Eurovision Song Contest Asia 2026. The grand finale of the first edition will be held in



Fahmida Nabi (top-left), Bappa Mazumder (top-middle), Ankhi Alamgir (top-right), Hamin Ahmed (middle-left), Shauquat Ali Imon (bottom-right), Tahsan Khan (bottom-left).

Bangkok on November 14. A total of 10 countries are participating in the Asian edition. Along with Bangladesh, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Nepal, Bhutan, Cambodia and Laos are participating. The winners of this edition will get the opportunity to participate in the main competition of the Eurovision Song Contest. Bongo is organising a national selection show 'Voice of Bangladesh' to determine who will compete for Bangladesh on the main stage of the Eurovision Song Contest Asia in Bangkok. After the initial selection based on the applications of artists from May to June, a special grooming session is underway with the best 12 contestants. There are plans to select the final representative of Bangladesh through the grand finale on September 30. On this occasion, Bongo will announce the overall plan of the competition at a programme to be organised at a hotel in Dhaka on July 22, along with introducing hosts and judges of the show. The entire competition will be seen on the screens of Bongo and NTV

Martinez raises doubts over Argentina future after World Cup

Sports Desk

Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez has cast doubt over his international future after the team's defeat to Spain in the 2026 FIFA World Cup final. Soccer He said he would use the aftermath of the loss to consider what comes next. Writing on Instagram after Argentina returned to Buenos Aires on Monday, Martinez spoke of the disappointment of missing out on a second straight World Cup title and questioned whether it was time to step away from the national team. "We dreamed of winning the World Cup again, of bringing the trophy back to Argentina and making history once more," he wrote.



FIFA opens probe into World Cup final clash between Spain and Argentina

Sports Desk

FIFA has opened an investigation into the scuffle involving players and coaching staff from Spain and Argentina after Sunday's World Cup final. Soccer The governing body said it has appointed an investigator under Article 36 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code after reviewing the referee's report. "Following an assessment of the match report from the FIFA World Cup final between Spain and Argentina, disciplinary proceedings have been opened," FIFA said in a statement. It said the disciplinary committee would decide on the next steps after receiving the investigator's report. Spain beat Argentina to lift the World Cup, but celebrations after the final whistle gave way to a confrontation involving players from both teams and members of Argentina's coaching staff. Videos shared on social media showed Argentina midfielder Leandro Paredes arguing with Spain defender Eric Garcia before appearing to punch him, setting off a melee.

Neer shares second place after 4th round

Sports Desk

International Master Manon Reja Neer shared the second place along with two other players, securing 2.5 points after the fourth round of the Farago Ivan Memorial 2026 Grandmasters Chess Tournament now being held in Budapest, Hungary. In the fourth-round game held on Tuesday, IM Neer drew with Hungarian International Master Bence Pribelszky. Earlier, in the third round, he also shared a point with United States International Master Sethuraman Sandeep.

Bangladesh women's kabaddi team aim to finish test series with win

Sports Desk

The Bangladesh national women's kabaddi team will aim to finish the series on a high when they take on the touring Nepal women's kabaddi team in the fifth and final match of the five-match Women's Kabaddi Test Series tomorrow (Thursday) at the National Kabaddi Stadium. Bangladesh have already secured the series with one match to spare. The hosts took a 1-0 lead by winning the opening match 34-24, before Nepal bounced back to level the series with a 25-20 victory in the second Test. Bangladesh regained the lead by defeating Nepal 31-23 in the third match and then sealed the series with a commanding 34-22 win in the fourth Test. The home side will now be looking to clinch victory in the final match and end the series with an emphatic 4-1 triumph.



Warner pleads guilty to drink-driving charge

Sports Desk

Former Australia opener David Warner has pleaded guilty to a mid-range drink-driving charge after being stopped by police in Sydney during a break from the Pakistan Super League earlier this year. Warner entered the plea through his lawyer at Waverley Local Court on Wednesday and was not required to appear. He is due to be sentenced on August 18. Police pulled Warner over in Sydney's eastern suburbs on April 5. A roadside breath test led officers to take him to Maroubra Police Station, where he returned a blood alcohol reading of 0.104 — more than twice the legal limit. His lawyer, Bobby Hill, has previously said Warner accepted he made a mistake. "He knows what he did was wrong," Hill said. "He accepts that was a reckless decision, a foolish decision to get in his car instead of taking an Uber." Hill said Warner had drunk three glasses of wine at a friend's apartment before driving. He said Warner would seek leniency when he is sentenced but expected to be treated like any other member of the public. The case comes as Warner prepares for another Big



Bash League season with Sydney Thunder, where he was appointed captain after his lifetime leadership ban from the 2018 ball-tampering scandal was lifted in 2024. Cricket NSW Chief Executive Lee German said after Warner was charged that the allegations were "concerning" and that the organization strongly opposed drink-driving. Sydney Thunder has yet to say whether Warner's guilty plea will affect his captaincy.

India series in September will go as planned, hopes Sports Minister

Sports Desk

Sports Minister Aminul Haque said on Tuesday he expects India's cricket team to tour Bangladesh in September as scheduled. ExecutiveBranch He said he is hoping that the series will help restore cricket ties after months of strain between the two countries following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, which was a close ally of the Indian ruling party. Sports organisation structure being rebuilt from ground up: Aminul India are due to play three ODIs and three T20Is in Bangladesh in September. The series was originally scheduled for last year but was postponed amid diplomatic tensions. Questions over the tour resurfaced after Bangladesh's interim government withdrew from this year's T20 World Cup in India, citing security concerns. The decision came after Bangladesh fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman was dropped from the Indian Premier League in March. Speaking to reporters at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur, Aminul said the government wants to use sport to improve relations with neighbouring countries. "I have spoken with officials at the Indian High Commission, and they have also been in touch with us," Aminul said. "Everyone is waiting for India to come to Bangladesh in September." He said the government believes the tensions that emerged over recent events should not stand in the way of sporting ties. "We should move past what happened and ensure that our sporting relations, communication and exchanges with neighbouring countries continue as normal," he said.



Bezos holds talks with group interested in buying Liverpool stake : reports

Sports Desk

Amazon founder Jeff Bezos has held talks about joining the Amit Bhatia-fronted consortium that has expressed interest in buying a minority stake in Liverpool, according to reports on Wednesday. Bezos, one of the world's richest men, could become part of the group led by British-Indian businessman Bhatia, the son-in-law of billionaire steel tycoon Lakshmi Mittal. Sky News reported Bezos' interest but said he is not certain to proceed with the potential plan. The 62-year-old American is estimated by Forbes to be worth around £192 billion (\$257 billion). Liverpool's owners Fenway Sports Group confirmed on Tuesday Bhatia's consortium had approached them to discuss buying a minority stake in the 20-time English champions. Bezos has reportedly explored previous bids for the NFL's Seattle Seahawks and Washington Commanders, but decided against pursuing either deal. Bhatia's interest in the Premier League club came on the same day the 46-year-old stepped down from the board at QPR. He ended an 18-year association with the English Championship team by transferring his stake to majority owner Ruben Gnaniangam. In 2023, FSG sold a minority stake in Liverpool to investment firm Dynasty and any deal with Bhatia, should it proceed, is expected to be along similar lines. According to the Financial Times, a deal with the consortium led by Bhatia would value Liverpool at more than \$6 billion. FSG, which also owns the Boston Red Sox baseball team, bought Liverpool in 2010 for £300 million.

Chelsea sign Rogers from Villa for reported UK record fee

Sports Desk

Chelsea signed England midfielder Morgan Rogers from Aston Villa on Tuesday in a deal British media valued at £117 million (\$157 million), a price that smashed the transfer record for a British player. "The 23-year-old forward has signed a contract at Stamford Bridge until 2033," the London club posted on their web site. Rogers passed a medical on Monday following his return from the World Cup in North America. "I'm so excited," said Rogers. "For me, Chelsea are the biggest club in London and a club I've always admired since I was a kid," Rogers was quoted as saying by the club. "I'm really excited about the project with the new manager, the players we've got and where the club is heading. That's why I'm here and I can't wait to get started." The transfer surpasses the previous record fee for a British player set by Manchester City when they signed England midfielder Elliot Anderson from Nottingham Forest for £116 million earlier in July. Rogers is the most expensive signing in Chelsea's history, eclipsing the £107 million paid to sign Enzo Fernandez from Benfica in 2023. The swoop is a significant statement of intent from Chelsea, who convinced Rogers to leave Villa even though -- unlike his former club -- the west Londoners will not play in the Champions League in the coming season. Chelsea had been chasing Rogers for two years and beat Arsenal to his signature after the Premier League champions refused to match the eye-watering fee demanded by Villa. Rogers' departure is another blow for Villa boss Unai Emery after Youri Tielemans' move to Manchester

United and Lucas Digne's expected switch to Paris Saint-Germain. "A player with impeccable behaviour and commitment, Morgan leaves Aston Villa with the best wishes of everyone at the football club for both his service to the club and for his future career," said Villa on their website. Championship side Middlesbrough will receive 20 percent of the fee due to a sell-on clause in the deal when they sold Rogers in Villa in 2024.

Rogers scored 21 goals in 85 league appearances for Villa and was a key figure in their Europa League final victory over Freiburg in May. He enjoyed a breakout campaign last season, netting 14 times and producing 11 assists in 55 appearances. "He will always remain a core part of our recent great moments and memories," said Villa.

Chelsea's new manager Xabi Alonso will have to find a way to fit Rogers, Cole Palmer, Pedro Neto, Estevao Willian and another close-season signing Geovany Quenda into his attacking midfield positions. Following Rogers' arrival at Stamford Bridge, Argentine winger Alejandro Garnacho is expected to be sold by Chelsea before the transfer window shuts. Rogers is close friends with Palmer after their time together in Manchester City's youth academy. Palmer's famous 'cold' celebration was inspired by Rogers, who first struck the pose as a Middlesbrough player. Rogers' signing shows Chelsea can still attract top-class signings despite their failure to qualify for Europe after a dismal 10th place finish in the Premier League last season. Rogers will link up with Chelsea after taking a break following his role in England's run to the World Cup semi-finals.



Madrasas asked to form teams for Prime Minister's Gold Cup Football Tournament

Sports Desk

The Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board has directed all the madrasas of the country to form football teams and take necessary preparations for the 'Prime Minister's Gold Cup Football Tournament-2026' beginning on August 9 next. According to a notification issued yesterday, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman will inaugurate the 'Prime Minister's Gold Cup Football Tournament-2026' at Chattogram Stadium on August 9. The tournament will start simultaneously on the same date across the country. On this occasion, every educational institution under the board has been asked to organise class-based inter-class football competitions and select skilled players. The madrasas have been instructed to form boys and girls football teams separately at Dakhil (Cass VI-X) and Alim (1st and 2nd year) levels. In addition, it has been asked to ensure regular practice of the teams formed under the supervision of an experienced teacher or trainer. Information about the football teams must be sent to the board by July 30 via e-mail (registrar@bmeb.gov.bd).



Messi lands in Argentine hometown after World Cup defeat

Sports Desk

Argentina's defeated football hero Lionel Messi returned to his hometown on Tuesday after a painful World Cup final loss. The national squad captain landed at Rosario airport on a private jet at around 6:30 am (0930 GMT) along with his wife and three children, a local government source told AFP on condition of anonymity. A video published by sports outlet ESPN showed a gray SUV carrying Messi entering a gated community in the city of Funes. The house he owns in this suburban area is where he usually stays during visits to his native Rosario in central Argentina. Most national squad players and their coach Lionel Scaloni arrived in Buenos Aires on Monday night, where thousands of fans enveloped them in cheers, chants, flags and tears. Argentina lost the World Cup final to Spain 1-0, with soccer idol Messi breaking down in tears after Sunday's defeat. The 39-year-old star scored eight goals during this year's tournament.



Rangpur farmers happy with yield, price of Kharif-1 vegetables

Rangpur Correspondent

After exceeding the set farming target this season, farmers of Rangpur agricultural region are happy with the good yield and profitable prices of Kharif-1 summer vegetables, as harvesting is in full swing now. Market sources said that summer vegetables are sold in large quantities in local markets and sent to the capital city and other parts of the country daily from Rangpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari districts of the region. The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) officials said that a target of producing over 5,65,791 tonnes of summer vegetables have been set from 30,085 hectares of land for the Rangpur agricultural region during the current Kharif-1 season. "However, farmers have finally cultivated summer vegetables on 31,130 hectares of land, exceeding the set farming target by 1,045 hectares or 3.47 percent in the region," said Additional Director of DAE for Rangpur region Agriculturist Md Shirajul Islam. In the meantime, farmers have already harvested summer vegetables on 17,385 hectares of land till Sunday and produced 3,21,177 tonnes of vegetables at an excellent average yield rate of 18.47 tonnes per hectare of land. Enthusiastic farmers, who have repeatedly received bumper yields and profitable market prices every year, are cultivating vegetables two to three times a year on the same land, and many of them have achieved self-sufficiency in recent years. Cultivation of vegetables on croplands, homesteads and riverine char areas has become a highly profitable scheme for farmers across the region in recent years. "As the harvest continues with excellent yield rates, there is a possibility of bumper harvest of summer vegetables cultivated in the Kharif-1 season in the Rangpur agricultural region this season," said Md Shirajul Islam. Farmers Noman Ali and Ashrafur Islam of village Ranipukur in Mithapukur upazila of Rangpur said they

have cultivated Dudhkushi, Jhinga, Kakrol, chili, bitter gourd, brinjal, Borboti, Potol, chili, off-season cabbage and leafy vegetables this season. Local fariahs Mohammad Abdullah, Sekendar Ali and Abul Kalam said they purchase summer vegetables from farmers on their fields and sell to merchants at wholesale markets with 15 to 20 percent profits on an average. Merchants at wholesale markets of Shothibari and Jaigirhat in Mithapukur upazila, Palichara in Sadar upazila and Rangpur city market said daily vegetable supply had reduced a little in recent days due to frequent monsoon rains. "The supply of summer vegetables is gradually returning to normal, but prices are a bit high," proprietor of Bithi Banijyalaya at Rangpur city wholesale market Md Delwar Hossain told this afternoon. Retailers in Rangpur city market, Palichara market and Shothibari and Pirgachha markets of Rangpur said they buy vegetables from wholesale market traders and sell them to consumers at a profit of 10 to 15 percent. Retailers Md Hafizur Rahman of Rangpur city market and Fazlur Rahman of Keranipara kitchen market in Rangpur city said that farmers are happy to get fair prices for summer vegetables. "However, consumers are not satisfied with the price of vegetables," he added. Consumers are currently buying potato at Taka 25-50 per kg, Dudhkushi at Taka 50, Kakrol at Taka 55 and Jhinga 60 at Taka 60-80 per kg, Potol at Taka 50 and brinjal at Taka 60-100 per kg, cucumber at Taka 100-150, papaya at Taka 25-30 and green chilli at Taka 160-200 per kg, radish at Taka 30, onion at Taka 50 and garlic at Taka 150-200 per kg in these local markets. "Besides, bitter gourd is being sold at Taka 40-50 per piece, cabbage at Taka 240 per kg, pumpkin at Taka 50 per kg, coriander at Taka 300 per kg, gourd at Taka 50-60 per piece, Sajina at Taka 120-160 per kg, Borboti at Taka 80 per kg, arum roots at Taka 60 per kg and Ol Kochu at Taka 80 per kg," Hafizur Rahman said.



Tk 10,000 fine for selling unauthorized chocolates, lozenges in Rajshahi

Rajshahi Correspondent

At the initiative of the Divisional Office of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), a mobile court was conducted in the city yesterday. In this drive, Rahat Enterprise, located in the lane of Saheb Bazar Kali Mandir, was fined Tk. 10,000 for selling foreign 'chocolates and lozenges' without BSTI quality certification and clearance, and brought in illegally without valid import. In addition, special monitoring was conducted at M/s Nayan Petroleum Agency and M/s Afrin Filling Station located in the Talaimari area of the city to stop illegal stockpiling of petrol, octane and diesel at filling stations, prevent rumours, and ensure correct weight and measurement. The mobile court was led by Assistant Commissioner and Executive Magistrate Farhana Hossain, and Engineer Junaid Ahmed, Officer of the Certification Marks Wing of BSTI Divisional Office, acted as the prosecutor. Members of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police were present at that time. Such BSTI drives in Rajshahi will continue regularly in the public interest to prevent adulteration and ensure the supply of quality food products.

Relief distributed among flood victims in Rangamati

Rangamati Correspondent

Member of Parliament for Rangamati-299 Dipen Dewan yesterday visited flood-affected areas in Langadu upazila and distributed relief materials among the flood victims. During the visit, the lawmaker inspected flood-hit localities and several government offices and exchanged views with local officials and residents. Speaking after inaugurating the Langadu Upazila Parishad conference room and attending a discussion meeting, Dewan said initiatives would be taken to complete the construction of the Langadu-Naniarchar connecting road at the earliest to make it operational. He also said that electricity supply would be extended to the upazila's three unions that are still without power, while ongoing development activities would continue.

Youth sentenced to life-term jail in Ctg yaba smuggling case

Chattogram Correspondent

A court here yesterday sentenced a fugitive accused to life imprisonment for his involvement in a Yaba tablets recovery case at Patenga Police Station in the city. Additionally, he has been imposed a fine of Taka 50,000, in default, to suffer six-month more in jail. This ruling was delivered by the Fifth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge, Md. Tajul Islam. The convicted was identified as Md. Sohel, 37, son of Md. Shafi of Dhurung area under Fatikchhari upazila. Court sources said that on June 1, 2019, Md. Sohel was subjected to a search due to his suspicious behavior at the APBN check post located near the VIP entry gate of Shah Amanat International Airport. During the search, authorities recovered a total of 5,005 pieces of Yaba tablets from his school bag, as well as from his shoes and socks. Later, Sub-Inspector (SI) Md. Abul Kalam filed a case at Patenga Model Police Station as the plaintiff in this matter. Following the investigation, a charge-sheet was presented to the court. According to S M Kawsar Sagar, the court's bench assistant, the evidences presented by five witnesses substantiated the charges in the case, leading to the life imprisonment sentence for Md. Sohel under the Narcotics Control Act. Besides, the court mandated a fine of Taka 50,000, with an additional six months of non-commissioned imprisonment for failure to pay. Notably, the accused was not present in the court during the verdict, prompting the court to issue an arrest warrant against him based on the original sentence warrant.

Gaibandha canal re-excavation project returns surplus Tk over 41 lakh to state treasury

Gaibandha Correspondent

The district administration has returned a surplus of Taka 4,190,828 to the government treasury after successfully completing the re-excavation of the Nakai Canal in Palashbari upazila at a cost lower than the allocated budget. The project was implemented as part of the government's nationwide canal excavation and re-excavation programme aimed at improving agricultural productivity, easing waterlogging, and expanding irrigation facilities. According to the Upazila Project Implementation Office (PIO), the government allocated Taka 20,603,080 for the project. Of this, Taka 16,412,252 was spent on the re-excavation of 4.92 kilometres of the Nakai Canal in Harinathpur union. The remaining money was deposited into the state treasury in accordance with government financial regulations. Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Aminul Islam Bulbul said the project was completed with quality workmanship while keeping costs below the allocated budget through proper planning, efficient supervision, and coordination among the relevant authorities. Work on the project began on May 12 this year. Officials monitored construction quality and expenditures throughout the implementation period to ensure transparency and cost efficiency. After settling all expenses, including labour wages, machinery, transportation, and other operational costs, the remaining funds were returned to the government. The re-excavation has restored the canal's natural water flow, improved drainage, reduced waterlogging during the monsoon season, and enhanced irrigation opportunities for surrounding farmland, according to project officials.



Residents said the canal now drains water from more than 20 nearby wetlands (beels), significantly reducing waterlogging and allowing farmers to cultivate Aman paddy in areas that were previously unsuitable. They also said that the restored canal is expected to improve fish habitats and contribute positively to the local economy. Upazila Project Implementation Officer Abdus Salam said no public funds had been wasted during the project, adding that all surplus money was officially returned to the government treasury through the prescribed procedures. UNO Aminul Islam Bulbul said public funds are a trust of the people and must be spent with the highest level of responsibility and accountability. "After completing all necessary work, the remaining funds were returned to the state treasury. Ensuring the proper use of public resources is essential for good governance, and we remain committed to making the best use of every taka allocated for public welfare," he said.

Teenage boy killed in Chuadanga road accident

Chuadanga Correspondent

A teenage motorcycle mechanic was killed while he was test-riding a motorcycle that collided head-on with a truck at Alukdia Bazar in Sadar upazila here this morning. The deceased was identified as Abdullah, 14, son of Sahabuddin of Taltala village in Chuadanga municipality. He worked at a motorcycle servicing shop in Alukdia Bazar. Abdullah had been repairing motorcycles at the workshop since this morning. After completing repairs on a motorcycle, he took it onto the Chuadanga-Meherpur highway for a routine test ride to check whether it was functioning properly. When he reached the area, the motorcycle collided head-on with a truck, leaving him critically injured. Locals rescued Abdullah and rushed him to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital, but he died on the way, they said. Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Chuadanga Sadar Police Station Mizanur Rahman confirmed the matter and said the body was handed over to the family for burial without an autopsy as no complaint had been filed.



BGB chief distributes relief, medical aid to Sunamganj flood victims

Sunamganj Correspondent

Director General of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Major General Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui yesterday visited flood-affected areas in Sunamganj and distributed relief materials among more than 500 distressed people. The BGB chief visited Lalpur Cluster Village in Gourarang Union under Sunamganj Sadar Upazila this morning, said a BGB press release this afternoon. During the visit, the BGB chief distributed food items and other relief materials among over 500 people affected by the recent floods triggered by heavy rainfall and hill torrents.

Excess funds from canal excavation projects returned to state treasury in Natore

Natore Correspondent

Nearly Taka 22 lakh in unspent funds from the excavation of seven canals in the district has been returned to the state treasury after the successful completion of the projects. The canal excavation programme, implemented by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, covered 11.65 kilometres of canals across four upazilas. According to the office of the District Relief and Rehabilitation officer, the Khalishadanga Canal in Lalpur upazila, measuring three kilometres, was allocated Taka 1,28,78,000, while the actual expenditure stood at Taka 1,28,53,000, leaving a surplus of about Taka 25,000. Another project in Lalpur, the 2.5-kilometre Chandana Canal, had an allocation of Taka 1,03,03,000. The excavation was completed at a cost of Taka 1,02,95,000, resulting in savings of around Taka 8,000. In Bagatipara upazila, excavation of a 1.05-kilometre canal from Dumrai to the Baral River was completed at a cost of Taka 26,81,000 against an allocation of Taka 27,07,000, generating savings of approximately Taka 27,000. Similarly, excavation of the 1.35-kilometre canal from Pukurpur to the Baral River cost Taka 32,04,000 compared with the allocated Taka 32,22,000 million, leaving about Taka 19,000 unspent. In Gurudaspur upazila, excavation of the 1.35-kilometre canal from Shidhuli Canal to Airmari Bridge was completed at a cost of Taka 51,26,000 million against an allocation of Taka 51,53,000, saving Taka 27,000. In Natore Sadar upazila, excavation of the 750-metre Bhatulia Canal cost Taka 25,62,000 against an allocation of Taka 25,79,000, leaving a surplus of around Taka 14,000. The largest savings, however, came from the two-kilometre Helencha Canal in Natore Sadar. Although Taka 77,28,000 had been allocated for the project, the actual expenditure was Taka 56,82,000, resulting in savings of



approximately Taka 20,46,000. Chairperson of the Bhatulia Canal Project Implementation Committee and Administrator of Halsa Union Parishad Monjira Parveen said the five-member committee—including the Upazila Agriculture Officer, Upazila Engineer, Assistant Engineer of the Department of Public Health Engineering, and the Upazila Project Implementation Officer—closely monitored the excavation work to ensure quality standards. Local farmer Abdul Majid said the increased depth of the Bhatulia Canal would help retain sufficient water, enabling farmers to use it for irrigation and improve agricultural production. Upazila Project Implementation Officer Md. Saidur Rahman said the excavation work was carried out mainly using excavators, while labourers were engaged in embankment protection, tree plantation and other ancillary works. District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer A.K.M. Shaha Alam Molla said the department had completed the excavation work within a short time and at lower cost than many other agencies while maintaining high quality standards. He attributed the savings to close supervision and coordinated efforts at every stage of implementation. Out of the total allocation of Taka 4,45,74,000 million for the seven canal projects, the actual expenditure amounted to Taka 4,24,09,000, leaving Taka 21,65,000 in surplus, which has been returned to the state treasury.