



PM assures support for locally developed ventilator, high-flow oxygen machine

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today assured full government support for testing, quality validation and commercial production of locally developed ventilators and high-flow oxygen machines, reaffirming his government's commitment to advancing healthcare through research and innovation. "The government is attaching the highest priority to research and innovation in healthcare.

We will provide all necessary support for testing, quality verification and commercial production of these locally developed medical devices," he said. The assurance came at a meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office in the Cabinet Division at the Bangladesh Secretariat this afternoon, said Prime Minister's Deputy Press Secretary Hasan Shiplu. During the meeting, the Prime Minister highly appreciated the initiatives of the experts and researchers,

who developed the two medical devices using indigenous technology. He also assured all possible assistance to make the ventilator and the high-flow oxygen machine ready for practical use and commercialization. The experts, in the meeting, presented the effectiveness, prospects and future development plans of the two locally developed medical devices. The meeting was informed that two separate teams

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Army takes Brig Gen Miftah Uddin into custody over Ekramul murder case at ICT

Staff correspondent

The Bangladesh Army has taken Brigadier General Miftah Uddin Ahmed into military custody in connection with a crimes against humanity case over the 2018 killing of former Teknaf municipality Ward councillor Ekramul Haque. GeographicReferenceConfirming the development, an official of the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), speaking on condition of

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Hidden disease, hidden losses: How brucellosis is ravaging dairy farms in stealth

Staff correspondent

Dairy farmers in Bangladesh may be losing a significant amount of income every year without even realising it, as brucellosis, a largely overlooked livestock disease,

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Alleged Attack on Sarjis and Nasiruddin Patwari

Akramul Hossain, Staff Reporter

An attack took place on Sarjis Alam and Nasiruddin Patwari, during the National Citizen Party's (NCP) July Jagoron program in Habiganj. At one point, the attack led to chase and counter-chase. Several journalists' vehicles were also vandalized during the incident. The attack occurred on Tuesday (28 July) around 7 PM, in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office after the rally ended. They have now been taken to the Circuit House. However, no casualties or damage have been reported immediately following the attack. No official statement has been

received yet from the police or the district administration. Law enforcement agencies are reportedly working to determine the actual cause of the incident and identify those involved. The NCP media wing told the media that during the march rally, Nasiruddin Patwari and Sarjis Alam were on stage. In the first phase, Chhatra Dal attacked them. Later, they also attacked other party leaders and activists who were in vehicles, as well as journalists. The program was organized demanding implementation of the referendum verdict, creation of employment for the youth, and ensuring border security.



Protein filler, collagen to be produced from tannery waste

Staff correspondent

A private firm has taken initiatives to produce protein filler, gelatin and collagen from tannery waste to improve waste management in the leather industry and ensure environment-friendly production. Bangladesh JW Animal Protein Co. Ltd, a Chinese-invested recycling enterprise, has already produced protein filler, gelatin and collagen on a trial basis. Sources at Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) said BSCIC has already signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh JW Animal Protein Co. Ltd. to produce protein filler by chrome

separation. The company has already set up a large factory with its own ETP in the Nayarhat area of Savar and has started trial production. The factory recycles tannery waste (leather scraps and chrome shaving dust) into high-value exportable products. Established in 2023, the company operates a plant on nine acres of land in Nayarhat, Savar, and exports products such as gelatin and industrial protein powder to China and Russia. Parvez Khan, an interpreter at Bangladesh JW Animal Protein Co. Ltd told BSS that the firm has not yet been able to go into full-scale production. "The construction of the factory is

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Shahe Alam seeks accurate progress report on govt's 180-day action plan

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Mir Shahe Alam today directed officials to prepare an accurate progress report on the implementation of the government's 180-day action plan. He gave the directive at a review meeting on the implementation progress of the 180-day action plan formulated by the ministry and its divisions in line with the current government's election manifesto. The meeting was held at the conference room of the Local Government Division at the secretariat here. Alam said that over the past 180 days, the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives has undertaken a number of important initiatives to improve people's quality of life, strengthen local government institutions, modernise urban management, promote rural development, ensure safe

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PM sends gifts for newborn daughter of injured July fighter Sujan

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, also chief patron of 'Amra BNP Paribar', today sent gifts for Saifa Nur Subha, the newborn daughter of Mohammad Sujan, an injured fighter of the July 2024 mass uprising. A delegation of 'Amra BNP Paribar' visited Sujan's residence at Keraniganj in the capital this afternoon and handed over the gifts on

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akhrul calls for social movement against drugs

Staff correspondent

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir today stressed the need for creating a social movement against drug abuse across the country. "We want to build a social movement against drug abuse involving people of all views, regardless of their party affiliation," he said. Fakhru, also the BNP

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Acting President begins official duties at Bangabhaban

Staff correspondent

Acting President Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, Bir Bikram, today received his first ceremonial salute and held his first official engagements at Bangabhaban after taking charge. On his arrival at Bangabhaban around 11:15 am, a smart contingent of the horse-mounted President Guard Regiment (PGR) welcomed the Acting President at the main gate no.2 of Bangabhaban and escorted him to the venue of the Guard of Honour. A smartly turned-out PGR contingent extended him a Guard of Honour as part of the welcoming ceremony. A combined military band comprising the Army, Navy and Air Force played a welcome tune. After presenting the

Guard of Honour, President's Military Secretary Major General A S M Bahauddin, Public Division Secretary Khan Md Nurul Amin, Press Secretary Md Sarwar Alam and Assistant Military Secretary Brigadier General Mohammad Raisul Islam welcomed the Acting President with floral bouquets at the Octagonal of Bangabhaban.

Hafiz Uddin Ahmad then went to his office and exchanged greetings with the senior officials.

The Military Secretary and the Public Division Secretary then briefed him about Bangabhaban there. Later, accompanied by the secretaries, he toured the Bangabhaban offices, the Gallery Hall and the Bangabhaban Toshakhana.

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MP Nurul Amin Inaugurates Road Widening Project in Mirsarai

Jewel Nag, Mirsarai Correspondent

Member of Parliament for Chattogram-1 (Mirsarai), Nurul Amin, has said that the current BNP-led government has accomplished within five months what, according to him, the previous "fascist" government failed to achieve in 17 years. Speaking as the chief guest at the inauguration ceremony of the Mithachhara

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Sanko Group to invest \$300m in Mirsarai textile facility

Staff correspondent

Turkish textile giant Sanko Group has announced plans to invest US\$300 million in setting up a modern integrated textile manufacturing facility at the Mirsarai industrial zone, marking one of the latest major foreign direct investments (FDI) in Bangladesh's textile sector. The announcement came during a meeting with Commerce, Industries, and Textiles & Jute Minister Khandakar Abdul Mukhtar at the Secretariat today. State

Minister for Textiles and Jute Md. Shariful Alam was also present. During the meeting, the Sanko delegation said the company intends to shift from supplying textile products from Turkey to establishing a full-scale manufacturing base in Bangladesh to meet growing demand from international buyers. The proposed integrated facility will manufacture fabrics, undertake advanced textile processing and produce high-value-added textile products aimed at global export markets.

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Govt. steps-up anti-crime drive nationwide to bolster law and order

Staff correspondent

The government has stepped up nationwide efforts to strengthen law and order, intensify anti-crime drives, modernize surveillance systems and reinforce public confidence in law enforcement under its zero-tolerance policy against crime. Senior police officials said the strategy combines tougher law enforcement, technology-driven policing, professional reforms and coordinated operations involving multiple agencies to enhance public safety. Additional Inspector General of Police (Crime and Operations) Khondoker Rafiqul Islam told BSS that police have strengthened regular patrols, routine operations and nationwide special drives to combat crime and drug trafficking. "We are on hot pursuit to curb crime across the country

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Over 7,300 students killed in road crashes in 7.5 years in Bangladesh

Staff correspondent

Road crashes continue to claim the lives of a staggering number of students in Bangladesh, with 7,364 students killed between 2019 and June 2026, accounting for 15.11 percent of all road fatalities during the period. South Asians & Diaspora These findings come from a report by the

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Our youth need better vocational education

The importance of technical and vocational education in preparing our young people for the labour market cannot be overemphasised. The government has set a target of increasing the share of students in technical and vocational education to 30 percent by 2030. However, a recent report by Prothom Alo has revealed that many institutions established to achieve this goal exist only on paper.

The government has set a target of increasing the share of students in technical and vocational education to 30 percent by 2030. However, a recent report by Prothom Alo has revealed that many institutions established to achieve this goal exist only on paper. According to the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB), 621 of the country’s 3,440 approved vocational institutions have remained without students or educational activities for five consecutive years. BTEB records show that not a single student enrolled in these 443 SSC (Vocational) and 178 Dakhil (Vocational) institutions between 2021 and 2025. This is deeply concerning and calls for urgent action from our policymakers. Reportedly, at the SSC level, technical schools and colleges filled only around 176,000 of their more than 567,000 available seats in the 2024–25 academic year. Government polytechnics also could not fill all their seats, while private polytechnics enrolled fewer than one in five students they had capacity for. Many of these institutions were approved without recruiting qualified teachers or providing laboratories, equipment, and other essential facilities. In some cases, vocational programmes have remained inactive for more than a decade. Even where courses are running, practical training often remains inadequate, undermining the very purpose of vocational education. Teacher shortages have become particularly severe after vocational teachers in many nationalised institutions were absorbed into general education posts. The lack of student interest in enrolling in these programmes is therefore understandable. The question is: why did the authorities allow these problems to persist for so long?Unfortunately, our industries continue to report shortages of skilled workers, even as many young people struggle to find decent jobs. We have previously written that our education and skills training system must better match the changing needs of industry. Vocational education should be at the centre of that effort. But it cannot fulfil that role if institutions remain non-functional and practical learning is neglected. The BTEB has begun issuing show-cause notices to institutions that have remained inactive for years, which is a welcome step. However, the government must do more than close non-performing institutions. It should conduct a comprehensive review of the vocational education system, including a nationwide school mapping exercise, to determine where new institutions are needed and whether existing ones can provide quality training. It should approve new institutions based on actual demand, while existing ones must receive adequate teachers, laboratories, modern equipment, and regular monitoring. Curricula should also be updated in consultation with employers so that graduates acquire skills that industries genuinely need.

PM assures support for

of specialists developed the ventilator and the high-flow oxygen machine.

Following the required regulatory approvals and clinical trials, the devices could be introduced in hospitals across the country and also have the potential to be exported to international markets.Officials said as the machines have been developed locally, they are expected to be manufactured and marketed at comparatively lower costs, making advanced healthcare services more affordable for patients.The experts also observed that successful production and widespread use of the two devices would reduce Bangladesh's dependence on imported medical technologies.

The ventilator is a life-saving medical device for critically ill patients with severe respiratory complications. It will undergo further testing and evaluation to ensure its safety, effectiveness and compliance with international standards.The high-flow oxygen machine, on the other hand, is designed for patients with common respiratory problems. One of its notable features is that it can operate without electricity, making it suitable for use in remote areas with limited power supply as well as in ambulances during emergency patient transportation.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain, State Minister Dr M A Muhit, PM’s Special Assistant on Health Affairs Dr S M Ziauddin Hyder, Health Services Division Secretary Md Qamruzzaman Chowdhury, BUET Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Mohammad Shariful Islam, PM Office Physician Associate Professor Dr Shah Muhammad Aman Ullah, PM’s Assistant Private Secretary-1 Dr Mamun Shibby, and officials concerned attended the meeting.

Shahe Alam seeks

water and sanitation, expand cleanliness programmes, and improve the quality of civil services. He said the report must properly reflect the actual progress of these activities and their positive impact on people's lives.He particularly called for giving priority to presenting initiatives taken to create employment, empower women, develop the local economy, and improve people's quality of life.The state minister said the activities carried out during the government's first 180 days must reflect the expectations of the people. He instructed the officials concerned to ensure that the achievements, ongoing activities, and future action plans of the ministry and its subordinate departments and agencies are presented in an information-based and realistic manner.He said that effective measures taken to establish good governance, ensure transparency and accountability, and prevent corruption should be highlighted as important achievements of the first 180 days.He said the government's main objective is to earn the people's trust through welfare-oriented development.

Referring to the Prime Minister's 'Clean and Green City' vision, the state minister laid special emphasis on making waste management across the country, including Dhaka metropolitan city, more modern, integrated, and sustainable.Alam said all relevant institutions must work in a coordinated manner to improve waste management, cleanliness activities, and public awareness in order to build a clean, healthy, and liveable Bangladesh.The meeting was chaired by Local Government Division Secretary Md Shahidul Hasan. Among others, National Institute of Local Government (NILG) Director General Dr Rowshan Ara Begum, Dhaka WASA Managing Director Md Aminul Islam, Additional Secretary (Administration) Suraiya Akhter Jahan, Director General (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Inspection) Md Mahmudul Hasan, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) Chief Engineer Md Belal Hossain, Department of Public Health Engineering Chief Engineer Md

When the river takes everything, even a girl's childhood

Md. Neyamul Hossain

go, and someone there who would take you in.Thus, early marriages in the chars are often not arranged solely for the reasons we most commonly discuss—patriarchy, poverty, the desire to unburden a family of a daughter. Those factors remain real, and must be named, but there is an additional layer that is often missed. The calculation—made by mothers and fathers who love their children—that marriage to a fami-

The chars dismantled all of them.The family I was sitting with had moved four times in seven years. Four times they had dismantled a home—rolled up tin sheets, unloaded bamboo poles, gathered the children and the chickens—and loaded everything onto a boat to find land that the Brahmaputra had not yet swallowed. The mother told me this with the matter-of-factness of someone describing the weather. Because for her, it was simply how life worked.Over the decades, Bangladesh has made real strides in reducing child marriage. The national rate fell from 62 percent in 2000 to around 47 percent by 2025, according to the Unicef Child Marriage Data Portal. And yet, in the chars—those fragile, shifting islands scattered across the Brahmaputra-Jamuna River system—the practice persists with a stubbornness that national figures cannot capture. Rangpur division, which encompasses much of the northern char belt, recorded a child marriage rate of 58 percent in the 2022 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey—among the highest in the country. To understand why, you have to understand what a char actually is. A char is not a village in the ordinary sense. It is a temporary arrangement between people and a river that owes them nothing. Entire settlements may disappear within a single monsoon season. For generations, char communities developed a remarkable form of social engineering to survive this uncertainty: kinship networks spread across multiple islands. Families deliberately maintained connections—relatives, in-laws, old neighbours—on different chars at different stages of erosion and emergence. The logic was elegant and brutal. When your char went under, you needed somewhere to go, and someone there who would take you in.Thus, early marriages in the chars are often not arranged solely for the reasons we most commonly discuss—patriarchy, poverty, the desire to unburden a family of a daughter. Those factors remain real, and must be named, but there is an additional layer that is often missed. The calculation—made by mothers and fathers who love their children—that marriage to a family on another char is a form of insurance—a lifeline to a place that might still exist when.

ly on another char is a form of insurance—a lifeline to a place that might still exist when your own island is gone. And the earlier the alliance, the sooner the connection is secured. Geography compounds vulnerability in another way. While primary education has expanded considerably through government and NGO initiatives, access to secondary education remains limited in many chars. Adolescent girls often have to travel long distances by boat or along difficult routes to reach a high school. During monsoons, attendance becomes even

As a result, farmers may suffer substantial financial losses every day without knowing that brucellosis is responsible.The researchers advised farmers to consult veterinarians and arrange testing without delay if they notice repeated miscarriages, retained placenta, failure to come into heat or repeated breeding failures among their cows. Professor Anisur Rahman said cows are generally classified simply as either healthy or infected when studying brucellosis. The BAU study, however, specifically identified latent infections as a separate category, allowing researchers to assess the economic impact of animals that appear healthy but are carrying the disease.“Brucellosis cannot always be identified from external symptoms. In many cows, the disease remains hidden or latent. Although they may appear healthy, their milk production declines and the infection can later become active,” he said.For the study, researchers collected information and milk samples from the nearly 2700 lactating cows, spread across 17 large commercial dairy farms.Using modern laboratory tests and an advanced statistical approach known as Bayesian mixed-effects multinomial regression, the cows were classified into three groups- healthy, latently infected and actively infected.Two experts from the University of Thessaly in Greece, Lefteris Meletis and Polychronis Kostoulas, worked jointly with the BAU research team on the advanced mathematical methods used to identify the disease.The economic analysis found that brucellosis could cause average annual losses of about Tk 2.41 crore at large dairy farms, with reduced milk production making up the largest share of the losses.Based on the research findings, the researchers estimated that dairy farmers in Bangladesh may unknowingly face losses amounting to around Tk 2.5 crore annually from the disease.The study also assessed the costs and benefits of different measures that could be adopted to control brucellosis.

Professor Anisur Rahman said planned mass vaccination emerged as the most economically viable control measure.“Our economic analysis shows that planned mass vaccination is the most profitable measure. For every Tk 1 invested in this approach, an average of Tk 8.14 in losses can be avoided,” he said.On the other hand, identifying infected cows and removing them from farms can be costly for ordinary farmers, particularly in the absence of a government compensation scheme, he said.Risk to human health Brucellosis is not only an economic threat to the dairy sector but also a potentially dangerous zoonotic disease that can spread from animals to humans.

Dr Md Shafiul Alam, a member of the research team and a district livestock officer under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, said people can become infected by drinking raw milk from infected cows or coming into contact with infected animals.“Brucellosis is also a dangerous zoonotic disease for humans,” he told UNB.

He stressed the need for early identification of high-risk cows, regular disease surveillance and stronger reproductive health management to control brucellosis in Bangladesh. History He also called for wider research into the disease at small dairy farms across the country, saying studies should not remain limited to large commercial farms.

The research was conducted with funding from the government’s Livestock and Dairy Development Project (LDDP) and support from field-level officials of the Department of Livestock Services.The research team was led by Professor Dr AKM Anisur Rahman of BAU’s Laboratory of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine under the Department of Medicine. Other members included BAU professors Dr Md Siddiqur Rahman and Dr M. Ariful Islam; district livestock officer and PhD student Dr Md Shafiul Alam; master’s students Md Nazmul Islam Lijan, Biswo Jyoti Adhikari, Shanta Islam and R.S. Mahmud Hasan; and Milk Vita veterinary officer and

more uncertain—children in Rangpur district alone lost up to six weeks of schooling to climate-induced closures in 2024, according to Unicef Bangladesh. A 2022 study of riverine island communities in Gaibandha found that barely 7 percent of residents had completed education beyond the secondary level. Faced with these barriers, many families withdraw daughters from school altogether. Once education ends, the pressure for marriage begins. In this way, geographic isolation becomes another pathway through which climate vulnerability contributes to child marriage.

This does not justify child marriage. But it means any intervention that ignores this underlying reality, and treats early marriage in the chars as simply a product of ignorance or tradition, will fail. And many have. The challenge Bangladesh faces in the chars is one the country’s broader development story has yet to fully reckon with. It is the fact that climate displacement is not only a humanitarian crisis, but a driver of social practices we have long catalogued under other headings. When Unicef and the Bangladesh government report that chars have some of the highest rates of child marriage in the country, the response cannot only be more awareness campaigns and helplines. It must also ask: what are these families afraid of losing? The answer, almost always, is safety. Connection. The assurance that when the water comes, and the water always comes, there will be somewhere to go and someone to help. Bangladesh’s National Plan of Action to End Child Marriage sets 2041 as the horizon for eliminating the practice. It is an ambitious target, and the country has the will to pursue it. But the chars will require a different kind of imagination—one that grasps that you cannot simply tell a family to wait for their daughter to turn eighteen when they do not know if their island will survive until she does. The answers lie in building what the river has always forced these communities to build for themselves: resilience, connection, and a future that does not depend on sacrificing the present of a child. The river does not negotiate. But we can.

PhD student Muhammad Akhtaruzzaman.

The researchers said the findings highlight the need for a more systematic approach to controlling brucellosis, particularly as Bangladesh seeks to strengthen domestic milk production and improve food and nutrition security. HistoryFor dairy farmers, they said, the message is straightforward: a cow does not necessarily have to show obvious signs of illness for brucellosis to cause financial damage.A seemingly healthy cow producing slightly less milk every day may already be costing a farm money — and, in some cases, the hidden losses can continue until the disease is detected.

PM sends gifts for newborn

behalf of the Prime Minister, said the organisation's Member Secretary Krishibid Moksedul Momin Mithun.The visit was arranged under the initiative of Prime Minister's Additional Press Secretary Atikur Rahman Rumon. The delegation, led by adviser to ‘Amra BNP Paribar’ and lawmaker Engineer Ashraf Uddin Bokul, included Dhaka District BNP General Secretary and Lawmaker Advocate Nipun Roy Chowdhury and Krishibid Moksedul Momin Mithun.The delegation inquired about the health and well-being of the newborn and handed over the gifts on behalf of the Prime Minister.They also enquired about Suján's physical condition and the overall well-being of his family.Members of ‘Amra BNP Paribar’ Masud Rana Liton, Mostakim Billah, Farhad Al Sajib, Rubel Amin and Shahadat Hossain, former BUET Chhatra Dal General Secretary Engineer Abu Hanif, Banani Thana BNP leader Saiyam Sikandar Pappu, Chhatra Dal leaders Mashhur Rahman Mohan and Abdullah Al Misbah, along with local BNP leaders, were present on the occasion.

akhrul calls for social

secretary general, made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at an anti-drug meeting here.He said if drug abuse can be eradicated, many problems of the society will be solved. The incumbent BNP government is making all-out efforts to eradicate drug abuse from the country, he added.Thakurgaon district administration organised the meeting at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room this morning.

With Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Rafiqul Huq in the chair, the meeting was attended, among others, by Superintendent of Police Belal Hossain, 50 BGB Commander Lt. Col. Akhlaq Hossain and Thakurgaon District BNP President Mirza Faisal Amin.

MP Nurul Amin Inaugurates

–Bamansundar–Darogarhat–Madbarhat Road Widening Project on Tuesday morning, the lawmaker stated that development activities are now underway across rural areas of Mirsarai. He said that rural roads are being upgraded, projects that had remained unimplemented under the previous administration.

Nurul Amin also announced that new academic buildings for several educational institutions are being constructed and that the Mirsarai Upazila Health Complex has been approved for expansion to a 100-bed facility. He added that the present government is working day and night to fulfill the expectations of the people and is committed to delivering development for the public.

Among those present at the event were Mirsarai Upazila BNP Convener Abdul Auwal Chowdhury, former Member Secretary Gazi Nizam, former General Secretary Md. Alamgir, former Convener of Baraiyarahat Municipal BNP Didarul Alam Miajy, Convener of Chattogram North District Jatiyatabadi Swachchhasebak Dal Sarwar Uddin Selim, and Upazila Engineer Didarul Alam.

Human trafficking prevention tops Home Minister's talks with IOM chief



Staff correspondent

Bangladesh and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) today reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation to prevent human trafficking, enhance border management and promote safe migration through greater use of technology and

institutional capacity building. The commitment came during a courtesy meeting between Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed and newly appointed IOM Chief of Mission in Bangladesh Dr. Laura Tomm-Bonde at the minister's office in the Bangladesh Secretariat, according to a press release of the Home Ministry. During the meeting, the two

sides discussed ways to further strengthen their two-decade partnership, with particular emphasis on intensifying national efforts to combat human trafficking, addressing technology-enabled trafficking networks, modernising integrated border management and ensuring safe and orderly migration. The home minister welcomed Dr. Tomm-Bonde and assured her of his ministry's full support in preventing human trafficking, strengthening border security, enhancing technical capabilities of law enforcement agencies and promoting safe migration. The meeting noted with satisfaction that the national validation of the jointly developed Integrated Border Management (IBM) Strategy is nearing completion. IOM also reiterated its commitment to providing technical assistance to Bangladesh's Special Branch and other law enforcement agencies. The two sides also reviewed IOM's continued support

HC seeks probe report on microplastics in toothpaste within 15 days

Staff correspondent

The High Court has ordered an investigation into the alleged presence of harmful microplastics in most toothpaste sold in the country's market and directed that a report be submitted within 15 days. A High Court division bench comprising Justice Khizir Ahmed Choudhury and Justice Md Ziaul Haque issued a rule and directed the formation of a three-member expert committee, with one representative each from BUET, the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI), to carry out the investigation. The court came up with the order after holding hearing on a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Md Abdullah Al Mamun. The petitioner himself moved the plea before the court. The Environment and Social Development

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Fakhrul Islam Khan, CIP, distributed more than 500 fruit, forest, medicinal, and other saplings



Special correspondent. Chattogram

With a pledge to protect the environment,

Kallyan Sangstha (Central Committee), United Arab Emirates, and Chairman of Al Sumaiya Group,

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EC to announce presidential election schedule in due course: CEC

Staff correspondent

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) A M M Nasir Uddin today said the Election Commission (EC) will announce the schedule for the presidential election after making a final decision at an EC meeting.

"The schedule for the presidential election will be announced in due course once the Commission takes a final decision at its meeting," he said. The CEC made the remarks after holding a meeting with Jatiya Sangsad Acting Speaker Barrister Kayser Kamal. Mentioning that preliminary and procedural discussions were held with the Acting Speaker regarding the presidential election, he said, "But the exact date of the presidential election has yet to be fixed."

The CEC said nomination papers for the presidential election will be submitted to the EC, which will act as the returning officer. Under the Presidential Election Act, 1991, the Election Commission is required to consult the Speaker before announcing the schedule for the presidential election. If Parliament is not in session, the Commission, in consultation with the Speaker, must convene a meeting of Members of Parliament at least

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Shama urges honorary consuls to champion Bangladesh investment

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam has urged honorary consuls to become strong ambassadors for Bangladesh's investment potential and help generate new opportunities for trade and business. She made the call while outlining five expectations from members of the Consular Corps in Bangladesh (CCB) at a reception hosted by its Executive Committee in her honour at a city hotel on Monday night.

"Promote partnership in technology, education, innovation and skilled employment. Help expand Bangladesh's engagement with emerging regions, particularly Africa, strengthen people-to-people connections, and help the world better understand the real Bangladesh," she said. Shama said the government values honorary consuls as trusted partners in promoting friendship and international cooperation, stressing that their role should extend

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Chattogram zoo to be elevated to international standards: Tuku

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Sultan Salauddin Tuku today announced plans to elevate the Chattogram Zoo to international standards. "The zoo will be developed not just as a place of recreation, but also as a center for animal conservation, research, education and raising public awareness about biodiversity," Tuku said told journalists after his visit to the zoo today. He said, "Our future generations, especially students from schools, colleges and universities, will be able to gain practical knowledge about the country's important animals, their lifestyles, characteristics and environmental significance." He said the purpose of a modern zoo is not merely to display animals, but to ensure an integrated environment for animal conservation, research, education, environmental

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Japanese SWG tender crucial for HSIA's 3rd terminal ORAT

Staff correspondent

The government today stressed that the Japanese Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) must submit its tender next month to launch the Operational Readiness and Airport Transfer (ORAT) process, crucial to opening HSIA's Third Terminal by December 16. The urgency was raised during a meeting between Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Afroza Khanam Rita and State Minister Rashiduzzaman Millat and Special Adviser to the Prime Minister of Japan UNO Yoshimasa at the Bangladesh Secretariat here today. During the meeting, Khanam said the government is working to inaugurate the Third Terminal of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) on December 16 this year in line with the directives of Prime Minister

Tarique Rahman. She said the government would complete all necessary preparations in time to meet the targeted inauguration date.

Millat stressed the urgency of beginning the ORAT process at the earliest as part of preparations to make the Third Terminal operational, keeping December 16 as the tentative inauguration date.

He said timely completion of the tender submission by the Japanese SWG would be necessary to pave the way for commencement of the ORAT activities.

The State Minister described Japan as one of Bangladesh's oldest and most trusted development partners and acknowledged the significant contribution of Japanese companies to the construction of the Third Terminal. He sought Japan's overall cooperation in

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Spanish envoy meets NCP's Nahid, discusses reforms, bilateral ties

Staff correspondent

Ambassador of Spain to Bangladesh Gabriel Sistiaga Ochoa de Chinchetru on Tuesday met National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener and Opposition Chief Whip Md Nahid Islam at the party's central office in B angla motor. Geographic Reference The discussions centred on Bangladesh's post-election political landscape, progress on constitutional reforms, and key reforms in the economy and judiciary, along with issues of mutual interest relating to Bangladesh-Spain relations. Both sides also exchanged views on Bangladesh's economic out

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Nusrat Murder Case: High Court Hearing on Death Reference and Appeals of 16 Convicts Begins Today

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter.



The High Court is set to hold the hearing today, Tuesday (July 28), on the death reference and appeals of the 16 convicts sentenced to death in the sensational Nusrat Jahan Rafi murder case of Sonagazi, Feni—a tragedy that shocked the entire nation.

?On October 24, 2019, Judge Mamunur Rashid of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal in Feni pronounced the verdict in this high-profile case. All 16 accused were sentenced to death, along with a fine of Tk 1 lakh each. ?Subsequently, the death reference was sent to the High Court for approval, while the convicts filed appeals challenging the tribunal's verdict. Following long legal procedures, the formal hearing on the matter begins today in the apex court.

?The 16 death-row convicts are: former principal of Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa SM Siraj-ud-Doula (57), former president of Sonagazi Upazila Awami League Ruhul Amin (55), former municipal councillor and local Awami League leader Maksud Alam

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Swapon warns of strict action against irregularities in family card distribution

Staff correspondent

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon today warned of taking stern action if any irregularity is found in distribution of family cards.

"There is no room for any broker or middleman in the distribution of family cards. If the allegations of irregularities are proved, strict action will be taken against those involved," he told a tree plantation programme here. The minister said no middleman or broker can be kept in the distribution of family cards. Swapon earlier inaugurated the tree plantation programme on both banks of the Swanirbhar Canal, where a



canal-digging programme was once launched by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, at Kutubpur in Gournadi this morning.

Later, he addressed a meeting there as the chief guest with Krishak Dal Member Secretary Abul Kalam Azad in the chair. Barishal District BNP General Secretary Mizanur

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Ex- BB deputy governor SK Sur sentenced to 3 years jail

Staff correspondent

A Dhaka court on Tuesday sentenced former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank SK Sur Chowdhury to three years' imprisonment in a case filed by Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Dhaka Second Special Judge Ayesha Nasrin passed the order, said ACC Public Prosecutor Tariqul Islam Tarik. TravelGuides & Travelogues ACC arrested SK Sur from Segunbagicha area of the capital on January 24, 2025. Since then he was in jail. According to the prosecution, a notice was served to SK Sur for submitting his wealth statement including all movable and immovable assets, liabilities, sources of income and property held in his own name or in the names of his dependents. However, he failed to submit the wealth statement within the stipulated

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লোডশেডিং কেন হয়?

আসুন সত্যটা জানি

উৎপাদন

দেশের বিভিন্ন বিদ্যুৎকেন্দ্রে বিদ্যুৎ উৎপাদন করা হয়।

সঞ্চালন

জাতীয় সঞ্চালন লাইনের মাধ্যমে সেই বিদ্যুৎ দেশের বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলে পৌঁছে দেওয়া হয়।

বিতরণ

প্রতিটি বিতরণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে বিদ্যুৎ গ্রাহকের কাছে পৌঁছে যায়।

দেশের মোট উৎপাদন ও চাহিদার ভিত্তিতে প্রতিটি বিতরণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্য নির্দিষ্ট **বিদ্যুতের বরাদ্দ** নির্ধারণ করা হয়।

যখন উৎপাদন বা সরবরাহ চাহিদার তুলনায় কম থাকে, তখন **NLDC** জাতীয় প্রিডের ভারসাম্য রক্ষার জন্য বিভিন্ন বিতরণ সংস্থাকে তাদের **বরাদ্দ অনুযায়ী** বিদ্যুৎ প্রদানের নির্দেশ দেয় বা বাধ্য করে।

কোনো বিতরণ প্রতিষ্ঠানের চাহিদা তার প্রাপ্ত বরাদ্দের চেয়ে বেশি হলে, সেই বরাদ্দের মধ্যেই বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করতে সাময়িকভাবে কিছু এলাকায় বিদ্যুৎ বন্ধ রাখতে হয়। এটিই **লোডশেডিং**।

অর্থাৎ, পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ সমিতি **নিজে থেকে** লোডশেডিংয়ের **সিদ্ধান্ত নেয় না**; জাতীয়ভাবে নির্ধারিত বরাদ্দ অনুযায়ী বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহ পরিচালনা করে।

আসুন, সঠিক তথ্য জানি, গুজব নয়।

বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয় করি, জাতীয় সম্পদ রক্ষা করি।



Golden fibre shines again in Rajshahi

Staff correspondent

After years of struggling with low prices despite rising production costs, jute farmers in Rajshahi are finally witnessing a turnaround as strong market prices and a bumper harvest have revived hopes for the country's traditional "golden fibre." With newly harvested jute fetching Tk 4,000-4,500 per maund, significantly higher than last year's opening price of Tk 3,000-3,500, growers are reporting healthy profits and renewed enthusiasm for jute cultivation. Officials believe the

favourable market, coupled with increased acreage and better yields, could further strengthen the rural economy. A visit to Nowbata Haat in Paba Upazila on Monday revealed brisk trading of the season's new jute. Farmers arrived carrying bundles of dried fibre on their heads, vans, three-wheelers and locally made Nosimon vehicles, bargaining with traders amid hopes of securing better returns than in previous years. The encouraging prices have already changed the outlook for many farmers. Bablu Ahmed of Choubaria

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Human trafficking prevention

in policy development, specialised training, research, institutional capacity building and mobilisation of international resources to strengthen Bangladesh's anti-human trafficking framework. During the meeting, Dr. Tomm-Bonde informed the minister that IOM Deputy Director General Ugochi Daniel will visit Bangladesh from August 1 to 5 and invited him to attend a reception at the UN House in Dhaka on August 4.

HC seeks probe report on microplastics

Organisation (ESDO) recently tested 34 toothpaste samples from 19 brands available in the country's market. According to its study, microplastics were detected in 26 samples, accounting for approximately 76.5 percent of the total.

Japanese SWG tender crucia

completing the necessary preparations to open the terminal to the public within the targeted timeframe. The two sides also discussed the longstanding friendly relations between Bangladesh and Japan, mutual cooperation and Japan's contribution to Bangladesh's infrastructure and development.

Yoshimasa expressed the hope for further strengthening Bangladesh-Japan cooperation and continuation of Japan's support for ongoing initiatives, including the HSIA Third Terminal project.

At the end of the meeting, Afroza and Millat presented Yoshimasa with a model of Biman Bangladesh Airlines' Boeing 787 Dreamliner, marking the resumption of Biman's flights on the Dhaka-Narita route.

Fakhrul Islam Khan, CIP, distributed

Abu Dhabi, UAE.Speaking at the event, Fakhrul Islam Khan said, A tree does not just make the environment green. It plays a vital role in protecting people's lives, health, and future. Therefore, every student and citizen should plant and take care of at least one tree.Teachers, students, parents, local dignitaries and people from various professions were present at the program. The organizers said this initiative was taken to maintain environmental balance, inspire students to plant trees, and further strengthen the greening program.

EC to announce presidential election

seven days before the election.

As part of the process, the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat will send the list of MPs to the EC, which will prepare and publish the electoral roll for the presidential election before announcing the schedule.

According to Article 123(2) of the Constitution, an election to fill the vacant office of the President must be held within 90 days of the post becoming vacant due to resignation.

On July 24, Mohammed Shahabuddin resigned from the office of the President, and Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad assumed the responsibilities of Acting President.

Asked whether there had been any further discussion on the Sathkira-4 constituency, the CEC said, "No discussion was held on that matter. We discussed only the presidential election."

Spanish envoy meets NCP's

look and explored opportunities to deepen economic cooperation and expand bilateral partnerships between the two countries.The meeting concluded with both sides reaffirming their commitment to continued engagement and closer cooperation to further strengthen the longstanding relations between Bangladesh and Spain.Following the meeting, Nahid Islam congratulated the Spanish ambassador on Spain's triumph at the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Among others, NCP Spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyan, International Affairs Cell In-Charge Alauddin Mohammad, Joint Secretary SM Saif Mustafiz, and Central Committee Member Ashrefa Khatun were present at the meeting.

Nusrat Murder Case: High Court Hearing

(50), Shahadat Hossain Shamim (20), Nur Uddin (20), Saifur Rahman Mohammad Zobair (21), Javed Hossain alias Sakhawat Hossain (19), Hafez Abdul Kader (25), Absar Uddin (33), Kamrun Nahar Moni (19), Umm-e Sultana Poppy (19), Abdur Rahim Sharif (20), Eftekhar Uddin Rana (22), Imran Hossain Mamun (22), Mohiuddin Shakil (20), and Mohammad Shamim (20).

?It may be recalled that on April 6, 2019, Nusrat was set on fire on the rooftop of Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa during the Alim examination. succumbing to her severe burn injuries, she passed away on April 10 while undergoing treatment at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Investigations revealed that the horrific murder was carried out in a planned manner after Nusrat refused to withdraw sexual harassment charges against the principal, Siraj-ud-Doula.

Shama urges honorary

well beyond ceremonial responsibilities."Your role should never be viewed as merely ceremonial. Around the world, honorary consuls have promoted trade, investment, cultural exchanges, education and humanitarian cooperation," she said. "For a developing country like Bangladesh, your contribution can make a real difference," she added.The State Minister said the Foreign Ministry would remain ready to engage constructively with the CCB, provide necessary guidance and facilitate coordination with relevant ministries and government agencies. Referring to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's "Bangladesh First" foreign policy, Shama said national interest, sovereignty, security and people's welfare remain at the heart of the government's international engagement.Bangladesh, she said, seeks greater foreign investment, wider export markets, advanced technology, stronger education and healthcare partnerships, increased tourism and practical cooperation on climate resilience."I firmly believe that our Honorary Consuls can play an important role in advancing these objectives. You can identify opportunities early, connect the right partners, and help transform ideas into lasting partnerships," she said. Highlighting Bangladesh's investment potential, Shama said the country offers much more than a large consumer market, pointing to its young and hardworking workforce, dynamic entrepreneurs, expanding manufacturing base and strategic location connecting South and Southeast Asia.These strengths, she said, make Bangladesh an attractive destination for investment, production, logistics and regional connectivity. "Our partnership must be mutually beneficial. We welcome investment, technology and expertise into Bangladesh while also encouraging Bangladesh's businesses, professionals and innovators to contribute to global markets," she said. Shama expressed the hope that the new CCB board would usher in a new chapter of practical cooperation, stronger partnerships and tangible outcomes.

The reception brought together ambassadors, high commissioners, heads of diplomatic missions, honorary consuls, representatives of international organisations, senior government officials and business leaders.

CCB President and Honorary Consul General of Mongolia Nasreen Fatema Awal reaffirmed the organisation's commitment to strengthening diplomatic relations, international coop-

eration, trade, investment, cultural exchanges and people-to-people connectivity.CCB Vice Presidents Shahab Sattar and Shakhawat Hossain, Secretary General Kazi Shah Muzakker Ahmadul Hoque Ishmam and Treasurer Masud Jamil Khan also spoke.

Swapon warns of

Rahman Khan Mukul, Gournadi Upazila BNP Convener Bir Muktijoddha Syed Sarwar Alam, Gournadi Upazila BNP Member Secretary Sharif Zahir Sajjad Hannan, Municipal Unit Convener Md Zakir Hossain Sharif, acting Member Secretary Shafiqur Rahman Sharif Swapan, Upazila BNP Senior Joint Convener Badiuzzaman Mintu and District Jubo Dal leader Syed Alam Khan Sentu were present. Speaking on the occasion, the minister called upon all to come forward to protect the environment through tree plantation.Later, the guests planted saplings of different species on both banks of the canal. Local BNP

Chattogram zoo to be

awareness and healthy recreation."To achieve this, the Chattogram Zoo will incorporate modern infrastructure, improved management, a visitor-friendly environment, and various educational activities," he added. During the zoo visit, Chattogram-7 lawmaker Hummam Kader Chowdhury, Director General of the Department of Livestock Services Md. Shahjaman Khan and senior officials from various government departments were present.

Golden fibre

village cultivated an early jute variety on five bighas of land this season. He harvested around 11 maunds per bigha and sold part of his produce at Tk 4,500 per maund."I have already earned an estimated profit of around Tk 25,000 per bigha after meeting production costs," he told BSS, expressing satisfaction over the market price.

Abdul Alim of Bargachi Union said it cost him nearly Tk 22,000 to cultivate one bigha of jute. Thanks to favourable weather, he expects a yield of 10-12 maunds per bigha. At the current market rate, he hopes to make a profit of about Tk 20,000 per bigha. Jute traders also confirmed the stronger market.Trader Janip Hossain of Nowhata Bazar said jute prices have remained considerably higher since the beginning of the season.

"Last year we bought jute at Tk 3,000 to Tk 3,500 per maund. This year we are purchasing at Tk 4,500 and sometimes even higher depending on quality," he said.Across Paba Upazila, farmers are now busy harvesting jute while simultaneously preparing land for Aman paddy transplantation. In many fields, labourers were seen cutting jute in groups, bundling the stalks and preparing them for retting before fibre extraction.

Despite the positive market, growers remain cautious. Many fear prices could decline when the peak harvesting season brings larger volumes of jute to the markets. Farmers also pointed to labour shortages and inadequate water bodies for retting, forcing them to transport harvested jute over long distances and increasing production costs.Farmer Anwar Hossain of Haripur village said better access to water for retting would significantly reduce costs and improve farmers' profits.According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), jute cultivation in Rajshahi district has expanded to 18,399 hectares this season, compared with 17,305 hectares last year, an increase of 1,094 hectares. The district has set a production target of 49,333 metric tons against last year's output of 48,677 metric tons.Deputy Director of Rajshahi DAE Mohammad Nasir Uddin said farmers initially faced severe drought and a diesel shortage, creating uncertainty over the crop. However, timely rainfall, improved fuel availability and proper field management resulted in good yields."The current market price is encouraging. Farmers are likely to earn better profits this year, which will have a positive impact on the rural economy," he said.Paba Upazila Agriculture Officer M.A. Mannan said if the favourable prices continue throughout the harvesting season, more farmers are expected to expand jute cultivation next year.Assistant Director of the Department of Jute in Rajshahi, Md. Nadim Akhtar, said jute production in the district is expected to reach 381,696 quintals this year, up from 360,494 quintals last year.

He said the combination of higher production and favourable prices has created fresh optimism among growers. Farmers believe that if the market remains stable throughout the season, the country's once-celebrated "golden fibre" can once again become one of the most profitable crops and regain its importance in the agricultural economy.

Ex- BB deputy governor

ed 21 working days.As he did not submit the wealth statement within the specified timeframe, Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Nazmul Hossain filed a case against three people- SK Sur, his wife Suparna Sur Chowdhury and their daughter Nandita Sur Chowdhury on December 23, 2024.On August 25 last year, ACC Deputy Director Md Ahsan Uddin submitted the charge sheet against him.The court framed charges against SK Sur on November 6 last year. During the proceedings, the court recorded the testimonies of seven prosecution witnesses.eaders and activists also participated in the programme.

Dr Zahed stresses probing

(PID) here.Principal Information Officer Syed Abdal Ahmed and Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Dr Md Alam Mostafa were present.Responding to a question, the information adviser said although many people have a positive perception of the 2008 election, various statistics have shown that thousands of votes were cast in less than a minute at many polling centres."So, there needs to be a proper probe into each of the elections held in 2008, 2014 and 2018. The night-time irregularities in the elections pushed the country's governance and democracy to the brink of utter destruction," he said.

Referring to the unprecedented fraud committed during the 2018 election, Dr Zahed said it is important to take various legal measures, including criminal action, against the officials or individuals involved in electoral offences.At the same time, he said, if justice is not ensured over the 2018 election, it will set a bad precedent in the country.

About the Sagar-Runi murder case, Dr Zahed Ur Rahman said the investigation into the case had been prolonged due to a lack of goodwill during the previous Awami League government's tenure;however, he said, the incumbent government is committed to eliminating the culture of impunity."Just as the investigation into the Tonu murder has gained new momentum, efforts are underway to ensure an impartial investigation and proper trial of all unresolved crimes, including the Sagar-Runi murder," he said.Informing about assistance for journalists who were injured or killed during the July movement, the adviser said a special assistance initiative is being taken under the Journalists Welfare Trust for the families of martyred journalists and injured journalists, in addition to the existing support.At the same time, he said, work is underway to produce a special documentary highlighting the outstanding sacrifices made by journalists during the July 2024 uprising.Responding to another question, Dr Zahed Ur Rahman said that under the law, legal action cannot be taken against the President while in office.

However, legal action can be taken against any person after they leave office, and the judiciary is conducting its activities completely independently, he said.

Regarding the gas and energy crisis in the country's industrial

sector, the information adviser said the situation had arisen due to the wrong policies of the previous government, which benefited oligarchs and relied on imported LNG instead of exploring domestic gas resources.However, he said, initiatives are being taken to quickly increase the use of Bhola gas and explore new offshore gas reserves to overcome the crisis.About the upcoming local government elections, the adviser reiterated that the government is committed to starting the formal process of local government elections within 2026."Once the first phase begins, it may take up to a year to complete the elections at all levels in phases," he said. He also said the inauguration of the July Museum and related commemorative programmes would be finalised on schedule to mark the anniversary of the July Revolution and preserve the historical memory of August 5.

Protein filler, collagen to

yet to be completed. Once the construction is complete, we will be able to process all the tannery waste generated in the leather industry in Savar," he said.He said about 20,000 tonnes of tannery waste is generated in the Savar leather industry.Parvez said preparations have also been taken to produce raw materials for gelatin and capsules from the rawhide scraps.Mizanur Rahman, the head of BSCIC's leather cell, said if these initiatives are implemented, they will not only check environmental pollution, but also create new value additions to the leather industry and create opportunities to earn foreign exchange.BSCIC officials said several more companies have been involved in tannery waste management.

Those are- Orion Trading Corporation, Ayub Brothers Tannery Limited, Reza Leather Export, AN International Company Limited, Alamgir Leather Complex and Feni Tannery Private Limited.

Trump says 'good chance'

everal drones fired by Iran-linked groups in Iraq targeting oil facilities.No group claimed responsibility, but Riyadh called on Baghdad to prevent such attacks from being launched from its territory.

raqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi later called for an investigation into Saudi Arabia's allegations.Pakistan, which has been mediating a resolution to the Middle East war, condemned the drone attacks, saying they "pose a grave threat to peace and stability" in the Middle East.Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels also said they launched drone attacks on Saudi Arabian oil infrastructure in response to incursions by the kingdom's drones. Riyadh is yet to comment on the claim.Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations accused pro-Iran militias in Iraq of launching waves of attacks on their territory during the conflict's earlier phase, but the groups have not claimed any attacks in the region since the resumption of hostilities.Elsewhere, the Israeli military, which has not joined the recent fighting, said it had intercepted two drones near the Jordanian border and was investigating where they had been launched from.Global stock markets meanwhile rallied and oil prices tumbled on Monday after the pause in strikes between Washington and Tehran.It came as respite for Gulf shipping and the oil industry, with international benchmark Brent dropping six percent to around \$86 a barrel.- 'Mafia gang' -Control of the Strait of Hormuz remains a hurdle to any peaceful resolution, and Iran insists on managing the crucial conduit for oil and gas.

Its powerful Revolutionary Guards have been stopping vessels trying to transit the trade route in recent days, including six that state television on Monday said had sailed outside Iran's designated route.Tehran says it has held talks in recent days with Oman, which also borders the strait, on "common principles and operational mechanisms" to ensure the safe passage of shipping.

In June, Muscat and Tehran said they would discuss imposing service fees, a move Washington opposes.But Oman also angered Iran after saying vessels could transit the Hormuz strait via its waters, with Tehran responding by attacking ships.Baqaei, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman, on Monday said the United States was not involved in the recent discussions with Oman.

Instead he criticised Washington, saying its conduct in recent years has "resembled that of a mafia gang that adheres to no rules or laws".

Sanko Group to invest \$300m

The delegation said Bangladesh's skilled workforce, strong export capacity and favourable investment environment made the country an ideal destination for the investment.

Sanko officials said the project would help introduce advanced technologies, enhance local industrial capabilities and promote technology transfer, enabling domestic manufacturers to move towards higher-value textile production.The company has already completed preliminary site selection and discussions with local partners. Construction is expected to be completed within 12 to 18 months after receiving the necessary government approvals, while operations are planned to begin within a few months of approval.The delegation sought government support in ensuring uninterrupted gas and electricity supplies and faster regulatory clearances. It also pledged to adopt environment-friendly technologies and coal-free energy management to meet international sustainability standards.The investment is expected to create significant employment opportunities, strengthen Bangladesh's export competitiveness and attract more international buyers seeking high-quality textile products.Welcoming the proposal, Muktadir assured the investors of the government's full cooperation.He said the government is committed to maintaining a business-friendly environment by providing the necessary infrastructure and policy support for large-scale foreign investments. The minister described the investment as an important step towards modernising Bangladesh's textile and jute sectors through advanced technology, increased employment and greater export diversification.

Govt. steps-up anti-crime drive

as part of the government's zero-tolerance policy against crime and narcotics," he said, adding that police are ensuring swift action against offenders.As part of the initiative, the government has expanded technology-based policing by bringing the Dhaka-Chattogram and Dhaka-Mawa highways under comprehensive CCTV and AI-powered camera surveillance.Additional Inspector General of Police of the Highway Police Faruk Ahmed said the entire Dhaka-Chattogram Highway is now under CCTV coverage, while 16 strategic locations are monitored through AI-powered cameras.He said the centralised monitoring system would help prevent robberies, drug trafficking and other highway crimes and would gradually be expanded across the country.Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed recently reiterated that the government remains firmly committed to maintaining peace, public safety and the rule of law through a strict and lawful approach.He said Bangladesh Police has adopted a range of operational strategies in line with government directives to ensure nationwide security.He added a joint anti-crime drive involving Bangladesh Police, the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) and intelligence agencies has been underway since May 1 to dismantle drug syndicates, cross-border smuggling networks and organised criminal groups.According to Police Headquarters, police arrested 141,989 people in nationwide special operations and other law enforcement drives between May 1 and July 27, including 39,267 in the ongoing special operation and 102,722 in criminal cases and routine operations.During the period, police recovered 325 illegal firearms, 638 locally made

weapons, 2,802 rounds of ammunition, large quantities of explosives, and over 9.12 million yaba tablets. Police also filed 17,066 narcotics cases and arrested 24,821 drug suspects.Police Headquarters said the campaign reflects a comprehensive strategy integrating intensified policing, inter-agency coordination, technology-based surveillance, professional development, stronger accountability and tougher enforcement against organised crime and narcotics.Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ali Hossain Fakir recently urged police personnel to remain firm in suppressing crime while maintaining politeness, humanity and professionalism.Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Mosleh Uddin Ahmed also instructed officers to perform their duties with professionalism, impartiality and dedication, intensify operations against illegal firearms, muggers, drug traffickers and extortionists, and ensure strict disciplinary action against negligent officers while rewarding outstanding performers. The DMP currently arrests an average of around 400 crime suspects daily from different parts of the capital as part of its ongoing efforts to maintain law and order.

Over 7,300 students killed in

Road Safety Foundation (RSF) which was released on Tuesday.

Data analysis shows that 48,713 people were killed in road crashes across the country during the same period.Among the student victims, 3,328 (45.19 percent) were school and madrasa students aged between five and 17 years, while 4,036 (54.80 percent) were college and university students aged between 18 and 25 years.Younger children remain vulnerable as pedestrians, motorcycle crashes have become the single biggest cause of death among teenagers and young adults, it said .Motorcycles account for more than half of student deathsOf the total student fatalities, 3,841 (52.15 percent) were either motorcycle riders or pillion passengers.Besides,519 students (7.04 percent) were killed while riding bicycles or travelling by rickshaw. Another 154 students (2.09 percent) died after scarves or clothing became entangled in the wheels of auto-rickshaws.Road-wise analysis shows that the highest number of student deaths occurred on regional roads, where 2,149 students (29.18 percent) lost their lives.The analysis shows that children aged between five and 12 were mostly killed while walking to or from school or while playing near their homes after being struck by auto-rickshaws, motorcycles and goods vehicles. Such crashes were more common on rural roads.Student deaths peaked in 2022

The annual death toll shows a sharp rise over the years.A total of 693 students were killed in road crashes in 2019, followed by 719 in 2020 and 936 in 2021.The number reached its highest level in 2022, when 1,385 students lost their lives.The figure later declined to 1,153 in 2023, 1,073 in 2024 and 1,014 in 2025. During the first six months of 2026 alone, another 391 students were killed.During the same period, another 1,237 students died after being hit by trains while crossing railway tracks carelessly or walking along railway lines while using headphones, according to the analysis.Major causes identifiedThe study identifies several factors behind the alarming number of student deaths, including defective roads and unsafe vehicles, inadequate awareness about road safety, the absence of structured road safety education in educational institutions, insufficient public awareness campaigns, reckless motorcycle riding among young people, poor compliance with traffic laws, and weak governance in the transport sector.RecommendationsTo reduce student fatalities, RSF recommended organising annual road safety campaigns in educational institutions, providing government-supported training for teachers, incorporating road safety questions into school examinations, launching sustained awareness campaigns through mainstream and social media, removing unsafe vehicles from roads, improving safety around schools and colleges, and strictly enforcing laws to prevent underage motorcycle riding alongside greater parental awareness.Eight years after the Safe Roads MovementRSF recalled the nationwide student movement for safe roads that followed the deaths of two students of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College, who were killed by a speeding bus of Jabal-e-Noor Paribahan on Airport Road in Dhaka on July 29, 2018.It notes that despite the passage of eight years, the country's road transport sector has failed to establish lasting discipline or significantly reduce road crashes.The absence of a long-term and coordinated road safety strategy, weak enforcement of the Road Transport Act and the influence of vested interests have prevented meaningful reforms, it added. Although committees are frequently formed and recommendations prepared, implementation remains limited, leaving road safety largely unchanged.

Measles-like symptoms claim 3 more lives; death toll stands at 828

Staff correspondent

Three more children died with measles-like symptoms in 24 hours until 8:00am on Tuesday, bringing the combined tally of confirmed and suspected measles-related deaths to 828 in the country.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), all the latest fatalities were suspected measles deaths.With the latest update, the number of suspected measles deaths has risen to 733, while the number of laboratory-confirmed measles deaths remained 95.A total of 799 new suspected measles cases were reported during the 24-hour period, bringing the cumulative number of suspected cases nationwide to 125,544.

Meanwhile, 105 new confirmed measles cases were recorded, bringing the total number of laboratory-confirmed infections to 15,660. Since March 15, a total of 108,441 patients with suspected measles have been hospitalised across the country, of whom 104,235 have recovered, according to DGHS data.

Bangladesh-China Parliamentary Friendship Group holds 1st meeting

Staff correspondent

The first meeting of the Bangladesh-China Parliamentary Friendship Group of the 13th Parliament was held today at the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) Bhaban with its Chairman Dr. Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, MP, in the chair.

Members of the committee-- Md. Shahidul Islam, MP, Md. Hasan Rajib Pradhan, MP, Jahrat Adib Chowdhury, MP, Mahamuda Habiba, MP, Mohammad Nazibur Rahman, MP, Mohammad Mosleh Uddin Farid, MP, and Md. Abul Hasnat, MP, attended the meeting.The meeting began with the recitation from the Holy Quran, followed by an introduction of the members and preliminary discussions, said a press release of Parliament Secretariat.During the meeting, the members discussed the longstanding friendly relations between Bangladesh and China and reviewed China's growing importance in the

current geopolitical context.They also held detailed discussions on further strengthening the Bangladesh-China strategic partnership, promoting bilateral exchanges of parliamentary delegations, and increasing Chinese investment to help reduce the bilateral trade imbalance.Senior officials of the Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were present at the meeting.



US plans hundreds of millions more in anti-China spending worldwide

International Desk

The Trump administration is preparing to increase funding by hundreds of millions of dollars for programmes aimed at countering China's growing global influence, after many such initiatives were halted last year amid sweeping budget and personnel cuts.

The administration informed Congress late last week that it plans to spend \$175.8 million to replace outdated undersea telecommunications cables in the Caribbean and Central America to prevent China from gaining influence in the sector, according to a copy of the notification obtained by The Associated Press on Monday.

The administration has expressed growing concern over China's activities in the Americas, including Chinese ownership of ports at both ends of the Panama Canal, infrastructure projects financed under China's Belt and Road Initiative and Chinese investments in telecommunications.

A State Department official said China's economic activities in the Western Hemisphere pose risks to US national security and prosperity. The official, who was not authorised to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said Chinese offerings may initially appear cheaper but ultimately become more costly because of cost overruns, hidden maintenance fees and poor performance.

The funding for undersea cables appears to be part of a broader effort to revive programmes aimed at limiting Chinese influence worldwide, which could cost many hundreds of millions of dollars more.

The move comes even as President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping have sought to project cooperation, with Xi expected to visit the United States this fall.

US weighs wider spending to counter China globally

The State Department is considering nearly half a billion dollars in additional spending on programmes targeting Chinese influence across the Western Hemisphere, Africa and Asia, according to an internal State Department document obtained by AP.

“The United States must respond to the CCP's growing economic, technological, and diplomatic leverage around the world which undermines our national interests,” the document says, referring to the Chinese Communist Party.

Many of the proposed programmes are intended to “reclaim diplomatic leverage” through investments in areas where the US had previously funded projects but stopped them as the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, carried out major budget and personnel cuts last year.

Those cuts dismantled the US Agency for International Development and eliminated several hundred diplomatic posts around the world. They also affected previously approved projects, including some designed to counter China's influence.

A senior US official, speaking on condition of anonymity about future administration plans, confirmed that the Trump administration wants to increase spending to counter China but declined to provide specific details.

The official acknowledged that large-scale projects were being discussed, but said many remained under consideration.

Congress notified about undersea cable project

The programme outlined to Congress on Friday is called the “Countering CCP Control of Caribbean and Central America Undersea Cables project.”



Pakistan monsoon death toll exceeds 100 in a month as more heavy rain forecast

International Desk

The death toll from monsoon rains and flash floods in Pakistan over the past month has crossed 100, while weather forecasters warned that more heavy rain is expected across the country later this week.

Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority said 109 people have died nationwide since June 26. Many of the deaths were caused by collapsing houses and roofs, with nearly half of the fatalities reported in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province along the Afghan border. The latest figures came a day after the disaster management authority reviewed flood preparedness measures across the country.

Officials discussed plans to issue timely warnings to communities living along rivers so that residents can voluntarily move to safer areas or be evacuated before floodwaters inundate their communities. Heavy rain lashed parts of Pakistan last week, including Lahore, the country's cultural capital, where several neighbourhoods were flooded and commuters were forced to take lengthy detours.

It will fund the installation of strategically selected undersea cable infrastructure and support foreign governments in working with private-sector cable installers, according to the notification.

The funding will support the replacement of outdated undersea telecommunications cables in the Caribbean and Central America with secure alternatives from US and trusted partners, the document said.

Even as the administration continues its war with Iran and peace efforts in Gaza and Lebanon, it has placed a strong focus on the Western Hemisphere.

The administration captured Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro earlier this year, increased pressure on Cuba's socialist government and imposed severe sanctions on Nicaragua.

Under the new programme, funding is expected to support undersea cable projects benefiting El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti, the document said.

The US has strained relations with Nicaragua and would not work directly with its government on the programme.

China's embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Other anti-China efforts may target cyber, critical minerals

Meanwhile, the administration has drawn up plans to spend more than \$340 million on over 50 specific projects aimed at countering China around the world, including many in the Western Hemisphere, according to the internal State Department document.

The administration told Congress in May that it had spent several hundred million dollars from the 2024 budget approved by the Biden administration on efforts to counter China.

However, many other projects funded for 2024 and 2025 had been put on hold.

Among the programmes proposed for revival are plans to establish security operations centres in Argentina and Belize to monitor Chinese threats to critical infrastructure and cyber platforms in the region.

Other initiatives would seek to protect Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay from alleged Chinese efforts to infiltrate port operations and illegally exploit offshore fishing and critical mineral resources.

More broadly, the proposal, which is still under consideration, would seek to counter Chinese influence in the selection of a successor to the Dalai Lama by developing proprietary technology for secure communications and information gathering.

It would also seek to reduce international support for China's space programme and counter Chinese companies seeking to export surveillance and censorship technologies.

The document did not provide details of the proposed initiatives.

Trump is expected to meet Xi in September around the time of the annual UN General Assembly gathering of world leaders in New York.

Ahead of the meeting, Secretary of State Marco Rubio met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week at a regional security conference in the Philippines.

Trump has alternated between anger and enthusiasm toward Xi, whom the US president has sought to cultivate as an ally even as China pursues policies that conflict with many of his administration's objectives.

The ultimate impact of the proposed programmes may not be clear for months or even years.

Magnitude 7.1 earthquake hits southern Japan, tsunami advisory issued

International Desk

A preliminary magnitude 7.1 earthquake struck Kumamoto on Japan's southern main island of Kyushu late Tuesday afternoon, prompting authorities to issue a tsunami advisory, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. The advisory was issued for nearby Ariake Bay along the western coast of Kumamoto, located about 900 kilometres (560 miles) southwest of Tokyo.

House fire in Japan leaves 4 people dead

International Desk

Four people, including two children, died in a house fire in southwestern Japan early Monday morning, local media reported.

Death& Tragedy According to public broadcaster NHK, firefighters received a report at around 5:30 a.m. local time that white smoke was coming from the second floor of a two-story wooden house in Imari City, Saga Prefecture. The blaze was extinguished at around 7 a.m. and did not spread to any neighbouring buildings. Police said two adults and two children were found inside the house and taken to the hospital unconscious. All four were pronounced dead shortly afterward.

Zelenskyy, new UK leader discuss drone projects and missile defense

International Desk

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and new British Prime Minister Andy Burnham met Monday at a British naval base, discussing joint drone projects and Ukraine's urgent need for ballistic missile interceptors to defend against Russian attacks.

Zelenskyy's visit was the first by a foreign leader since Burnham took office a week ago. The prime minister said the visit demonstrated Britain's “unwavering” support for Ukraine as it continues to defend itself against Russia's nearly four-year-old full-scale invasion.

Burnham's predecessor, Keir Starmer, visited Kyiv less than two weeks ago on his final foreign trip before leaving office. Burnham said he also planned to visit Ukraine soon.

Burnham is the fifth British prime minister Zelenskyy has dealt with since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in 2022.

“You are the first leader I have welcomed in person since taking office, and that is no accident,” Burnham told Zelenskyy. “It is intended to send a very clear message: we are with Ukraine 100%, I am personally with you 100%, and I will honor every commitment this country has made to Ukraine in full.”

Zelenskyy said relations between the two countries were “stronger than ever.”

The meeting took place aboard the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, docked at Portsmouth on England's southern coast, a day before Zelenskyy is expected to meet US President Donald Trump in Washington.

Burnham said the two leaders had discussed Kyiv's need for more interceptors to shoot down Russian ballistic missiles, particularly to protect Ukraine's critical infrastructure during the winter.

“We've taken away some things that we will now follow up with our partners,” Burnham said after the meeting.

Russia has stepped up attacks this year on gas stations, power facilities and other infrastructure as part of a wider campaign aimed at disrupting Ukraine's logistics and energy networks.

Zelenskyy said on X that the leaders also discussed “joint defense production.” Britain and Ukraine already have an agreement to cooperate on the development of new drones.

Before the meeting, Zelenskyy told Sky News that he hoped to establish a “big, big factory” in Britain.

The leaders also met more than 200 Ukrainian military personnel who had spent three weeks in Britain taking part in an exercise designed to strengthen their combat capabilities and improve measures to counter mines in the Black Sea, according to the UK government.

Burnham announced that Britain would provide Ukraine with the intellectual property behind its new “Stone Cloak” electronic warfare system. The technology can jam Russian air defenses and prevent drones from being detected.

Ukraine has expanded its campaign of frequent drone strikes deep inside Russia, targeting oil facilities, military factories and, most recently, logistics centers. The attacks have brought the war closer to millions of Russians and increased pressure on President Vladimir Putin.

The strikes have challenged Putin's narrative that the war does not directly affect ordinary Russians. However, he has remained undeterred, while Russia has intensified its own aerial campaign, regularly attacking Ukraine with missiles and drones.

Russia and Ukraine exchange drone attacks

Russia attacked Ukraine overnight with 147 long-range drones, according to Ukraine's air force, which said 123 of them were intercepted or jammed.

In Zaporizhzhia, one person was killed and two others injured in overnight attacks that damaged a residential high-rise and several private homes, regional administration head Ivan Fedorov said.

A Russian strike on the town of Balakliia in the Kharkiv region killed one person and wounded eight, according to Vitalii



Ukraine's military General Staff said its forces had struck an export terminal in Rostov-on-Don, setting it on fire.

The Ukrainian military also said other strikes in the Russian-controlled part of the Kherson region targeted a ground relay station used to control drones and a bridge over the Henichesk Strait used by Russia for military logistics.

Russian fuel and supply depots were also targeted, it said.

In Belgorod, a city in southwestern Russia near the Ukrainian border, a Ukrainian drone attack injured 12 people, including two children, according to regional emergency officials.

Iran vows retaliation after Ukrainian strike on ship

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Ukraine had attacked an Iranian vessel in the Caspian Sea, killing a sailor.

In a statement on X Sunday, Araghchi condemned the attack as a “blatant U.N. Charter violation” carried out at Israel's behest to draw Europe into its war.

He said he had made clear in phone calls with European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that the attack “can't go unanswered.”

Zelenskyy said on X that Ukrainian long-range strikes in the Caspian Sea over the weekend achieved “very good results.” He said the targets included “vessels involved in transporting military cargo linked to Iran, as well as a warship.”

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha rejected Iran's threats of retaliation as unjustified and baseless, saying Tehran's weapons supplies to Russia had made it a direct accomplice in Moscow's aggression.

“Iran has no standing to pretend to be a victim,” Sybiha posted on X, calling Tehran's references to the UN Charter “absurd.”

Sybiha said Iran's statements were an attempt to divert attention from Russian attacks on civilian shipping in the Black Sea, which he said would be discussed at an emergency UN Security Council meeting Monday.

Mediators see progress in efforts to halt Iran war: regional officials

International Desk

Mediators have made progress in efforts to bring the United States and Iran back to negotiations and prevent an all-out war in the Middle East, two regional officials said Monday, as attacks remained halted after nearly two weeks of rapidly escalating tensions.

The comments came after neither the US nor Iran reported attacks for three consecutive days, offering a brief respite following sustained bombardments that had raised fears of a return to full-scale conflict. However, Saudi Arabia said it had intercepted drones launched by Iran-backed militias in Iraq that targeted its petroleum facilities, highlighting the risk that tensions could flare up again.

The Saudi Defense Ministry, in a social media post, did not report any casualties or damage.

The two regional officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks, said mediators led by Qatar and Pakistan were working to narrow differences between Washington and Tehran and revive an interim ceasefire agreement that had been largely undermined by recent exchanges of fire.

No strikes over weekend

The US has paused its attacks after targeting Iranian coastal areas and infrastructure during nearly two weeks of escalation that began after Iran fired on ships attempting to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway for global oil shipments.

The Pentagon did not respond to questions about the pause.

US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike Waltz told Fox News that President Donald Trump was “giving talks some space” and allowing them some time.

Waltz also rejected suggestions that the US was running short of interceptor missiles needed to defend against Iranian attacks. However, experts have questioned how long either side can sustain the current level of military operations.

Iran also halted attacks after the US stopped its strikes for two nights, an Iranian army spokesperson said on state television Sunday.

In recent days, Tehran had launched retaliatory attacks against countries in the region that host US military forces, killing at least three service members at a base in Jordan and another in Iraq.

Regional officials cite progress in talks

One of the regional officials told AP Monday that progress in the mediation efforts was “significant.” He said mediators were work-



ing with Iran and Oman on a mechanism to manage vessel traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, which has emerged as a major flash-point in the latest escalation.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said at a news conference in Tehran Monday that mediators were passing messages between the two sides, but there were no direct negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

“Mediators may convey messages to us from the American side regarding ongoing developments in the region. But at present, we have no negotiations with the American side,” Baghaei said.

He said Iran and Oman, which lies across the Strait of Hormuz, had already held talks on Friday and Saturday over how to manage shipping through the waterway.

The aim, Baghaei said, was for Iran and Oman, as the two coastal states, to establish mechanisms to ensure safe navigation through the strait while respecting their sovereignty and Iran's security and national interests.

He stressed, however, that the waterway remained closed.

Tehran has maintained that the interim agreement with the US allows it to manage shipping through the strait for now.

Iran has also opposed US efforts to support a shipping route passing close to Oman instead. Before the war, the Strait of Hormuz was regarded as an international waterway. The US military said Saturday that its recently reinstated naval blockade of Iran remained in place, with 12 commercial ships redirected, two disabled and two boarded.

US forces “remain highly vigilant, focused, lethal, and ready,” it said. The 60-day period set under the interim agreement in mid-June is now well into its second half.

Major issues that were supposed to be discussed, particularly Iran's nuclear programme, which lies at the centre of the tensions, remain on hold as mediators focus on keeping both sides engaged.

Shipping through Strait of Hormuz hits three-week low

Concerns also remain over shipping through another key regional waterway, the Bab al-Mandeb Strait leading to the Red Sea.

Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen last week threatened to block Saudi shipping there and fired on at least one Saudi tanker, setting it on fire.

Global energy supplies and the broader economy remain at risk as gasoline prices have risen again.

Commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz fell to a three-week low, a maritime body overseen by the US Navy said Sunday.

It added that no new attacks had been confirmed in the previous 72 hours.



‘Shaplakuri’ begins search for talented child artiste

Entertainment Desk

The 14th edition of the talent search competition ‘Shaplakuri’ is about to begin to find talented child artistes in the country.

Organised with the slogan ‘Where there is talent, there we are’, this year’s competition will be broadcast live by television station Channel i.

The registration process for the event has already begun, which will continue until August 20.

The organising organisation, Zia Shishu Academy, gave detailed information at a press conference held at the Channel i building on Sunday.

It said that competitions will be held in six categories:

Qirat, recitation, acting, music, dance and instrumental music.

The preliminary winners from 12 regions across the country will have the opportunity to participate in the final or main phase.

The competition will have a total of 15 individual and 3 team categories, where a child can participate in a maximum of three individual and one team event.

In addition to selecting first, second, and third place winners in each category, two people in each category will be declared ‘Shaplakuri Champions’ based on overall excellence.

Raju Alim is acting as the project director for the event. Interested contestants can find all the details about registration on the official websites of Channel i and Zia Shishu Academy.



What I thought was impossible has become possible: Kiran Rao

Entertainment Desk

The demands that were once considered miraculous or impossible to achieve have been made true by India’s protesting youth! India’s Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has finally been forced to resign after a month-long protest by students over the controversial NEET exam question paper leak.

Bollywood’s renowned producer and director Kiran Rao could not contain her excitement and admiration for this historic victory of the youth.

Kiran, ex-wife of Aamir Khan, paid tribute to the winning students on social media and wrote, “Jen ji, you really did it! What we once thought was impossible, has become possible today.”

The day starts at 4:00am, what is Peya so busy with?

Entertainment Desk

From the glittering stage of the ramp, to the entertainment arena, or the courtroom of the country’s high court, Peya Jannatul has left her mark on everything.

As the scope of her work has increased over time, so has her busyness.

However, with all this professional and personal busyness, it seems like the star model and lawyer has found it difficult to find time to take care of herself.

Recently, Peya shared a glimpse of her busy life with her fans on social media.

In which she wrote, highlighting her extreme busyness in her daily life, “Life has brought me to a place where I am so busy that I don’t even have time to fix my eyebrows.”

Explaining how he had to change her daily routine to cope with the workload, Peya wrote, “As the days get busier, my mornings start earlier.

I used to wake up at 8am, then at 7:00am, then at 6:00am. And today I woke up at 4:00am to finish the day’s work.”



Madhumita Sarcar set to make her Dhallywood debut

Entertainment Desk

West Bengal actress Madhumita Sarcar is set to make her Dhallywood debut with Mohammad Iqbal’s upcoming film ‘Gulshaner Chameli,’ joining a growing list of Tollywood actors who have entered the Bangladeshi film industry in recent years.

Madhumita will now take on her first Bangladeshi feature film. Both the actor and the film’s director have confirmed the news.

Madhumita rose to fame through the popular Bengali television serial ‘Bojhena Se Bojhena,’ in which she played the character ‘Pakhi,’ a role that also earned her recognition among Bangladeshi audiences.

She previously appeared in the Bangladeshi television drama ‘Meghbalika’ (2016), directed by Parvez Amin, alongside Mosharraf Karim. The drama was filmed in Kolkata.

According to director Mohammad Iqbal, ‘Gulshaner Chameli’ explores themes of politics, abuse of power and the hidden realities of elite society.



The story revolves around a sex worker who repeatedly becomes a victim of power despite committing no crime.

Iqbal confirmed that Madhumita has officially signed on for the project.

He said pre-production is currently underway, with filming scheduled to begin later this year.

Speaking to the media, Madhumita said she was excited to work on her first Bangladeshi film.

Iqbal had previously revealed that the film will not feature a conventional male lead, with the narrative centring entirely on a female protagonist.

However, he declined to disclose the rest of the cast, saying the names will be announced officially at the film’s muhurat ceremony on August 1.

Madhumita said, “I really liked the story, and I loved the character. It has many layers, and I’m very excited to play the role.”

Kona on US tour, will sing in 16 cities

Entertainment Desk

Popular singer Dilshad Nahar Kona left Dhaka for America on July 21. She had announced at that time that she was going on this tour for a concert.

However, she kept the details of when and where she would sing a secret. The singer revealed it recently.

According to the information provided by Kona, she will sing in 16 cities in the United States.

Her concert tour will start on July 25 and end on October 3. That is, she will sing in different cities of the country for about three months.

This is one of the longest music tours among the country’s artistes.

The cities where Kona will perform include Indiana, Michigan, Atlantic City, Los Angeles, Oklahoma City, Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Boston, Orlando, Washington DC, Miami, Atlanta, Iowa, Arizona and New York.

Revealing the list, Kona wrote, “Dear Americans, I’m coming to your city. Let’s enjoy some memorable moments together.”

Kona said that her tour is being organised by Desi Music Entertainment.

The latest song released in the voice of Kona is ‘Tomar Hote Chai’. The song was released on CMV’s YouTube channel on July 11.

The song’s music and lyrics were composed by Sajeed



Das based on the lyrics of Rabiul Islam Jibon. Sajeed also sang a duet with Kona in the song. It was used in Rafat Majumder Rinku’s drama titled ‘Bhalobasar Golpo’.



Jaya is spl guest on an Indian reality show

Entertainment Desk

Popular actress Jaya Ahsan is going to appear as a special guest on the reality show ‘Lakh Takar Lakshmi Love’ on Sun Bangla, a popular television channel in West Bengal, India.

The special episode will be aired on

July 31 at 7:00pm.

The episode has already been filmed.

Hosted by actress Sudipta Chakraborty, Jaya participated in the show and discussed various issues with the contestants.

In this women-dominated show, ordinary women from different parts of West Bengal share their life struggles and participate in various episodes.

The actress was present there and inspired the contestants.



‘Pressure of expectation inspires us to do better’

Entertainment Desk

Tom Holland and Zendaya are currently the most popular and talked about star couple in Hollywood.

From their real-life love to their marriage, the pair’s chemistry has always been the center of attention for fans.

The newlyweds are currently travelling the world promoting two big-budget movies: Christopher Nolan’s mega project ‘The Odyssey’ and the global sensation ‘Spider-Man: Brand New Day’.

Talking about the excitement and high expectations that ‘Spider-Man’ franchise has generated around the world, Tom Holland said, “It’s a privilege to handle the pressure of such high expectations from the audience. We’re very lucky to have the opportunity to represent such a timeless character. This pressure inspires us to do even better.”

CBFC cuts 8 seconds of kissing scenes from ‘Spider-Man: Brand New Day’ ahead of India release

Entertainment Desk

Spider-Man: Brand New Day has received a UA 13+ certificate from India’s Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) ahead of its theatrical release in the country.

According to the CBFC certificate dated July 23, the film has an approved runtime of 144 minutes and 52 seconds, or 2 hours, 24 minutes and 52 seconds.

The certification document shows that the English-language 3D version, with English subtitles, was cleared with several modifications. The CBFC directed the makers to add a statutory anti-liquor disclaimer to the film.

The board also ordered the studio to mute and remove obscene words from the audio and subtitles at three points. In addition, two kissing scenes, appearing at around the 44-minute and 57-minute marks, were deleted.

The visual cuts total eight seconds, while the muted dialogue does not affect the film’s runtime. Following the changes, the approved runtime remains 144 minutes and 52 seconds.



The film has been classified as UA 13+, allowing children below 13 to watch it under parental guidance. Spider-Man: Brand New Day is the 38th film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and the fourth instalment in the MCU’s Spider-Man film series.

The film stars Tom Holland alongside Zendaya, Sadie Sink, Jacob Batalon, Jon Bernthal and others in key roles.

The film will hit Indian theatres on July 30, a day before its worldwide release.



West Indies lead Pakistan by 155 runs with three wickets in hand in first Test



Sports Desk
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West Indies held a 155-run lead over Pakistan with three wickets remaining in their second innings at the end of the third day of the first Test on Monday, after a day dominated by the bowlers. Justin Greaves claimed his first five-wicket haul in Test cricket, taking 5-27, as Pakistan lost six wickets for just 38 runs after Shan Masood completed his seventh Test century. Pakistan, who resumed the day at 199-3, were 244-4 when Masood reached 109, but collapsed to 282 all out, giving West Indies a 29-run first-innings lead after the hosts had made 311. Mohammad Abbas then produced another impressive spell with the

new ball, taking 3-14 in 13 overs as West Indies slipped to 126-7 at stumps. Kemar Roach was unbeaten on five, while Shamar Joseph struck a quick 22 off 13 balls as the hosts sought to build their lead toward 200, which would present Pakistan with a challenging fourth-innings chase. Masood reached his century from 163 balls after resuming on 88. He and Salman Agha initially made steady progress as Pakistan looked well placed to match or surpass West Indies' first-innings total. But Shamar Joseph changed the momentum when he bowled Agha for 20 with a delivery that seamed past the outside edge, leaving Pakistan at 244-4. Greaves then removed Masood,

who was bowled after an inside edge sent the ball onto the stumps. Aamir Jamal was dismissed for three after missing a straight delivery from Greaves. Ali Usman was then trapped lbw for a duck, while Mohammad Rizwan was caught behind for 12, leaving Pakistan at 259-8 before lunch. Greaves completed his five-wicket haul when Abbas was caught behind, and Pakistan were soon bowled out when Roach dismissed Khurram Shahzad for 19. Abbas continued his impressive form in West Indies' second innings, dismissing Brandon King for five and Kavem Hodge for a duck to reduce the hosts to 7-2 in the fifth over. Mohammad Ali then caught Amir Jangoo for four off his own bowling before Khurram Shahzad bowled Shai Hope for 10, leaving West Indies at 43-4. Tagenarine Chanderpaul offered some resistance with 35 before Aamir Jamal dismissed him. Abbas returned to remove Greaves for 20, while Shahzad claimed the wicket of West Indies captain Roston Chase for eight. Roach and Joseph then steadied the innings, with Joseph attacking Pakistan's bowlers in an effort to extend the lead before the close. Pakistan had entered the third day in a strong position at 199-3 after Masood's unbeaten 88 helped them recover from early setbacks. The first Test is being played at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba.

House Democrat seeks Infantino testimony over FIFA's ties to Trump

Sports Desk
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A senior Democratic lawmaker has asked FIFA president Gianni Infantino to testify before the US House Judiciary Committee as questions mount over the governing body's relationship with President Donald Trump before and during the 2026 World Cup. Representative Jamie Raskin, the top Democrat on the committee, has requested that FIFA submit records of its contacts with Trump, his administration and the Trump Organization by August 9. He also wants Infantino to sit for a transcribed interview. In a letter sent Sunday, Raskin asked FIFA to provide details of any money, gifts, awards or other benefits given to Trump, members of his administration, their relatives or businesses linked to them. He also requested visitor logs for FIFA's offices in Miami and New York and called on the organization to preserve all communications with administration officials, including messages sent through encrypted apps. The inquiry follows criticism of Infantino's close relationship with Trump in the lead-up to the World Cup, which was jointly hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. Among the issues raised is Trump's intervention



during the tournament after he urged Infantino to review the suspension of US forward Folarin Balogun. FIFA later cleared Balogun to play, saying the decision had been made independently. Raskin also questioned FIFA's ticketing practices, including its use of dynamic pricing and the sharp rise in prices for the World Cup final, and sought records of any communication with US authorities on those matters. The White House rejected the criticism, saying Trump's leadership helped deliver one of the most successful World Cups in history, generating billions of dollars in economic activity while ensuring a safe and smooth tournament.

West Indies lead Pakistan by 155 at close of third day

Sports Desk
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A day of fluctuating fortunes, in which 14 wickets fell, ended with the West Indies hanging on grimly at 126 for seven Monday in their second innings for a lead of 155 over Pakistan in Trinidad.

As much as the tourists were buoyed by the effort of their bowlers in the



second half of another sun-scorched day, spearheaded by the metronomic Mohammad Abbass, that only partially compensated for an abrupt batting collapse which handed the home side a 29-run first innings advantage.

Pakistan capitulated from the dominant position of 244 for three in mid-morning on the third day to the despair of 282 all out just after lunch. The collapse was engineered by

West Indies seamer Justin Greaves, whose controlled bowling earned him career-best Test figures of five for 27.

With the cricketing world, in mourning at the passing of the game's greatest all-rounder, Garfield Sobers, Greaves' all-round skills were both timely and necessary. Later in the day he briefly helped stem the clatter of Caribbean wickets as Pakistan fought back tigerishly on an increasingly two-paced pitch.

His day did not have the storybook finish, the right-hander was superbly caught for 20 by diving Pakistan captain Babar Azam at cover to give Abbas his third wicket.

"We didn't execute our plans the way we should have on the first day but for the second day and the second innings our bowlers hit the right areas and bowled a bit up (fuller)," said Pakistan bowling coach Umar Gul, who was particularly pleased with the way Abass led the attack.

"He is so experienced. He's played a lot of red ball cricket and is not only leading from the front but is helping the younger bowlers as well," the former Pakistan pacer added.

Pakistan seemed to be sailing into a dominant position led by captain Shan Masood's seventh Test century but lost seven wickets for 38 runs as the comfort of 244 for three became 282 all out in reply to the West Indies first innings total of 311.

After Shamar Joseph comprehensively bowled Salman Agha to break a fourth-wicket stand of 47, Greaves took over in a mesmerising spell. His disciplined wicket-to-wicket bowling reaping a swift harvest.

Masood was Greaves' first wicket, bowled for 109, an innings which spanned over five hours in which he faced 184 deliveries and struck 12 fours.

From then on it was the Greaves show as he scythed through the Pakistan middle and lower-order, only to be stalled by the resistance of the last-wicket pair, necessitating the second new ball and veteran pacer Kemar Roach to end the innings with the wicket of Khurram Shazad.

Injured Nahid, Taskin travel to Australia early for specialist consultations

Sports Desk
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Bangladesh fast bowlers Nahid Rana and Taskin Ahmed left for Australia



ahead of the rest of the national squad, with both set to consult specialists before the upcoming two-Test series. SouthAsians & Diaspora Nahid, who has already been ruled out of the series after suffering a Grade 2 side strain during the T20I series in Zimbabwe, is scheduled to fly out on Sunday night.

But the main purpose of his trip is to seek treatment for a long-standing shinbone problem rather than the side injury that forced him out of the Australia tour.

The pacer has been managing discomfort in his shin for some time and will undergo specialist assessment in Australia.

Taskin is also travelling early to have his shoulder examined by a specialist before linking up with the Bangladesh squad. The senior fast bowler is expected to spearhead Bangladesh's pace attack in Nahid's absence.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said earlier this week that Nahid is expected to need six to eight weeks to recover from his side strain, which effectively ruled him out of both Tests.

Bangladesh begin the series against Australia in Darwin on August 13, with the second Test scheduled for August 22 in Mackay.

Bangladesh reach CAVA Men's Championship final in style

Sports Desk
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Bangladesh national men's volleyball team booked their place in the CAVA Men's Volleyball Championship final with a commanding 3-0 straight-set victory over Uzbekistan in the first semifinal on Tuesday at the Liaquat Gymnasium in Islamabad, Pakistan. Bangladesh will play the final match either second semi finalists Pakistan or Sri Lanka, in the final, which will be held on Wednesday at the same venue. The second semi-final will be held later on the day.

Bangladesh produced an outstanding all-round performance, displaying remarkable determination, resilience and teamwork to register their fifth victory of the tournament.

The men in red and green dominated from the outset, taking the opening set 25-21 before maintaining their momentum to win the next two sets 25-20 and 25-19, sealing an emphatic straight-set victory and a place in the final.

Pedro bags three as Alonso starts Chelsea reign with 6-4 win over Western Sydney Wanderers



Sports Desk
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Chelsea manager Xabi Alonso got his reign off to winning start on Tuesday in a dramatic 6-4 victory over Western Sydney Wanderers with Brazilian striker Joao Pedro scoring a nine-minute hat-trick late in the game to ensure victory.

The former Real Madrid coach, who took over on July 1, is without many of his big guns for their pre-season tour and played 60 minutes with a side full of youth at Stadium Australia.

It was a seesawing affair, with Chelsea coming from behind three times.

Kazakh 17-year-old Dastan Satpaev lashed home on his debut in the sixth minute, but Chelsea then conceded twice with their defence run ragged before Portugal youth international Dario Essugo made it 2-2.

The Sydney side again then went 3-2 and 4-3 ahead in the second half before Pedro's heroics.

It was a confidence-boost for Alonso, who faces a huge task to get Chelsea back in the running for major honours after their 10th place finish last season and failure to make Europe.

An even tougher test will come on Saturday when they meet London rivals Tottenham Hotspur at the same venue before further friendlies in Hong Kong, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Chelsea have made four key summer signings so far as they rebuild -- attacking midfielder Morgan Rogers, winger Geovany Quenda, defender Marco Palestra and striker Emmanuel Emegha.

Only Italy's Palestra, who arrived from Serie A side Atalanta, is on the tour with their World Cup players also absent, including England's Reece James and Argentina's Enzo Fernandez.

Alonso deployed a 4-2-3-1 formation with Josh Acheampong, Liam Delap, and Tosin -- who began as captain -- providing experience to a team featuring several youngsters who

came through the Chelsea academy.

They got off to a flyer when Satpaev raced clear after a lovely through ball by Ryan Kavuma-McQueen and powerfully finished at the near post.

But it was a fleeting lead with the Wanderers' Anthony Pantazopoulos nodding home from a corner eight minutes later with Chelsea guilty of poor defending.

It sparked the home team into life and Aydan Hammond made it 2-1 with a cool side-footed finish after Chelsea were sliced open again at the back.

Essugo's goal was quality, finishing off a flowing move with a one-two off Reggie Walsh before stroking into the far corner to send them to the break all square.

Once again Chelsea went to sleep, and a lovely turn and finish from Dylan Scicluna put the Sydney side 3-2 ahead in the 62nd minute with Alonso making nine changes immediately after.

On came Cole Palmer and Pedro and the intensity lifted to set up a sensational finale that witnessed five more goals. facebook sharing buttonmessenger sharing buttontwitter sharing buttonwhatsapp sharing button

Fritz takes 250th hardcourt win in ATP Washington opener

Sports Desk
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World number 10 Taylor Fritz captured his 250th hardcourt victory on Monday in defeating Belgium's Zizou Bergs and advancing to the second round of the ATP and WTA Washington Open.

The American third seed, seeking his 11th career ATP title and first since last year at Eastbourne, needed only 79 minutes to complete a 6-3, 6-4 triumph.

Wimbledon quarter-finalist Fritz fired eight aces and took all four break points he faced to advance into a second-round match against countryman Tommy Paul or Poland's Kamil Majchrzak.

"He had a few break chances, but when I served out the first and went up a break in the second, I felt like the momentum was on my side," Fritz said. "It's really good to get out of those games and to finish the match unbroken."

Britain's Jack Draper withdrew from the event with a left arm injury after also missing Wimbledon. American Mackenzie McDonald replaced him in the field as a lucky loser.

"These last months have felt like nothing but adversity and setbacks," Draper wrote on Instagram. "Most days I've spent in doubt, yet hopeful that I can keep taking positive steps forward and finding ways to progress." Australian top seed and defending champion Alex de Minaur, who won his 11th career ATP title in February by

taking his third consecutive Rotterdam Open crown, was idle. He will face Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas in the first round.

Also advancing Monday were fourth seed Lorenzo Musetti, who won when fellow Italian Matteo Arnaldi retired down 6-0, 3-1, and Chile's Alejandro Tabilo, who defeated Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 6-4.



On the women's side, defending champion and seventh seed Leylah Fernandez of Canada beat Poland's Magda Linette 6-1, 6-4 in 79 minutes in her opening match.

"Overall my game was solid. I didn't give away too many free points, which definitely helped a lot," 2021 US Open runner-up Fernandez said.

"I'm feeling very good. So many good memories so

starting off a win definitely helps."

Fernandez will next meet either Alexandra Eala of the Philippines or China's Zheng Qinwen.

US eighth seed Emma Navarro downed compatriot Sofia Kenin 6-0, 7-5 to book a second-round date against Italy's Elisabetta Cocciaretto, who outlasted Denmark's Clara Tauson 4-6, 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/2).

Venus Williams, a 46-year-old former world number one who has won seven Grand Slam singles titles, teamed with Russia's Diana Shnaider to win their women's doubles opener 6-3, 6-4 over Ulrikke Eikeri of Norway and American Quinn Gleason.



Feni Shibir Hosts Football Tournament in Memory of July Martyrs : Falahia Madrasah Lifts Trophy

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

Amidst the vivid memories of the bloody July uprising and the vibrant enthusiasm of the youth, the "July Martyrs Memorial Inter-Thana Football Tournament 2026" came to a spirited conclusion. Organized by Bangladesh Islami Chhatrashibir, Feni City Unit, to mark the second anniversary of the July uprising, the fiercely contested tournament ended with Al Jamiatul Falahia Kamil Madrasah claiming the championship title after defeating their rivals in the final match. The sporting event, which kicked off on July 26, featured a total of 26 teams from various areas across Feni. Following intense on-field battles, trophies were recently awarded to the winners in a grand closing ceremony. Presided over by Shafiqul Islam, President of Feni City Chhatrashibir, the prize-giving ceremony was attended by the organization's Central Sports Secretary, Mushfiqur Rahman, as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, chief guest Mushfiqur Rahman said: "The youth must step forward to realize the dream of a just

society and the freedom achieved through the ultimate sacrifice of the July movement's martyrs. Sports not only ensure physical health but also foster honesty, discipline, and unity among the young generation." Speaking as a special guest, Muftah Abdul Hannan, Ameer of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Feni District Unit, paid deep tribute to the July martyrs. Urging the youth, he remarked: "This nation will never forget the sacrifices of the martyrs. Today's youth must stay away from drugs and all forms of antisocial activities, devoting themselves to sports and healthy social engagements." Concluding the event, Feni City Chhatrashibir President Shafiqul Islam expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the guests, players, and spectators. He pledged to continue organizing such sporting events in the future to keep the youth united and engaged. The entire event was conducted and overall supervised by Enamul Haq, Secretary of Feni City Chhatrashibir. At the end of the ceremony, guests presented the trophies and prizes to the champion team, Al Jamiatul Falahia Kamil Madrasah, as well as the runners-up.



An unidentified person has been killed after being hit by a vehicle in front of Main Uddin Filling Station in Baraiyarhat, Mirsarai.

Mirsarai correspondent.

The body is in the custody of Jorarganj Highway Police Station, Please help to locate the family.

Ataur Rabbi joins as new UNO in Mathbaria

(Pirojpur Correspondent

Md. Ataur Rabbi has officially assumed charge as the new Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Mathbaria in Pirojpur district. He recently took over the administrative responsibilities of the upazila.



Porsha crime, drug prevention meeting, inauguration of police box in Porsha

Porsha (Naogaon) Correspondent

A community policing meeting was held on the road in Porsha, Naogaon to prevent crime and prevent drugs. The meeting was held at the Saraigachi Police Box auditorium on Saturday afternoon, organized by Porsha Police Station. The event was presided over by Porsha Police Station OC Ziaur Rahman, and Naogaon-1 Constituency MP Md. Mostafizur Rahman was present as the chief guest. Naogaon District Police Superintendent Mohammad Tariqul Islam was present as the special guest. After the meeting, chief guest Md. Mostafizur Rahman formally inaugurated the Saraigachi Police Box built by the Porsha Police Station authorities on their own initiative. In the speech of the chief guest, MP Md. Mostafizur Rahman said, "To make Porsha Upazila completely drug-free and prevent robberies on the roads, the local administration as well as the general public must come forward. It is possible to build a safe and crime-free society with the combined efforts of everyone." The event was attended by UNO Rakibul Islam, Additional Superintendent of Police (Ops and Crime) Joybrata Pal, ASP of Sapahar Circle Shyamoli Rani Barman, Upazila BNP General Secretary Sadiqul Islam, former Senior Vice President Taufiqur Rahman Chowdhury and Community Policing President Abdul Gani, along with local BNP leaders and dignitaries.



Awareness meeting on women, child development in Tungipara

Gopalganj Correspondent

A courtyard meeting was held in Tungipara, Gopalganj to raise awareness about the development of children, adolescents and women. The meeting was organized on Monday at the premises of Kushli Khan Saheb High School in Tungipara by the District Information Office, Gopalganj under the Directorate of Mass Communication of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The event, organized under the project titled 'Awareness Promotion Activities for the Development of Children, Adolescents and Women', was addressed as the chief guest through video conference by Director General (Current Responsibilities) of the Department of Mass Communication Md. Abdul Jalil. The program was presided over by the acting District Information Officer of Gopalganj, Md. Benazir Ahmed. She discussed in detail the rights of women and children, safe motherhood, breastfeeding, child development, autism and mental health, prevention of child drowning, prevention of child marriage and eve-teasing, cleanliness and prevention of dengue. She also presented information about various social security programs of the government. He informed the attendees about the necessity and procedures for using various government toll-free numbers, including the National Emergency Service 999, Health Portal 16263, and the Anti-Corruption Commission hotline 106.

Attempted rape of class one student in Kalapara

Kalapara (Patuakhali) Correspondent

An allegation has been made against a young man named Saidul Khan (32) in Kalapara, Patuakhali, of attempting to rape a class one student by offering him 20 taka. The child's mother filed a case with Kalapara Police Station on Sunday midnight in this incident. Earlier, the incident took place in the Nachnapara Colony area of Tiakhali Union of the upazila last Friday evening. Police and family sources of the victim child said that the accused Saidul, a resident of Eatimkhana in Kalapara town, went to visit his father-in-law's house in the Colony area a few days ago. Last Friday evening, he offered the child 20 taka and took him to a secluded place between his father-in-law's house and the child's house and attempted to rape him. Later, he gave her 20 taka and threatened to beat her if she told anyone about the matter. When the child bought biscuits with the money and went home, her mother asked about the money, and she revealed the attempted rape. The locals tried to resolve the matter amicably, but failed. Later, she filed a case with the police station.

Pirojpur District Information Office decides to hold meeting with women and teenagers and enough volunteers in dengue north

Pirojpur correspondent.

An information and planning meeting was held in Pirojpur with the participation of students and teenagers and volunteers in dengue north. This meeting was held at 11 am today at the Omar Farr auditorium of Pirojpur Sadar Upazila Auditorium, District Office, Pirojpur UNICEF Administrative Information. Pirojpur District Civil Surgeon Dr. Md. Matiuir Rahman was present as the chief guest. Upazila Chairman (UN) Mamunurshid and Pakistan Party Dr. Arif Hasan were also special guests. The meeting of District Information Office Deputy Director Parikshit Chowdhury Chowdhury was moderated by Assistant Member Saifuddin Al Madani. The main discussant was UNICEF Barisa's Power Lisi Md. Abdul Jalil. The speakers discussed the issue of increasing public awareness in dengue prevention, the spread of mosquito breeding,



and the active role of volunteers. He expressed his views on journalistic activities for youth and parents. BD Clean, Positive Pirojpur and Kadamtala Youth Foundation, including various educational institutions, tried to involve youth and independent volunteers.



Biral Upazila declared free from child marriage, child labour, school dropout.

Dinajpur correspondent

A ceremony was held in Biral, Dinajpur, to declare the upazila free from child marriage, child labour, and school dropouts on Monday at the Birol Upazila Parishad Auditorium. Organized by the Birol Upazila Administration in collaboration with Birol ADP World Vision Bangladesh, everyone will be aware and stop child labor and my upazila will be my responsibility, my upazila will be free from child marriage. Dinajpur 2 constituency MP Alhaj Sadiq Riaz Chowdhury Pinak inaugurated the event by releasing balloons with the slogan "My Upazila, My Upazila, Child Marriage Free". Later, a discussion meeting was organized at the Upazila Auditorium. At the discussion meeting, all the conscious people of the society were called upon to come forward to prevent child marriage, child labor and school dropouts in a united manner. The oath was taken. The function was presided over by Birol Upazila Executive Officer Md. Rezaul Islam and was also attended as special guests by Birol Upazila BNP President Babul Hossain, Birol Thana Officer-in-Charge Md. Al Emran, Deputy Direct, Field Operation Northern Bangladesh Cluster Raju William Rosario, Upazila Women's Affairs Officer Runa Parveen, chairmen of various upazila unions, Antirim Area Development Grogam Officer Antina Das, Program Officer Golam Saqlain, Pradeep Roy, Child Protection Officer Biplob Kleme Mondal,

Preparatory meet to celebrate July Uprising Day in Porsha

Porsha (Naogaon) Correspondent

A preparatory meeting was held in Porsha, Naogaon to celebrate July Uprising Day. 26 with due dignity. The meeting was held at the Upazila Parishad auditorium on Sunday morning, organized by the Upazila administration. UNO Rakibul Islam presided over the meeting.

BGB seized drugs, motorcycle in Haripur border

Haripur (Thakurgaon) Correspondent

In a targeted anti-smuggling operation, the Thakurgaon Battalion (50 BGB) arrested two suspects and seized illicit drugs alongside a motorcycle at the Haripur border on Wednesday evening. Acting on intelligence, a team from the Kathaldangi BOP led by Subedar Md. Mohsin Ali raided the Beldangi Notun Bazar area, located roughly 800 yards inside Bangladesh territory from border pillar 371/2-S. Officers searched two individuals—identified as Md. Shahidul Islam (30) and Md. Sanaullah (29)—recovering 10 bottles of Indian Phenasedyl, 240 Parapent tablets, and a motorcycle used in the operation. The total value of the seized items is estimated at Tk 138,900. Dr. Abdus Salam, MP for Thakurgaon-2, commended the 50 BGB for their swift action and commitment to border security.

Controversy over Haridas Alias Tawhid Islam

Palashbari stirred over Ram Statue issue; protesters demand exemplary punishment thru' demonstration, memo



Gaibandha Correspondent

A wave of controversy and public debate has emerged in Palashbari upazila of Gaibandha centring on Haridas Chandra Tarani Das, also known as Tawhid Islam, particularly following the issue of a proposed Ram statue. The matter has triggered public concern, prompting various social and civic organisations to organise protest programmes and raise demands for an investigation. According to local sources and information gathered through inquiries, Haridas Chandra Tarani Das returned to Bangladesh from India in 2010 and became involved in the business of buying, selling, repairing, and servicing old air conditioners and electrical equipment in Uttara, Dhaka. It is reported that he later converted to Islam and began using the name "Tawhid Islam." Allegations suggest that he subsequently expanded his influence in different areas through various social activities. Recently, a screenshot circulated on social media reignited the controversy. The post claimed that Haridas had announced plans last year to construct an 81-foot-high Ram statue in Palashbari, Gaibandha, drawing nationwide attention. Local residents have also raised concerns regarding several

statements and social media posts attributed to him. Civic groups and concerned citizens have called for a thorough investigation to verify the authenticity of these allegations. Questions have also been raised regarding the source of funding for a luxury establishment, recreational facility, and swimming pool reportedly associated with him in the Fulbaria area. Ram Statue Project Suspended The proposal to construct an 81-foot Ram statue in Palashbari sparked widespread discussion and debate. Questions were raised about the project's funding, objectives, and implementation process, while differences of opinion emerged among local residents. Later, the concerned temple authorities reportedly announced the suspension of the construction project. Demanding the removal of the proposed Ram statue, a neutral investigation into the allegations, and exemplary punishment for those found responsible, the Conscious Citizens Forum, Gaibandha, organised a protest rally and submitted a memorandum in front of the Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner's Office on Monday. Speakers at the rally stated that any attempt to disrupt communal harmony must be firmly addressed by the authorities. They also demanded a fair and impartial investigation and legal action against any individuals found responsible. Following the rally, representatives of the organisation submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner. The memorandum called for the protection of social harmony, the removal of the disputed structure, an investigation into the source of funding behind the developments, and the adoption of appropriate legal measures based on the findings. Call for an Impartial Investigation Members of the local civil society believe that an impartial investigation into all allegations is essential to maintain social harmony and public order.