



PM assures foreign investors of all-out support

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today assured foreign investors of the government's all-out support, saying Bangladesh is ready to facilitate investment and provide a favourable business environment. "Bangladesh currently offers a favourable environment for investment...The government is ready to provide all necessary support to interested

foreign investors," he said. The Prime Minister made the remarks when a delegation of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) paid a courtesy call on him at the Cabinet Division meeting room at Bangladesh Secretariat this afternoon, said PM's Assistant Press Secretary Gazi Shahriar Pami. An eight-member AmCham delegation, led by its president and Mastercard Vice President Syed Mohammad Kamal, met the Prime

Minister. During the meeting, the AmCham representatives informed the Prime Minister that the organisation's new committee, which assumed office about two months ago, is working to attract greater US investment to Bangladesh and further deepening commercial ties between the two countries. Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktadir, Prime Minister's adviser on Posts, Telecommunications, ♦ see page 2

Bangladesh: WHO, UNICEF seek stronger breastfeed-ing support

Staff correspondent

Every child has the right to the best possible start in life, and every mother deserves the support she needs to breastfeed successfully, said the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF on Tuesday, calling for stronger action to protect, promote and support breast-feeding in Bangladesh. HistoryIn a joint statement, UNICEF Representative ad interim to Bangladesh Gillian Mellso and WHO Representative to Bangladesh Dr Ahmed Jamsheed Mohamed said the two UN agencies remain committed to working closely with the Bangladesh govern-ment and partners to turn this vision into reality. "Together, we will continue to strengthen health systems, empower families, and create an enabling environment where every mother can breastfeed and every child can survive, grow and thrive," they said. The UN agencies said breastfeeding provides every child with the healthiest and most sustainable start in life, ♦ see page 2



Colombia scrambles to find survivors as quake kills 111

International Desk

Colombian volunteers and rescuers sifted through rubble with bare hands and buckets Monday, hunting for survivors following a massive 7.4-magnitude quake that has claimed the lives of at least 111 people. The quake struck several cities across Colombia's picturesque coffee region and Pacific shortly after 7:30 am (1230 GMT), sending panicked residents onto the streets and damaging at least 1,500 buildings. "People ran out naked, people jumped from the second floor of their homes" Wilmer Cuesta, a law student in Quibdo told AFP, recounting violent shaking. Colombian President Abelardo de la Espriella -- just three days after being sworn into the job -- declared a state of emergency and vowed a concerted

rescue effort. In Cali, volunteers quickly went to work with picks, basic tools and their own hands to try to find survivors. Andres Felipe Mejia was among those who joined a make-shift crew. "We are trying to get everyone out alive," he told AFP. "One of the rescuers asked anyone trapped to whistle, and some-one whistled back." "They pulled out a man and a baby, but the wife is still in there," he said near a pancaked multistory building. Rescuers formed human chains to remove bricks and masonry, stop-ping every few minutes to listen for signs of life from those trapped below. "A lot of people have come, with supplies, with food, helping the firefighters, helping the people," he said. There were scenes of destruction in several cities, with furniture and fabrics sand-wiched ♦ see page 2

BGMEA, LPP issue joint state-ment to clarify invoice dispute, reaffirm sourcing partnership

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Polish fashion retailer LPP S.A. have issued a joint statement clarifying an ongoing dispute over claims involving invoices of FES Retail and reaffirming their commitment to maintaining a stable sourcing partnership in Bangladesh. SouthAsians & DiasporaIn the statement issued Tuesday, the two organizations said they share a common interest in ensur-ing legal certainty, protecting employees and maintaining stable business operations and future expansion in Bangladesh. The joint state-ment was signed by BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan and LPP S.A. Purchasing & ESG Director Dorota Jankowska-Tomkow. They clarified that the publicly discussed dis-pute concerns contractual and invoice-related claims involving two business enti ♦ see page 2



50% discount on airfare and 36% discount on hotels for July warriors and martyrs' families

Staff Correspondent, Dhaka

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Afroza Khanam has announced a 50% discount on airfare and 36% discount on hotels and motels for July warriors and martyrs' family members. She made the announcement at a July warriors' honoring and discussion program organized by the Bangladesh Tourism Corporation on Tuesday (August 11) evening. Minister Afroza Khanam said that a 50% dis-

count will be given on airfare for July war-riors and martyrs' family members. In addition, a 36% discount will also be given on hotels and motels of the Tourism Corporation for July warriors and martyrs' family members in commemoration of 'July 36'. Speaking as a special guest at the event, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M Rashiduzzaman Millat said that recently, the freedom fighters ♦ see page 2

Three killed in Chandpur bus-truck collision

Staff correspondent

Three people were killed and at least 18 others injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a sand-laden truck at Baniyacho in Shahrashiti upazila of Chandpur on Tuesday morning. All three deceased were men but their identities could not immediately be confirmed, said Additional Superintendent of Police of Chandpur Lutfor Rahman. The accident occurred around 8am when the Al-Arafah Paribahan bus was trying to overtake another vehicle and collided with the truck coming from the oppo-site direction, said witnesses. Officer-in-Charge of Shahrashiti Police Station Mir Mahbubur Rahman said Noakhali-to-Jashore-bound Al-Arafah Paribahan bus collided head-on with the sand-laden truck coming from the opposite direction. The front portions of both vehicles were badly mangled in the collision, leaving several bus passengers trapped ♦ see page 2



Attempts to undermine glory of Liberation War will not succeed: Rizvi

Staff correspondent

BNP senior joint secretary general and Prime Minister's political adviser Ruhul Kabir Rizvi has said that any attempt to belittle the glory of the 1971 Liberation War and the spirit of independence will not succeed. "The people of this country have achieved independence and they are equally prepared to protect it," he said while addressing a rally as the chief guest organised by the Muktiyoddha Dal in front of the BNP central office at Naya Paltan today. The rally followed a protest procession that began after a press conference titled

"Protest against the conspiracy to destabilize Bangladesh by conspirators" at the Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) auditorium. The pro-cession ended at the BNP central office. Rizvi said the freedoms enjoyed by Bangladeshis today are the direct achievements of the Liberation War. He alleged that those who opposed Bangladesh's independence in 1971 and assisted the occupation forces by identifying the hideouts of freedom fighters are now attempting to undermine the history of the Liberation War. "They have no history of valor, only ♦ see page 2

Five schools in Thakurgaon record zero pass rate in SSC results

Staff correspondent

Five educational institutions in Thakurgaon have recorded a zero pass rate in the SSC examinations for the 2024-25 academic year, reflecting a major setback in the district's education sector. According to the results, none of the 24 students who appeared for the SSC examination from the five institutions could pass. A total of 18 institutions under the Dinajpur Education Board recorded a 100 percent failure rate this year, with Thakurgaon accounting for the highest number at five. The institutions are Akcha Adarsha High School in Sadar upazila, where four students appeared; Onvardighi High School, seven students; Madhabpur Girls' High School, five students; Teowarigaon High School, five students; and Rampur Bhaturia Girls' High School in Haripur upazila, with three students. The district education authorities said action would be taken against the institu-tions following an investiga-tion ♦ see page 2

Govt aims to save 25cr trees to face climate change impacts: Faridul

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shaikh Faridul Islam today said the government is working with the goal of saving at least 25 crore trees across the coun-try in the next five years to address climate change risks and maintain environmental balance. Even if some trees are dam-aged due to natural disasters or other reasons, a total of 30 crore to 32 crore saplings will be planted by replacing those, he said. The state minister made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of a tree plantation pro-gramme organised at Nayabazar Degree College in Keraniganj upazila this morning. Faridul Islam said, "We are working with this slogan in mind: 'We will beautify the country with tree plantation, Bangladesh first'." He said the ministry is directly monitoring how many trees are being planted and how those are being properly cared for and maintained. Recounting his experience of visiting Cox's Bazar, he said 40 lakh saplings have been planted in a single district - Cox's Bazar. "People are planting trees very spontaneously and taking care of those, which is a great hope for us in protecting the envi-ronment," he said. Recalling the country's temperature rise due to climate change, the state minister said Bangladesh is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries, so it is important to increase family tree planting to check temperature rise and maintain normal rainfall. Mentioning that Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has announced 'One Child, One Tree' programme, he said each student will plant a sapling and grow it in their own way - this is their expectation. Emphasising environmental cleanliness and the ban on polythene, he further said, "We should devel-op the habit of using dustbins instead of throwing garbage or tissues at roadsides." In addition, Faridul said, the use of single-use polythene should be stopped in grocery shops, fruit shops or kitchen ♦ see page 2

Doctors advise dengue patients to drink adequate fluid, take rest

Staff correspondent

Doctors have advised patients suffering from dengue fever to take complete rest and drink plenty of fluid. They said taking adequate fluid help keep the body hydrated and maintain blood pressure, while rest helps the body to regain the strength quickly and increase immunity. So, they said, dengue patients should drink more water, coconut water, orsoline and fruit juices as it prevents water deficiency and helps in quick recovery. Dr Md Abdul Quader, an associate professor of the Pediatrics Department at Dhaka Medical College (DMCH), told BSS that it is very important to feed dengue patients nutritious food along with liquid food. At this time, problems like dehydration, weakness, fatigue and a decrease in the amount of platelets in the blood also occur, he said. "If one suffers from dengue fever, he or she should include protein-rich foods in his or her diet. At this time, ♦ see page 2



First-ever vessel census to be conducted nationwide from Aug 20-29

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh is set to conduct its first-ever Vessel Census 2026 from August 20 to 29 across the country to help build a safe, orderly and effective inland water transport system. The census will be conducted under the initiative of the Ministry of Shipping with the cooperation of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). Speaking as the chief guest at a programme at the BBS Auditorium in the capital today, State Minister for Planning Md. Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki, MP, said reliable data and statis-tics are indispensable for formulating appropriate policies and development plans. "Accurate statistics have no alternative for ensuring the country's socio-economic

development and adopting effective plans," he said, said a Planning Ministry press release. State Minister for Shipping Md. Razib Ahsan, MP also spoke at the inaugural training programme for census coordinators at the divisional, district and upazila levels. Saki instructed officials engaged in the census to maintain professionalism, transparency and neutrality in collecting information. The State Minister for Planning warned that strict departmental and legal action would be taken if any manipulation, irregularity, discrepancy or inconsistency is found in the collection and management of census data. He said the present government, which has received the people's mandate, is working sincerely for public welfare, and reliable infor-mation and data ♦ see page 7

Strict action against data manipulation in Watercraft Census: Saki

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Planning Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki on Tuesday directed officials to take strict departmental action against anyone found manipulating or distorting information and data during the country's first-ever census of watercraft. He made the remarks while inaugurat-ing a training programme for census coordinators at the divisional, district and upazi-la levels for the Watercraft Census 2026. Saki said reliable data and statistics are essential for formulating sound policies and development plans, stressing that there is no alternative to accurate statis-tics for ensuring socio-econ-omic development and effective planning. "If any irregularity, discrepancy or inconsistency is found in the collection of accurate and reliable data, strict legal action will be taken immedi-ately," he said. The state minister called for ♦ see page 7

Fertiliser shortages demand urgent action

It is quite alarming that reserves of some key fertilisers have fallen below safe levels, raising concerns about shortages during the upcoming Aman season. The protracted US-Israel war on Iran and China’s fertiliser export ban have only heightened the risks. Such concerns, however, have been looming over us for some time now, with fertiliser production hit by acute gas shortages just before the Boro season earlier this year. So, the question is why the government has still not taken adequate steps to address the problem.

Such concerns, however, have been looming over us for some time now, with fertiliser production hit by acute gas shortages just before the Boro season earlier this year. So, the question is why the government has still not taken adequate steps to address the problem. According to a recent report by this daily, reserves of several non-urea fertilisers have fallen below the required safe levels. These include diammonium phosphate (DAP), triple super phosphate (TSP), and muriate of potash (MOP), whose stocks currently stand at 3.90 lakh tonnes, 3.53 lakh tonnes, and 1.96 lakh tonnes, respectively—all below safe levels. The shortages are already forcing farmers to pay Tk 5-7 more per kilogram than the government-fixed prices. Meanwhile, urea stocks remain above safe levels for now, but much of its supply is typically sourced from West

Asian countries now caught up in the Iran conflict, meaning potential trouble down the line. The government, however, continues to maintain that there is no immediate fertiliser crisis, apparently to avoid public panic or supply disruptions. This stance has done little to boost confidence or address the crisis. The government has yet to issue any procurement circular for non-urea fertilisers, and orders usually take at least two to three months to be shipped once placed. This leaves little room for complacency as any disruption could have considerable implications for our food security. We, therefore, urge the government to demonstrate foresight in addressing the fertiliser shortage, particularly amid the volatile situation in West Asia. The Strait of Hormuz handles roughly one-third of internationally traded fertilisers, but traffic has remained heavily restricted amid the ongoing conflict. What is baffling is that, even after months of uncertainty, our government has yet to formulate and implement a robust fertiliser strategy. It is imperative that the government act proactively now. It must strengthen domestic production, try to secure more stable routes for raw materials, and explore diplomatic channels to ensure that fertiliser reaches farmers without interruption. If the government fails to act decisively, farmers will have to bear the immediate cost while consumers could ultimately suffer through higher food prices and greater insecurity. We cannot afford to wait for a crisis before taking proper action.

PM assures foreign

Information Technology, Science and Technology Rehan Asif Asad, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) Executive Chairman Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun, were present.

Bangladesh: WHO, UNICEF

supplying all the nutrients an infant needs during the first six months. It also protects children against infectious diseases, strengthens the immune system, and supports healthy growth and brain development, they said. For mothers, breastfeeding reduces the risk of non-communicable diseases, including breast and ovarian cancers and type 2 diabetes, while contributing to healthier families, stronger communities and more resilient societies. Bangladesh faces a slowdown in progress on breastfeeding, according to new findings from the Bangladesh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2025. The proportion of infants under six months who are exclusively breastfed declined from 62.6 percent in 2019 to 56.6 percent in 2025. Early initiation of breastfeeding within one hour of birth also fell sharply, from 46.6 percent to 30.4 percent during the same period. “These findings underscore the urgent need to strengthen support for mothers and families to ensure that every child benefits from the best possible start in life,” the statement said. The UN agencies noted that behind these figures are mothers who need greater support. “While breastfeeding is a natural act, it is not always easy,” they said, adding that many mothers still lack the counselling, encouragement and practical support they need during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. Many women return to work without adequate maternity protection or access to breastfeeding-friendly workplaces, while families continue to be exposed to inappropriate marketing of breast-milk substitutes, according to the statement. “These barriers are often even greater in emergency and humanitarian settings,” it said. The WHO and UNICEF said strong health systems, skilled health workers, effective community support, the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, maternity protection, breastfeeding-friendly workplaces and full implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes have all been proven to improve breastfeeding outcomes. They said every US\$1 invested in breastfeeding generates an estimated US\$59 in economic returns through lower healthcare costs, improved cognitive development, higher educational attainment and increased lifetime earnings. “The challenge is not to reinvent solutions, but to scale up and sustain those that already work, ensuring that every mother receives the support she needs and every child can benefit from breastfeeding,” they said. The UN agencies called on the government, private sector, development partners, health professionals, employers and communities to strengthen proven measures to support breastfeeding. They stressed the need to ensure that every health worker has the knowledge and skills to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative should be expanded across public and private health facilities, backed by strong accountability mechanisms and community engagement, they said. Working mothers also need stronger maternity protection, including paid leave, breastfeeding breaks and breastfeeding-friendly workplaces, according to the statement. The agencies called for full enforcement of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, including measures to prevent inappropriate marketing through digital and social media. Breastfeeding support should also be integrated into health, nutrition and social protection programmes so that every mother, particularly those in vulnerable situations, receives the

Bangladesh's vaccine future depends on a world-class regulator

Md. Neyamul Hossain

‘Bangladesh’s pharmaceutical industry has accumulated decades of manufacturing experience, internationally compliant production facilities, a skilled scientific workforce and an expanding biotechnology base.’ PHOTO: RASHED SUMON As Bangladesh enters a defining phase in its development journey, the forthcoming graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, the emergence of a globally competitive pharmaceutical industry and the growing demand for vaccines across Asia present unprecedented opportunities. However, it must be noted that in today’s world, countries do not earn international trust by manufacturing vaccines alone. They earn it by demonstrating that every vaccine is developed, produced and regulated according to the highest scientific standards. Bangladesh’s pharmaceutical industry has evolved into one of the country’s most successful manufacturing sectors, meeting nearly 98 percent of domestic demand for medicines while exporting pharmaceutical products to around 150 countries. Several companies have invested in biotechnology platforms and expressed interest in vaccine production. This ambition is timely and strategically important. The pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of countries that depended entirely on imported vaccines. Export restrictions, disrupted supply chains and vaccine nationalism delayed access for many developing nations, including Bangladesh. Besides, the country’s annual expenditure on vaccines is expected to rise significantly as new vaccines are introduced and immunisation programmes expand. Local vaccine production could therefore strengthen health security, reduce import dependence, create high-skilled employment, promote biotechnology research and open new export opportunities. However, vaccine manufacturing alone will not make Bangladesh a trusted global supplier. The missing link is a world-class regulatory system. This distinction is often overlooked in policy discussions. Factories manufacture vaccines, but regulators manufacture confidence. A vaccine’s value ultimately depends on the credibility of the institution that certifies its safety, quality, and effectiveness, because vaccines differ fundamentally from conventional medicines. Unlike chemically synthesised tablets, vaccines are biological products produced through complex processes involving living organisms or biological materials. Their quality depends not only on the final formulation but also on every stage of manufacturing—from seed selection and cell culture to fermentation, purification, filling, packaging and cold-chain management. Even small variations during production may affect their quality, safety or effectiveness. For this reason, vaccine regulation extends far beyond granting a marketing licence. It encompasses scientific evaluation of clinical evidence, licensing manufacturing facilities, inspections for compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), validation of manufacturing processes, independent laboratory testing, batch or lot release before distribution, post-marketing surveillance, pharmacovigilance, monitoring adverse events following immunisation and continuous benefit-risk assessment throughout a vaccine’s lifecycle, support she needs. The WHO and UNICEF also stressed the need for stronger data, monitoring and research to track progress and guide evidence-based action. “Protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding is one of the smartest investments Bangladesh can make in its children,” they said, adding that “It saves lives, improves health and nutrition, strengthens learning and human capital, and contributes to sustainable development.” History between concrete, walls and floors tossed into irregular angles, and cabling strewn across roads. The devastation comes less than two months after powerful twin quakes rattled neighboring Venezuela, killing over 6,300 people and leaving tens of thousands homeless. Hospitals in five Colombian cities were put on red alert Monday and a nighttime curfew was declared in Cali, according to local authorities. At least six local airports suspended operations, the civil aeronautics agency said. Colombian pop megastar Shakira led the calls for unity. “All my strength and love to my homeland. Let’s hold each other tight,” she said. Authorities warned the toll could rise as rescuers searched collapsed buildings across several cities. In Manizales, an AFP journalist saw many damaged buildings, including the crumpled tower of the city’s beloved neo-Gothic cathedral. - People prayed - Dentist Julian Pena was at home in Quibdo when he felt “very, very strong” shaking. “People were praying in the street. It was overwhelming,” he told AFP. “I ran outside carrying nothing and found hundreds of people there.” “There are many buildings with gaps, with cracks. There are others that have completely collapsed.” The quake was felt across Colombia, including the capital Bogotá, where crowds of people rushed out into the street in their pajamas. At a depth of 110 kilometers (68 miles), the quake was felt in neighboring Ecuador and Panama. Experts at the US Geological Survey said the quake was likely caused by movement along a deep fault within the Nazca tectonic plate. All upcoming professional football matches have been postponed. Messages of support came in from countries across the region and the world. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the United States was “closely monitoring” the situation and “stands ready to support the people of Colombia.” The US later announced \$15.5 million in emergency relief. European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen said the EU had mobilized Copernicus, a satellite service, to help with rescue operations. Israel, Mexico, Ecuador and France also offered assistance. BGMEA, LPP issue joint statement to ties, while LPP itself is neither a debtor nor legally liable for the disputed obligations. LPP said it regularly settles all outstanding liabilities with its direct suppliers and business partners in Bangladesh in accordance with the terms of its contracts. BGMEA acknowledged LPP’s position that any claims relating to such liabilities should be directed to the entities legally responsible for them. At the same time, both sides recognized the commercial difficulties faced by the affected factories and agreed that negotiations to resolve the liabilities should be conducted with the legally responsible parties. LPP said it would assist in facilitating constructive dialogue where necessary, while safeguarding its own legal position. LPP also clarified that its recent review of certain sourcing activities in Bangladesh was primarily aimed at protecting its local employees, ensuring legal clarity and maintaining a stable, predictable and fair operating environment. The company stressed that the review was not directed against Bangladeshi manufacturers and would not affect its commitment to fulfilling its direct contractual obligations. BGMEA and LPP further emphasized that disputes involving a limited number of third parties should not adversely affect the wider interests of Bangladesh’s ready-made garment (RMG) sector, including

cle. Vaccine regulation is therefore a continuous scientific process rather than a one-time administrative approval. Recognising the central role of regulation, the World Health Organization (WHO) introduced the Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) to assess the performance of national regulatory authorities (NRAs). The GBT evaluates whether regulatory authorities can consistently perform essential regulatory functions, including product registration, inspection, laboratory testing, clinical trial oversight, pharmacovigilance, market surveillance, lot release and regulatory governance. Based on this assessment, WHO classifies regulatory systems into four maturity levels. For vaccine-producing countries, Maturity Level 3 (ML3) has become the internationally recognised minimum benchmark. It signifies that a regulatory authority functions as a stable, integrated and well-performing institution capable of consistently carrying out all essential regulatory functions. Yet WHO considers ML3 a milestone, not the destination. Maturity Level 4 (ML4) represents continuous improvement and regulatory excellence. The longer-term aspiration is to become a WHO Listed Authority (WLA), a regulatory authority whose scientific decisions are trusted and relied upon internationally. Bangladesh should embrace the same long-term vision. The experience of successful vaccine-producing countries underscores the same lesson: regulatory strength must grow alongside manufacturing capacity. Although countries such as the United States, EU, India, China, South Korea, Indonesia and Egypt are in separate WHO regulatory authority lists, these countries strengthened their regulatory institutions to emerge as global vaccine producers. From the US Food and Drug Administration and the EU’s European Medicines Regulatory Network to India’s Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation, China’s National Medical Products Administration, South Korea’s Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, and Indonesia’s and Egypt’s respective drug authority, credible regulation has been fundamental to building global trust in their vaccines. In the case of Bangladesh, its pharmaceutical industry has accumulated decades of manufacturing experience, internationally compliant production facilities, a skilled scientific workforce and an expanding biotechnology base. These strengths provide an excellent foundation for vaccine production. More importantly, Bangladesh has already initiated important reforms to strengthen its regulatory system. Over the past decade, the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), with technical support from WHO and development partners, has modernised regulatory procedures, strengthened GMP inspections, enhanced laboratory capacity and invested in workforce development. The enactment of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 2023 established a modern legal framework better aligned with contemporary pharmaceutical regulation. These reforms have positioned Bangladesh on the threshold of

more than 350 manufacturers currently doing business with LPP. They urged all parties to avoid generalised or misleading publicity that could harm other manufacturers, workers or the longstanding commercial relationship between LPP and Bangladesh. South Asians & Diaspora As part of efforts to ensure a fair and orderly resolution, BGMEA said it would engage with relevant ministries, authorities and industry stakeholders to help ensure that LPP officials and employees are protected from improper harassment, pressure or unfounded legal complications. The organizations said the joint statement was issued without prejudice to due legal process or the right of any party to pursue legitimate claims against entities legally liable for the disputed obligations. Reaffirming their commitment to the growth and sustainable development of Bangladesh’s garment industry, BGMEA and LPP pledged to work together toward a fair, transparent and mutually acceptable resolution while ensuring safe, stable and uninterrupted business operations in Bangladesh.

50%discount on airfare

of 1971 are being compared with the July 2024 fighters, which is not logical in any way. He commented that the 1971 fighters liberated the country, while the 2024 fighters protected the country’s sovereignty. The July fighters were honored at the event.

Three killed in Chandpur

inside. The injured were taken to Shahrashti Upazila Health Complex. Aklima Akter, health and family planning officer of Shahrashti Upazila, told UNB that 18 injured people were brought to the hospital from the accident site. Newspapers “They were given emergency treatment. Three of them were in critical condition and were referred to Cumilla Medical College Hospital after receiving initial treatment,” she said. The remaining injured are undergoing treatment at the hospital, she added. OC Mir Mahbubur Rahman said three bodies have so far been recovered from the scene and rescue operation is still underway.

Attempts to undermine glory

a history of treachery,” Rizvi said. He further alleged that such opportunism and political maneuvering continued even after independence, claiming that those groups repeatedly sought favour from the Awami League during fascist, autocratic and one-party rule. Referring to a recent photo exhibition near the residence of the Jamaat-e-Islami chief, Rizvi said the exhibition portrayed events from 1971 to the July Uprising but did not include an image of the country’s greatest freedom fighter and the proclaimer of independence. He noted that the exhibition did, however, feature Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s March 7 speech, saying the selection and arrangement of photographs reflected the organisers’ interpretation of history. The veteran BNP leader said the spirit of the Liberation War remained deeply rooted in the people’s hearts and inspired the younger generation to take to the streets during the July Uprising. “People also recognize those who are trying to appease the fascists. Any attempt to belittle ‘71 will not succeed,” Rizvi said. He added that the present generation is the inheritor of the country’s struggles and history, warning that attempts to create divisions over the relative importance of 1971 and the July Uprising would not benefit the nation. “The people of this country have achieved independence and they also know how to protect it. The 20 crore people of this country are always ready to protect their independence,” Rizvi said.

Five schools in Thakurgaon

tion into the reasons behind the poor results. Teachers and guardians attributed the poor performance to poverty, irregular attendance of teachers and students, child marriage and stu-

achieving WHO ML3 for vaccine regulation. This landmark achievement would demonstrate Bangladesh’s capacity to perform essential vaccine regulatory functions to international standards, and strengthen global confidence, facilitate technology transfer, and attract collaboration and investment. However, ML3 should be viewed not as an endpoint but as a foundation for continuous improvement in scientific capacity, digital systems, laboratories, and regulatory excellence. Several priorities therefore deserve immediate attention. First, the momentum of regulatory reform must be maintained. The WHO ML3 Roadmap and the DGDA’s institutional development plan should be implemented within clearly defined timelines and monitored at the highest level. Second, the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 2023 must be fully operationalised through the timely approval of supporting rules, regulations and implementation guidelines. Effective legislation is meaningful only when translated into practical regulatory action. Third, Bangladesh must invest in regulatory science. Vaccine regulation requires highly specialised expertise in biotechnology, microbiology, immunology, pharmacology, epidemiology, toxicology, biostatistics and quality management. The DGDA’s revised organogram should be approved promptly, and vacancies for inspectors, laboratory scientists and regulatory assessors should be filled as a national priority. Fourth, sustainable financing for advanced laboratories, digital information systems, sophisticated analytical equipment, international proficiency testing and continuous professional development at DGDA must be ensured. These investments cannot depend solely on short-term donor-funded projects. They require sustained domestic financing that reflects the strategic importance of regulation. Fifth, Bangladesh must accelerate digital transformation so that electronic submissions, integrated regulatory information systems, digital inspection platforms and real-time pharmacovigilance databases are in place for efficient, transparent and internationally credible regulation. Institutional independence is equally important. Regulatory decisions must be impartial and transparent, based exclusively on scientific evidence and public health considerations, and free from political or commercial influence to boost public confidence. Additionally, a high-level national steering committee should oversee implementation of the regulatory reform agenda. Vaccine regulation involves multiple stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, DGDA, the Expanded Programme on Immunisation, research institutions, universities, manufacturers and development partners. Strong coordination across these institutions will be essential to sustain reform and achieve internationally recognised regulatory maturity. Strong regulatory systems attract investment, facilitate technology transfer, support clinical research, expand pharmaceutical exports and enhance industrial competitiveness. In an increasingly knowledge-based global economy, regulatory credibility is becoming as valuable as manufacturing capacity itself. As Bangladesh enters the post-LDC era, a respected regulatory authority will be one of its most important strategic assets.

dents being pushed into the science stream despite not having the academic preparation for it. Nur-e-Alam Siddiqui, acting head teacher of Akcha Adarsha High School, said the institution has 11 teachers and has been under the MPO scheme since 1995. “I think the students are inattentive, while there is also negligence on the part of some teachers. Many teachers do not attend classes on time,” he said. He also said some students who were not suited to the science stream had taken the SSC examination from that group, contributing to the poor results. Harun-or-Rashid, assistant head teacher of Madhabpur Girls’ High School, said this was the first time students from the institution had appeared for the SSC examination. “Our students are often married off by their families at an early age. As a result, many good students drop out. Poverty is a major reason behind this,” he said. He also said the institution lacked proper infrastructure, including a suitable building and a laboratory for science students. District Education Officer Shahin Akter said the authorities had provided guidance to institutions that performed poorly in the previous year, which helped improve their results. “We will do the same this year and take necessary action against these institutions after investigation,” she said.

Govt aims to save 25cr trees

markets. “If the use of non-biodegradable polythene is reduced, waterlogging and plastic pollution will be largely addressed,” he said. Speaking as a special guest at the event, Alhaj Aman Ullah Aman, MP from Dhaka-2, said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has taken a five-year plan to plant 25 crore trees. As part of that, five crore trees will be planted this year, he said. Presided over by Dr Lubna Sharmin, President of Bangladesh Rotary International, the event was attended, among others, by Keraniganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Umar Faruk, Principal of Nayabazar Degree College Abdul Malek, Keraniganj Model Upazila BNP Acting President Md. Shamim Hasan, its Joint Secretary Monir Hossain, local political and civil society leaders, teachers and students. Later, the guests planted saplings there.

Doctors advise dengue

fish, meat, pulses, eggs, nuts, milk and yogurt should be kept in the food list,” Quader said. He said dengue patients should drink more water, coconut water, orsoline and fruit juice, yogurt or lassi. In addition, the doctor said, chicken soup, nuts and milk shakes, pudding are very beneficial and easily digestible foods. Ince patients with fever cannot eat heavy food, taking nutritious light food in a short time provides the body with adequate nutrition, he said. Advising the patients to take complete rest, Quader said they can eat vitamin-C rich foods such as lemon, orange, malta, amalaki, olives, grapefruit, pineapple. “Vitamin-C helps our body absorb iron easily. It also increases immunity.” Regarding the treatment of dengue fever, Dr Hasan Hafizur Rahman, an associate professor of the Department of Medicine at DMCH, said the body temperature can rise to 102 to 105 degrees Fahrenheit in dengue fever. At this time, the fever should be reduced by pouring water on the head and wiping the body, he said. In addition, he said paracetamol-like medicines should be given in every six to eight hours, depending on the severity of the fever. Dr Hafizur said the main treatment for dengue fever is to manage enough water in the body. “Along with water, liquid foods such as fruit juice, soup, orsoline and coconut water should be consumed,” he said. He said the main medicine for viral fever is rest because rest will give the human body’s immune system the scope to be fully active against the disease. “However, make sure that the rest time is not spent on social media, online games or unnecessary browsing of the net,” he said.



Home Minister seeks more Swedish assistance for Rohingyas

Staff correspondent

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed today sought increased Swedish assistance to improve the living conditions of forcibly displaced Rohingyas in Bangladesh.

"Their safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation to Myanmar is the only solution to the crisis," he said. The minister made the remarks when Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Nicolas Linus Ragnar Weeks paid a courtesy call on him at his office at the Ministry of

Home Affairs at Bangladesh Secretariat here, said a press release.

Describing the Rohingya crisis as a major threat to regional security, the home minister said Sweden's role is important in keeping the issue in the focus of the international community as the country is the co-chair of the Rohingya Donor Group. He urged Sweden to increase its assistance for improving the living conditions of the displaced Rohingyas.

The Swedish ambassador stressed the importance of safe repatriation and reha-

bilitation of the Rohingyas and reiterated Sweden's interest in working for the education and overall security of Rohingya women and children. During the meeting, the two sides discussed a wide range of issues of mutual interest, including security, prevention of irregular migration, expansion of trade, promotion of technical education and technical assistance, and a sustainable solution to the Rohingya crisis. Referring to Sweden as an important development partner of Bangladesh, Ahmed said the government

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Previous govt embezzled Tk 7,000cr of teachers' retirement benefits: Milon

Staff correspondent

Education Minister Dr A N M Ehsanul Hoque Milon today said the Awami League government had embezzled Tk 7,000 crore of teachers' retirement benefits. He said this while addressing as the chief guest at a session titled "Rebuilding a Fragile Economy and Achieving Sustainable Development Goals" at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre here.

Milon said the previous government had spent thousands of crores of Taka in the name of observing August 15. Mentioning that Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has been working round the clock for the needs of the country and its people, he said that he has also been working with equal importance on the development of all sectors, including education, health and housing. Addressing the country's political parties, the minister said, "Instead of only criticising, let us all work together." He also highlighted various development activities of the government, saying family cards are being distributed among the people of the country. Milon said,

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Shama seeks greater trade, investment, jobs with Singapore

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam has called for greater trade and investment cooperation with Singapore alongside expanded opportunities for skilled Bangladeshi professionals in the city-state. She made the call while exchanging views with Bangladeshi businesspeople, professionals and migrant workers in Singapore on Monday, according to a foreign ministry press release received here today. The Bangladesh Chamber of Singapore organised the interaction at a local hotel, where entrepreneurs briefed the state minister on business opportunities and challenges and offered proposals for strengthening bilateral economic ties. Shama underscored economic diplomacy as a key tool for expanding trade and attracting investment, saying Singapore, as a major global business hub, holds significant potential for investment in Bangladesh that could also generate employment. She said the government was working to create a more investment-friendly environment and had established a separate wing at the foreign ministry to coordinate with government and private-sector stakeholders on migration, trade and

investment issues.

Highlighting Bangladesh's trade deficit with Singapore, Shama stressed diversifying exports and developing new export sectors through research, innovation and appropriate policy support.

She identified jute and jute-based products as having potential in the Singapore market and proposed establishing joint Bangladesh-Singapore Chamber comprising businesses, entrepreneurs and investors from both the countries. Such a platform, she said, could play a crucial role in promoting trade and investment and expanding bilateral business cooperation.

During the interaction, business representatives identified data centres as a potential area for Singaporean investment in Bangladesh and highlighted the possible benefits of a Bangladesh-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA). They said an FTA could benefit Bangladeshi companies in sectors such as steel, shipbuilding and ship recycling through duty-free access to the Singapore market.

The business community also proposed road shows and trade fairs to showcase Bangladeshi products, a one-stop service for Singaporean investors and simplified procedures

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From the streets of Chhatra Dal to Parliament, The rise of Nadia Pathan Papon

M. Badal Khandaker, District Correspondent, Brahmanbaria

From a Chhatra Dal activist in Chandura village of Bijoy Nagar to a Member of Parliament. Nadia Pathan Papon has received recognition for 25 years of political struggle. Nominated by BNP, she is now a member of the 13th National Parliament from Reserved Women's Seat-32.

Nadia Pathan Papon is a daughter of Chandura village in Bijoy Nagar Upazila, Brahmanbaria. Her father is late Anwar Hossain. Her mother, Syeda Nakhlu Akhter, was a former member of the District Council. She began her education at local Daudpur High School. After passing SSC from there, she completed HSC from Kazi Mohammad Shafiqul Islam College. Later she pursued higher education at the historic Badrunessa Government Women's College in Dhaka. She completed her Honors and Masters in Economics. After that, she completed a Masters in Information Science and Library Management from Dhaka University. She also completed LLB from Bangladesh Law College. She entered politics during her stu-



dent life. In 2000, she began political activities as a member of Chandura Union Chhatra Dal. While studying at Badrunessa College, she served as General Secretary of the college branch Chhatra Dal. Later she also worked as former Assistant

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Bangladesh adviser says Shakib will get security if he returns, calls him 'rotten'

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh's information and broadcasting adviser Zahed Ur Rahman said cricketer and former lawmaker Shakib Al Hasan would receive security if he returns to the country. HistoryHe also sharply criticised Shakib's political association with former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Speaking at a government press briefing in Dhaka on Tuesday, the adviser characterised Shakib as a "rotten" person despite his achievements as a crick

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Article 70 to remain effective in presidential election: Chief Whip

Staff correspondent

Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) Md Nurul Islam Moni today said Article 70 of the

Constitution will remain effective in the upcoming presidential election, meaning any lawmaker voting against party decision will lose parliament membership. He made the remarks while

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ICU shortage leaves critically ill patients waiting for beds at Rangpur Medical College Hospital

Staff correspondent

For critically ill patients at Rangpur Medical College Hospital, the wait for an intensive care unit (ICU) bed can be a matter of life and death.

With millions of people depending on a single major referral hospital and only 10 ICU beds available, the shortage remains a critical challenge for healthcare in northern Bangladesh.

For patients in critical condition, however, the consequences of the shortage are measured not in statistics but

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Irene urges development partners to step up support for SDGs, LDC transition

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) in New York, Irene Khan has called upon the international community and development partners to strengthen their support for the country's efforts to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensure a sustainable graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category.

Irene Khan said this while addressing a session on the second day of the three-day national conference titled "Navigating Five Year Strategic Framework for Achieving SDGs: Policy, Partnership and Priorities". The parallel session titled "Role of Development Partners on Implementing Five Year Strategic Framework for Reform and Development (July 2026-June 2031) and SDGs" was held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre (BCFCC) today which brought together representatives of the United Nations, development partners and government

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Ambulance and 9 Motorcycles Burned in Fire at Bagerhat District Hospital, 1 Injured



Masum Howlader, Bagerhat

A fire broke out at Bagerhat 250-Bed District Hospital. An ambulance and 9 motorcycles were completely burned in the fire. However, there were no casualties. The fire at the 250-bed district hospital was caused by the explosion of a gas cylinder in an ambulance. The

eyewitnesses said that on Tuesday (11 August) around 12:30 PM, a gas cylinder in an ambulance parked in front of the hospital's old building suddenly exploded. After the explosion, the ambulance caught fire and driver Faridul Islam jumped into the pond in front of the hospital to save his life. At that time, the

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Food godowns to be built in 3 hill districts: Info adviser



Staff correspondent

Information Adviser Dr Zahed Ur Rahman today said the government will establish new food godowns in three hill districts to ensure uninterrupted food supply in the hilly areas amid natural disasters, communication system limitations and emergency situations. He said the government is working on a long-

term plan to ensure food security of the people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region and the construction of new food warehouses is part of that initiative. The information adviser made the remarks while speaking at a press briefing at the conference room of the Press Information Department (PID) at the Secretariat here.

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Protest Rally in Nilphamari Demanding Cancellation of Prepaid Meters and Uninterrupted Power Supply

Mohinul Islam Sujon, Crime Reporter, Nilphamari

A protest march and rally was held in Nilphamari on Tuesday demanding uninterrupted electricity supply, cancellation of prepaid electricity meters, and implementation of five-point demands. The demonstration was organized by the Nilphamari District Sramik Oikya Sangram Parishad (Workers' Unity Struggle Council). Later, a memorandum was submitted to the Electricity Minister through the Deputy Commissioner, urging

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3 Sand-Laden Pickups Seized, 3 Drivers Detained in Chhagalnaiya

A.N.M.Nurul Amin . Chhagalnaiya (Feni)
Police in Chhagalnaiya have seized three sand-laden pickup trucks and detained three drivers during a targeted operation, conducted under the direct guidance of the Officer-in-Charge (OC) Chhagalnaiya. Police Station yesterday. According to police sources, the drive was carried out to tackle illegal sand extraction and transport within the upazila. Acting on operational directives, police officers intercepted the three sand-filled pickups, seized the vehicles, and took the drivers into custody on the spot after they failed to provide valid documentation for the sand being transported. Legal proceedings against the detained drivers are currently underway at the police station. Authorities stated that strict surveillance and operations against illegal sand carrying will continue across the area.



Robbers Raid Expatriate’s Home in Mirsarai, Elderly Man Injured

By Jewel Nag, Mirsarai
A gang of robbers raided the home of an expatriate family in Mirsarai, Chattogram, injuring an elderly man and looting gold jewellery, cash and mobile phones. The incident took place at around 2:30am on Tuesday night at the residence of Nurul Alam in East Hinguli village under Hinguli Union of Mirsarai Upazila. According to the victim’s family, a group of around 15 to 20 armed robbers entered the house in the middle of the night. The gang reportedly broke the locks of the rooms of Nurul Alam’s sons, Gias Uddin, who lives in Singapore, and Nur Uddin, who is currently in Qatar. The robbers allegedly held the family members at gunpoint and looted gold jewellery, Tk 250,000 in cash and two mobile phones from the rooms. When Nurul Alam tried to resist the robbery, the gang attacked him with a knife, leaving him injured. The robbers also held a weapon to his head and threatened him. Speaking about the incident, Nurul Alam said, “There is no adult male in our house except me. My sons are all living abroad. Around 15 to 20 armed men came to our house at night. They broke into the rooms of my elder and second sons and took gold jewellery, Tk 250,000 in cash and two mobile phones from the wardrobes. When I tried to stop them, they attacked me with a knife and injured me. They also held a weapon to my head.” The injured elderly man was subsequently taken for medical treatment, according to family members. Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Joraganj Police Station Mohammad Abdul Halim said police teams began working immediately after receiving information about the incident. “We have deployed several teams to investigate the incident. We hope to arrest those involved in the robbery soon,” the OC said.

First-ever vessel census to
are essential for ensuring effective governance and development planning. Saki said the government is attaching special importance to waterways as they are comparatively more cost-effective for transporting goods. “Effective use and development of waterways can expand trade and commerce and further accelerate economic activities in the country,” he said. Welcoming the initiative of the Ministry of Shipping, he expressed confidence in the professionalism and capacity of the BBS to successfully complete the Vessel Census 2026. The census is being undertaken for the first time in the country with the objective of collecting comprehensive and reliable information on vessels and related activities, which will contribute to developing a safer, more organized and efficient inland water transport system. Secretary of the Ministry of Shipping Zakaria, Secretary of the Statistics and Informatics Division Md Firoz Sarker, Director General of the Department of Shipping Commodore Md. Shafikul Bari, and the Director General of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, among others, addressed the programme as special guests. Senior officials of the Ministry of Shipping, the Department of Shipping, BBS and officials involved in the census were present. The training programme was organized to prepare census coordinators at the divisional, district and upazila levels ahead of the nationwide data collection. The Vessel Census 2026 will be conducted across the country from August 20 to 29.

Strict action against
professionalism, transparency and neutrality throughout the data collection process. He said the government is attaching special importance to waterways as water transport is relatively cost-effective, particularly for carrying goods. “Effective use and development of waterways can help expand trade and commerce and further accelerate economic activities in the country,” Saki said. He welcomed the initiative of the Ministry of Shipping and expressed confidence in the professionalism and capacity of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to successfully conduct the census. Shipping State Minister Md Rajib Ahsan said the Watercraft Census 2026 will be conducted nationwide from Aug 20 to 29 to help build a safe, organised and efficient water transport system. He said the census is being organised by the Ministry of Shipping with assistance from the BBS. The census is expected to provide comprehensive information on watercraft operating across the country, helping authorities formulate policies and plans for the development and effective management of the water transport sector.

Home Minister seeks more
is placing special emphasis on modernising technical education to create skilled and globally competitive human resources. He said plans and projects are being undertaken to establish new technical educational institutions at different locations across the country. The minister said demand for skilled manpower, including caregivers, is increasing in Sweden and other European markets.

He sought close cooperation from the Swedish government in improving the quality of technical education and training in Bangladesh and exporting skilled manpower. The Swedish ambassador said Bangladesh is the only country in South Asia with which Sweden has a “Bilateral Cooperation Strategy.” He said Sweden’s trade relations with Bangladesh are deepening gradually, while Swedish investment is increasing in promising sectors, including readymade garments and healthcare. The ambassador also said around 10,000 Bangladeshis are currently living in Sweden, a large number of whom are students. Expressing concern over irregular migration to Sweden, the ambassador said some innocent people are becoming victims of irregular migration after falling into the traps of unscrupulous human trafficking networks. In response, the home minister said the Ministry of Home Affairs is taking strict and effective measures to prevent human trafficking. He said aspirations for a better life and the lure of traffickers are the main reasons behind irregular migration. To address the problem, he said, multifaceted initiatives, including nationwide awareness campaigns, are being conducted in coordination with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs and representatives of the Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh were present at the meeting.

Previous govt embezzled Tk
“Following instructions of the Prime Minister, I am working day and night to improve the country’s education system.” State Minister for Planning Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki along with officials from various ministries and educational institutions, also spoke at the event.

Shama seeks greater trade
for opening bank accounts. Professionals and migrant workers, meanwhile, identified elderly caregiving as a promising new employment sector for Bangladeshis and called for greater diversification into skilled fields such as IT, data analysis, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. Participants also raised concerns over high migration costs and alleged exploitation by some recruiting agencies. Shama said the government was working to bring recruitment under a transparent system to reduce exploitation and migration costs while reviewing opportunities under Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). She said discussions with relevant ministries and stakeholders were continuing to expand employment opportunities for Bangladeshis abroad. The state minister also highlighted potential cooperation in renewable energy, artificial intelligence, technology, pharmaceuticals, ICT, education and TVET. “Bangladesh is open for investment from all over the globe,” she said, encouraging expatriate Bangladeshi entrepreneurs to explore investment opportunities at home. Shama asked participants to submit their proposals in writing so the government could pursue appropriate measures with relevant ministries and agencies. She reaffirmed the government’s commitment to working for the welfare of expatriate Bangladeshis, including those living in Singapore.

From the streets of Chhatra Dal to
Organizing Secretary of the central committee of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, and as a member of BNP Dhaka Metropolitan South. During the tenure of the previous Awami League government, Nadia was active in every movement on the streets. During this time she was attacked by police and Chhatra League and faced multiple cases. Currently she serves as a member of BNP Dhaka Metropolitan South and as a member of the party’s central committee. On 20 April 2026, her name appeared at number 32 on the list of 36 candidates for reserved women’s seats published from BNP’s central office. After her name appeared on the list signed by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, there was an outpouring of joy among BNP leaders and activists in Brahmanbaria and Bijoy Nagar. After receiving the nomination, Nadia Pathan Papon said, “I have been involved with BNP and Chhatra Dal politics for a long time and was active on the streets during the party’s difficult times. I was confident about getting the nomination because of my role during the party’s crisis. I have received affection and guidance from BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia.” Her husband, Md. Jahangir Hossain, works as News Editor at Desh Television. The newly elected Member of Parliament said her main goal is to work for the welfare of backward women and children in society. She wants to play a vocal role in Parliament to remove various social barriers facing women. Local leaders believe that this story of rising from a Chhatra Dal activist to Member of Parliament will serve as an inspiration for young politicians in Bijoy Nagar and across Brahmanbaria.

Bangladesh adviser
eter. “He may be a good player. He is a rotten person who aligned himself with Hasina and remains aligned with her,” he said in response to a question about Shakib. Shakib, one of Bangladesh’s most successful cricketers, entered politics with Hasina’s Awami League and won a parliamentary seat in the January 2024 election, which was marred by allegations of widespread irregularities. He was among several former lawmakers and officials linked to the previous government who came under scrutiny after Hasina’s government was ousted following the student-led uprising in August 2024. During the uprising in July- August in that year, at least 1400 protesters were killed, according to the UN. The adviser said Shakib would be able to return to Bangladesh safely and face any allegations against him through the legal process. The adviser made similar comments about Hasina, who remains in India. He said the former prime minister would also receive full security and have her legal and constitutional rights protected if she returns to Bangladesh. Hasina, in a recent interview, said she has plans to return in December. “We will ensure her rights, and she will face the judicial process,” he said. “Whatever decision the court makes will have to be accepted.” He said the government would guarantee the civil and constitutional rights of anyone accused of serious crimes, including Shakib and Hasina.

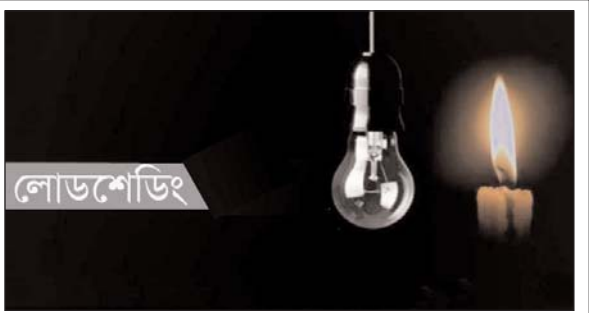
Article 70 to remain
talking to journalists after a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban before parliamentaries representatives of the ruling and opposition parties and officials of the Election Commission (EC) and Parliament Secretariat on preparations for the upcoming presidential election slated for August 20. The Chief Whip said the presidential election will be held on August 20, while the deadline for withdrawal of candidature is the night of August 18 after submission and scrutiny of nomination papers. “The ruling party’s presidential candidate has not yet been finalized. The Prime Minister will nominate the candidate, and the name will be announced on the day of submission of the nomination paper,” he said. He said detailed discussions were held at today’s meeting to ensure a free, fair and transparent presidential election. According to the decisions taken at the meeting, voting will be held from 2pm to 5pm on August 20 at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. Members of Parliament will cast their votes according to their seat and division numbers, he said. Nurul Islam Moni said the media would be allowed to broadcast live the voting.

“The ballot counting and preparation of the election result after voting would also be allowed to be broadcast live until the declaration of the result,” he added.

ICU shortage leaves critically
in hours—and sometimes in lives lost while waiting. The hospital, the largest referral healthcare facility in Rangpur division, serves around 1.80 crore people across eight northern districts. With 2,000-3,000 patients admitted on average at any given time, at least 10 percent are estimated to require ICU support. But the hospital has only 10 ICU beds, leaving many critically ill patients waiting for lifesaving care and, in some cases, dying before a bed becomes available. Hospital sources said they receive requests for ICU admission for at least 15-20 patients every day, against the 10 available beds. Dr Touhid Sarker Dollar, an inspector at the ICU department, said the hospital is unable to accommodate all patients who need intensive care. “We receive many requests for ICU admission every day, but we cannot accommodate everyone. Many patients are deprived of ICU care. The number of beds, manpower and space in the ICU need to be increased to provide adequate services to the huge population of northern Bangladesh,” he said. SouthAsians & Diasporaaiting for an ICU bedAccounts from relatives of critically ill patients reveal the human cost of the shortage. According to a list of 12 patients waiting for ICU beds at Rangpur Medical College and Hospital, most of them died without receiving ICU care. Relatives of several patients spoke about their experiences. Shafik, a relative of a patient said his mother-in-law Mohsena Begum, a resident of Dhap Satgara in Rangpur city, was admitted to the cardiology department with severe chest pain and later developed complications. Doctors advised immediate ICU admission, but she remained without an ICU bed for three days.

Irene urges development
officials to discuss key development priorities and partnership needs. Irene Khan said the country was going through a rare “window of opportunity” to make a major breakthrough in its development journey. She said the government is keen to engage with th international community to broaden and deepen discussions on development priorities and implementation of the SDGs. Irene Khan said her role as Bangladesh’s Permanent Representative to the UN would also be to act as a bridge between the country’s development efforts and the international community, ensuring that the issues discussed at the national level receive due attention at the global level. She noted that Bangladesh had performed well in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but the SDGs are considerably more comprehensive, interconnected and demanding. She stressed that the remaining period for achieving the goals would be a difficult but important journey for Bangladesh. Referring to the government’s commitment, Khan said it is focusing on investment in key sectors, strengthening implementation and monitoring, and working closely with development partners to make up for lost time. She also underscored the importance of domestic partners, particularly civil society and local communities, in achieving the SDGs. “Civil society and communities have an incredibly important role to play because you’re the ones who go out there and actually are the last mile of the delivery,” she said. She also highlighted the strong linkage between Bangladesh’s SDG implementation and its LDC graduation process. Referring to Bangladesh’s request for a time-bound extension of the LDC graduation preparation period, Irene Khan said the extension would help the country achieve a sustainable and irreversible transition out of the LDC category. She said the two processes create a “double incentive” for Bangladesh to accelerate reforms and development initiatives. Irene Khan pointed out that several priorities identified in Bangladesh’s roadmap for the requested extension are closely linked to SDG implementation. These include reforms to strengthen the financial sector, improving the investment climate, enhancing domestic resource mobilisation, facilitating trade and negotiating new trade agreements. “We would like to do, in the next three years, many of these reforms while simultaneously investing in and accelerating the delivery of the SDGs,” she said. She urged development partners to take these two interconnected priorities into account and encourage Bangladesh on both fronts. Describing the present period as a rare opportunity in the country’s history, Irene Khan said there is growing enthusiasm from communities to the highest levels of leadership to achieve a major development breakthrough. She acknowledged that Bangladesh is facing difficult circumstances and resource constraints, saying the country would need to be creative and make the best possible use of its limited resources. At the same time, she said Bangladesh has no shortage of energy, creativity and innovation and expressed confidence that these strengths can be effectively utilised to accelerate development. Irene Khan called on the international community to stand beside Bangladesh and provide the necessary support during this critical phase of its development journey. “We have to be creative. We have to squeeze the last penny that we have because money is short. But at the same time, there is no shortage of energy or creativity or innovation in this country,” she said. She concluded by assuring development partners that Bangladesh would continue to engage with them at national and international levels to advance its SDG and development priorities. Principal Coordinator on SDG Affairs at the Prime Minister’s Office Dr SM Abdul-Awal while making his presentation sought enhanced support from development partners, including concessional financing, debt relief and technical assistance, to accelerate the country’s progress towards achieving the SDGs by 2030. Awal said Bangladesh needs stronger partnerships and resources to implement its development priorities, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable communities. He said Bangladesh’s performance remains weak in several SDG indicators, particularly in health, water and sanitation, affordable clean energy and other areas, while the country has made relatively better progress in poverty reduction, education and gender equality. He identified poverty and vulnerability reduction, health and education, job creation, skills development, investment and export diversification, food security, rural enterprises, clean energy, climate resilience, and transparent and efficient service delivery as key priorities for accelerating SDG implementation by 2030. Highlighting several flagship initiatives, including the Family Card, farmers’ initiatives, plantation programmes, e-healthcare, primary healthcare centres, education reforms, youth employment, skills development, startup funding and rural entrepreneurship, he said these programmes are aimed at improving the socioeconomic conditions of marginalized people.

Ambulance and 9 Motorcycles
fire also spread to 9 motorcycles parked on both sides of the ambulance. Within moments, the hospital area was engulfed in smoke. When the smoke entered the hospital buildings, panic spread among patients and their relatives. Upon receiving the news, fire service members rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control. Dr. Ashim Kumar Samaddar, Superintendent of Bagerhat 250-Bed District Hospital, said a gas cylinder in an ambulance parked at the entrance of the hospital’s old building exploded, and the fire spread within moments. The fire then spread to 9 motorcycles parked nearby. When smoke from the fire entered the hospital buildings, panic was created among patients and their relatives. Upon receiving



Severe Load Shedding: Life in Amtali Becomes Unbearable

Amtali (Barguna) Correspondent
Even if electricity comes, it goes. It doesn’t even come. If it comes once or twice in a day, it doesn’t last more than 10-15 minutes. People’s lives have become miserable due to the suffering from electricity. This is what Ripon Munsai a resident of Amtali Municipality, said in frustration. He further said, I’ve given up hope for electricity and am now thinking of alternatives. AGM Moh. Kausar Ahmed, Zonal Officer of Amtali PBS, said, There is severe load shedding because supply is less than demand. The demand for electricity in Amtali Upazila is 13 megawatts. But we are getting only 5 megawatts. So 8 megawatts of load shedding will continue. It has been learned that 67,000 families in Amtali Upazila have electricity connections. These families need 13 megawatts of electricity every day. But for the last 15 days, severe load shedding has been seen. On average, electricity is available for only 4-5 hours per day. For the rest of the time, load shedding is happening in one way or another. Because of this kind of load shedding, life in Amtali has become unbearable. Housewife Ruma Akter said, The suffering from electricity is at its peak now. It’s not available during the day. It comes and goes. Even if it stays a bit at night, once it goes it doesn’t come back. I urge the government to save us from this electricity suffering. School student Tanjila Akter said, Studying at night is almost impossible because of electricity. Now there’s no option but to use hurricane lamps. Fish seller Abdul Kader, said, I’m in big trouble with fish because I’m not getting ice. Only Allah knows when we’ll get relief from this problem. Saiful Islam, owner of Fatema Ice Factory in Amtali, said, Ice production is almost shut down due to electricity. Business is in very bad shape. I’m not able to supply ice to fish traders. They are also facing problems.

the news, fire service members quickly arrived at the scene and brought the fire under control in about half an hour. The ambulance driver, Faridul Islam, was injured in this incident.

Food godowns to be
supply food in emergency situations and people living in remote areas will receive food assistance quickly,” he said. Dr Zahed said under the government’s food-friendly programme, 30 kg of rice is being distributed to 55 lakh rural poor and extremely poor families of the country at a price of Taka 15 per kg. This programme will continue to ensure food security of low-income people, he added. Highlighting the issue of publishing the results of SSC, Dakhil and Vocational examinations, Dr Zahed said this time the pass rate and the number of students obtaining GPA-5 have decreased compared to the previous years. However, he said, the government is seeing this as part of improving the quality of education.

He said in the past, there was a tendency to increase only the pass rate, but the incumbent government is determined to ensure the quality of education. The education minister also gave the same message while publishing the results, the adviser added. Regarding the health sector, he said ensuring the presence of doctors in public hospitals is one of the government’s priorities. There are complaints from commoners about the absence of doctors in hospitals and that is why the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is strictly monitoring the matter, he said. Recently, Dr Zahed said, a doctor was dismissed during working hours for negligence in performing his duties. He said this is a clear message for government doctors to ensure regular attendance at work. The information adviser also spoke about the sufferings of passengers on a recent international flight.

He said an important spare part of the aircraft was not available at the designated maintenance centre abroad, so that part had to be sent from Bangladesh. At the same time, he said, passengers were subjected to additional suffering as they could not go outside the airport due to immigration-related reasons. The adviser said the government and the concerned ministries expressed regret to this incident and necessary measures are being taken to prevent such situation in the future. He said people have shown great interest in the recently inaugurated Mass Uprising Museum. Dr Zahed said although some management problems arose due to excessive pressure from visitors in the early stages of the inauguration, it was resolved quickly. Currently, visitors are able to visit the museum without any problems, he added. Highlighting the activities of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the information adviser said 82,376 patients have been provided with various modern medical services, including PET-CT scan, thyroid scan, radiotherapy, bone mineral density (BMD) test and ultrasonography, through 22 nuclear medicine institutes and the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences under the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission. Also, he said, 2,041 tests have been completed under the radioactivity test of imported food products. Regarding the initiatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, he said initiatives have been taken to preserve, free up and build new grounds in 13 city corporations of the country, including Dhaka.

To this end, a meeting has been held with representatives of the concerned city corporations and necessary instructions have been given, he said. Dr Zahed said there is no alternative to sports for the healthy physical and mental development of children and adolescents. Many playgrounds have been lost or occupied due to urbanization, he observed. He said the government is giving importance to restoring these playgrounds and establishing new grounds where needed. At the same time, work is also being done to reduce the excessive dependence of children and adolescents on mobile and digital devices and involve them in sports and cultural activities, he said. The information adviser said the government’s goal is not only to build infrastructure but also to establish a humane and sustainable development system by ensuring education, health, food security, science-based treatment and healthy development of children and adolescents. All the ministries concerned are working in a coordinated manner to implement this goal, he added.

Protest Rally in Nilphamari
the authorities to implement the demands. The protest march began from the city’s Boro Traffic Mor on Tuesday (August 11) at noon and ended at the premises of the District Commissioner’s Office, where a protest rally was held. The rally was chaired by Bir Muktiyoddha Zainal Abedin, president of the District Sramik Oikya Sangram Parishad. Among others, Mahbulul Alam Tulu, vice-president of the organization; Sirajul Islam Abu, general secretary; Abdul Jalil, former deputy commander.



Opposition, NDA MPs stage rival protests outside Indian Parliament

International Desk

Opposition and ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) lawmakers staged rival protests outside India's Parliament on Tuesday, with the Opposition demanding answers from Home Minister Amit Shah over police action against student protesters and seeking a discussion on alleged irregularities involving donations to the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

The two groups protested outside Makar Dwar, one of the main gates of the Parliament building. Security personnel stood between them as lawmakers from both sides raised slogans against each other.

The Opposition wants Shah to appear in Parliament and explain the police crackdown on students in Delhi. It also wants a discussion on allegations of embezzlement involving donations collected for the Ram Temple.

The NDA lawmakers, meanwhile, accused Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi of avoiding discussions and practising double standards. They pointed to a recent police crackdown on protesting students in Jharkhand, where Congress is a junior partner in the state government led by Chief Minister Hemant Soren.

The counter-protest came a day after the government offered to allow Shah to respond to the Opposition's concerns in Parliament.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Shah was ready to answer the Opposition's questions if the House was allowed to function without disruptions.

Rahul Gandhi, however, said the Opposition was not interested in hearing Shah's "opinion" and wanted clear answers about who was responsible for the police action against students.

The Lok Sabha remained adjourned amid continued disruptions, with several days of the Monsoon Session passing without significant legislative business.

As the session entered its final week, Speaker Om Birla urged lawmakers to cooperate.

"The government has stated that the Home Minister is ready to respond. The government has agreed to your main demand, and other issues will also be discussed. Please cooperate," he said.

During the protest, BJP MP Mukesh Dalal raised slogans against Rahul Gandhi as Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra arrived at Parliament.

"Sharm karo, sharm karo, Rahul Gandhi, sharm karo," Dalal shouted.

Priyanka Gandhi responded that Rahul Gandhi had already met protesting students in Jharkhand.

"Go to Jharkhand. Why have you not gone to Jharkhand?" Dalal replied as she walked away and joined the Opposition MPs.

Speaking to reporters, Priyanka Gandhi said the Opposition's protest had forced ruling party lawmakers to take to the streets.

"This is the first time we have seen government MPs

staging a protest. We have compelled them to this extent. Now, let them come forward and make a statement," she said.

Dispute over Jharkhand student protests

Jharkhand Police recently used batons and water cannons to disperse students during a march to the state assembly in Ranchi. The protesters included candidates preparing for Jharkhand Public Service Commission and Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission examinations.

The students were protesting alleged irregularities in the JPSC and JSSC-Combined Graduate Level examinations.

BJP lawmakers carried banners saying Rahul Gandhi should answer for the use of force against students in Jharkhand.

BJP MP Anurag Thakur criticised Gandhi and called for justice for the protesting students.

"The way they were subjected to lathi-charges and atrocities reveals the mindset of Rahul Gandhi," Thakur said.

He also accused Gandhi and Congress of demanding answers from the Union Home Minister while disrupting Parliament and preventing the House from functioning.

"The Home Minister is ready to provide answers, but Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party are peddling lies and making reckless statements merely to stay in the headlines," Thakur said.

Congress MP Manickam Tagore, meanwhile, demanded that Shah appear in the Lok Sabha and answer questions about police action against students during a July 20 rally at Jantar Mantar in Delhi.

Tagore alleged that Shah was present in the Parliament complex but was avoiding the proceedings.

He rejected the BJP's attempt to link Rahul Gandhi to the Jharkhand police action, saying responsibility lies with the government in charge of the respective jurisdiction.

"The Jharkhand government is responsible for what happened in Jharkhand; Rahul Gandhi is neither the Chief Minister nor the Home Minister there. Amit Shah, the Home Minister, is responsible for what happens in Delhi, as the Delhi Police falls under his jurisdiction," Tagore said.

Rahul Gandhi had earlier criticised the use of force against students in Jharkhand.

"The use of force against students protesting in Jharkhand is wrong. Students have a right to peaceful protest, and only dialogue can yield solutions," he said, urging the state government to hear the students and resolve their grievances.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav also accused the government of avoiding a debate in Parliament.

He said issues involving education, examinations and the Ram Temple should be discussed and argued that dialogue was the only way forward in dealing with the student protests in Jharkhand.

Yadav said the Jharkhand government had already expressed willingness to engage with the protesting students and should continue talks with them.

3 crew members killed in Houthi attack off Yemen

International Desk

Three crew members were reportedly killed on Tuesday after Yemen's Houthi group attacked a commercial vessel passing through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, according to a pro-government Yemeni media outlet.

Initial information indicated that the attack killed two Pakistani nationals and one Indonesian on the ship, Aljouthouriya TV of the pro-government National Resistance Forces reported.

The report did not identify the vessel or specify the weapon used in the attack. No information was immediately available on the extent of damage to the ship or the condition of the remaining crew. The Houthis have yet to comment on the reported attack. The incident comes amid a recent Houthi escalation of attacks on commercial shipping in waters off Yemen, as well as missile and drone strikes against government-held areas and targets in neighboring Saudi Arabia.

On July 20, the Houthis announced a ban on Saudi-linked shipping in the Red Sea, citing what they described as a Saudi blockade of Houthi-held areas. Yemen has been mired in conflict since late 2014, when the Houthis seized much of northern Yemen, including the capital Sanaa. A Saudi-led coalition intervened in 2015 in support of the internationally recognized Yemeni government.

4 killed, 30 injured as bus overturns in Iran

International Desk

At least four people were killed and 30 others were wounded as a bus overturned on an intercity road in Iran's eastern South Khorasan province on Tuesday, state-run IRIB news agency reported.

The incident occurred in Darmian County at 6:40 a.m. local time (0310 GMT), IRIB quoted the province's deputy traffic police chief as saying. The bus was carrying 40 passengers, said the official, adding that those wounded in the incident were transferred to hospital. The cause of the incident remains under investigation.



Pentagon official urges Asian allies to invest more in defense

International Desk

A senior Pentagon official on Monday urged U.S. allies in Asia to increase their defense spending and do more to deter aggression in the region, saying Washington remains committed to the region and wants to work with "partners, not protectorates."

Elbridge Colby, undersecretary of defense, made the remarks at a forum in the Philippines, his first stop on a Southeast Asian tour that will also take him to Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia.

Colby sought to reassure regional allies that the United States is not stepping back from Asia despite its current focus on the war with Iran and developments in the Middle East. "America is definitely not disengaging from Asia — to the contrary. Our vital national interests dictate our enduring presence here," Colby told an audience that included diplomats, military commanders, business executives and journalists.

"We are not leaving; in fact, we are digging in, to ensure a favorable balance of power where it matters most," he said, adding that Washington considers Asia to be of "paramount importance."

Colby did not repeat the U.S. government's usual criticism of China's increasingly assertive actions in the region, including in the disputed South China Sea. Washington has frequently expressed concern over what it describes as increasingly hostile Chinese actions toward Philippine coast guard and naval vessels in recent years.

Trump rejects Iran's demand for war compensation amid wider Mideast tensions

International Desk

US President Donald Trump has rejected Iran's demand for compensation over damage caused by US and Israeli attacks, saying Tehran had not raised the issue in earlier negotiations.

Here are the latest developments in the Iran conflict and the wider Middle East:

Trump demands compensation from Iran

Trump's comments came after Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said Iran would not reopen the Strait of Hormuz unless the United States met several conditions.

Tehran wants Washington to end its blockade of Iranian ports, lift economic sanctions and release frozen Iranian assets. It also wants compensation for damage caused by the war.

"It is up to the U.S. side to stop and make amends for its illegal and destructive actions," Baghaei said.

Trump responded by saying he would instead seek compensation from Iran for Americans killed or seriously wounded in attacks involving Iran-backed groups over several decades.

The US has blamed Iran-backed militants for the deaths and injuries of hundreds of Americans. They include 241 US military personnel killed in a 1983 bombing of a Marine compound in Beirut and at least 603 US troops killed in Iraq between 2003 and 2011.

Trump also said Iran should compensate the families of Iranian protesters who were killed.

He said he had instructed US representatives to include the demand in future negotiations with Tehran.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which about one-fifth of the world's traded oil passed before the war, remains a major concern as its closure has pushed energy prices higher and become an important political issue in the United States ahead of November's midterm elections.

Iran's supreme leader calls for unity

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei has called for "unity and cohesion" as the country faces economic difficulties and sanctions linked to the conflict with the United States.

Pezeshkian said he held a nearly seven-hour meeting with Khamenei, during which they discussed people's livelihoods, market conditions, jobs, housing and problems caused by US sanctions.

He said the most important message from Khamenei was the need to maintain unity.

"All of the enemy's plans are aimed at creating division," Pezeshkian said.

It was only the second time Pezeshkian has publicly said he met Khamenei since the younger Khamenei became supreme leader in March following a US-Israeli strike that killed his father, former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The new leader was also reportedly wounded in the attack and has not appeared in public since then.

Iran appoints former Revolutionary Guard chief

Iran on Sunday appointed Mohsen Rezaei, a military adviser to Khamenei, as head of the Supreme National

Security Council.

Rezaei, 71, led Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from 1981 to 1997, including during much of the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

Last week, he warned that US forces would face serious risks and casualties unless Washington ended its blockade of Iranian ports.

The Institute for the Study of War, a US-based think tank, said Rezaei appears open to negotiations with



Washington to pursue Iran's goals, including maintaining control over the Strait of Hormuz, but has not indicated that Tehran is prepared to make concessions.

Rezaei replaced Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr, who will serve as a political adviser to Khamenei.

Israel declares Christian town a closed military zone

Israel's military said Monday it had declared Taybeh, a Christian-majority town in the occupied West Bank, a closed military zone in an effort to prevent Israeli settlers and other non-residents from entering.

The move follows months of reported arson, vandalism and incursions by settlers onto private and village property.

The military said Palestinian residents and journalists would be allowed to enter unless soldiers determine that their presence poses a security threat. It also said troops would detain suspects and disperse gatherings to maintain order.

The decision comes as Israeli forces and police face growing difficulties in controlling violence in the occupied territory.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry in Ramallah, at least 87 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli settlers or soldiers in the West Bank in 2026.

Houthi attack in Yemen kills seven

Iran-backed Houthi rebels attacked the Red Sea port town of Mokha, which is controlled by forces aligned with Yemen's internationally recognised government, on Sunday, killing seven people and injuring 30 others, according to Yemen's Defence Ministry.

Four military personnel and three civilians were among those killed.

Clashes continued Monday near the village of Taiz. The Houthis said a 13-year-old child was killed in artillery shelling and another child was injured.

The attack was among the largest recent waves of Houthi strikes on positions held by Yemen's Saudi-backed government since a truce in 2022.

Renewed threats to shipping in the Strait of Hormuz have also increased attention on the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a key shipping route at the southern end of the Red Sea.

At least 132 killed in Colombia's strongest earthquake in years

International Desk

At least 132 people have been killed and more than 480 injured after one of Colombia's strongest earthquakes in years struck the country, prompting the government to declare a national disaster as rescue teams searched for people believed to be trapped beneath collapsed buildings.

The magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck at 7:34 am local time Monday at a depth of 103 kilometers (64 miles) in Chocó province, according to Colombia's geological service. The powerful tremor was felt across a vast area of western Colombia.

Many of the deaths were reported in Pereira, a city in the country's coffee-growing region, while surrounding areas and the Valle del Cauca region also suffered significant damage.

The epicenter was near the village of San José del Palmar in Chocó province.

Despite damage to roads leading in and out of the village, local mayor León Fabio Marín Moncada said there were no reported deaths or injuries there.

Colombia's Association of Capital Cities said more than 480 people had been injured in the earthquake.

Pereira, about 55 kilometers (34 miles) from the epicenter, was among the hardest-hit cities. Videos verified by the BBC showed at least one building collapsing in Plaza Bolívar, the city's main square, leaving debris and clouds of dust scattered across the area.

Local authorities reported at least 40 deaths in Pereira's metropolitan area and said 65 buildings had collapsed. People were believed to be trapped inside 15 of those structures. A curfew was imposed in parts of Pereira until 5am Tuesday.

In Cali, about 160 kilometers south of Pereira and roughly 200 kilometers from the epicenter, 32 buildings collapsed.

Dan Cutler, 29, a London resident who has been traveling in Colombia with his partner for about two months, was in Cali when the earthquake struck.

"I've never experienced anything like it," he told the BBC, saying they ran outside in their pajamas after being awakened by the tremor.

He said their hotel suffered no major structural damage,

although there were cracks in the walls and some paint and plaster had fallen away.

Deaths were also reported in Manizales, Quibdó and Medellín, as well as in the Chocó and Valle del Cauca regions. At least two people were killed in Manizales.

Angélica Ávila, who was staying at a hotel in Manizales, said cracks appeared in the walls as the earthquake struck.

"Everyone was screaming," she told BBC World Service, adding that she saw dust coming from neighboring buildings and bricks falling from walls.

Journalist and meteorologist Luis Felipe Molina, who was at home in Manizales, about 150 kilometers from the epicenter, said the city has strict seismic-resistant building regulations because of previous earthquakes.

He said his building withstood the impact, although most of the books on his shelves fell and there were sounds of breaking glass and people screaming.



Colombia's aviation authority reported damage at several regional airports, including those in Pereira, Manizales, Quibdó, Armenia, Cartago and Buenaventura.

In the capital Bogotá, trees and traffic lights shook violently, and some buildings developed cracks, but there were no immediate reports of serious damage to major infrastructure. Tremors were also felt in neighboring Venezuela, Ecuador and Panama.

The earthquake struck less than two months after twin earthquakes devastated northern Venezuela, killing more than 6,300 people.

President Abelardo de la Espriella declared a national disaster situation, giving authorities special powers to respond to the emergency and reallocate funds. The president, who took office only Friday, said more than 1,500 homes had been damaged.

As the scale of the destruction became clearer, several countries offered support. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington was closely monitoring the situation and was ready to assist. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the EU's Copernicus satellite system was being used to support rescue efforts.



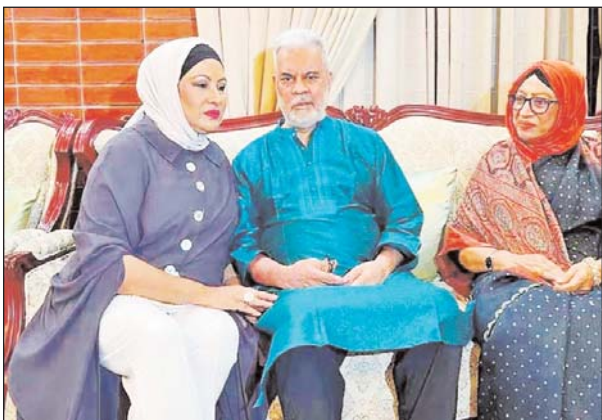
Sohana Saba announces secret marriage

Entertainment Desk

Actress Sohana Saba, who had been dating for five and a half years, was married a year and a half ago. She discussed her marital life and disclosed the issue in a recent interview. The name of her husband is Faisal, who works as a businessman. However, the actress chose not to disclose specific details about her

personal life, including the exact date of their marriage. She expressed that she feels content with her husband and child in her new family. Her son has embraced this relationship positively, and Sohana Saba mentioned that she is truly happy with her new family. Sohana Saba was previously married to producer and actor Murad Parvez and they had a son. In a recent interview, Sohana Saba

said about her married life, "The marriage happened a long time ago. I don't want to say the day and date. My son is very happy." In 2006, Saba acted in the movie "Ayna" directed by actor Kobori. After that, she worked in multiple movies including "Chondrogrohon", "Priyotomeshu", and "Brihonnola". She also acted in a Kolkata film named "Shororipu" and numerous other telefilms and dramas.



Kanchan sings 'I will not go to America', Suchanda and Champa join in

Entertainment Desk

From left: Champa, Ilias Kanchan and Suchanda. Renowned actor Ilias Kanchan has returned to the country after a break of a few days after undergoing treatment for 15 months. Hearing this news, many in the film industry are visiting his house, expressing their love for their beloved colleague. Two popular Dhallywood stars, Suchanda and Champa, visited the Kanchan's Gulshan residence on Saturday night. Kanchan was also happy to see the two sisters together. He spent quite some time laughing and chatting with them. The prince of 'Beder Meye Josna' seemed to come alive for a moment, forgetting the stress of his illness. Suchanda-Champa brought flowers and gifts for Kanchan. Then Champa said, "We love you". In return, Kanchan said, "I love everyone too. It feels very good." Various memories of the days gone by come up in their chat. The topic of the film 'Teenakanya' produced by Suchanda also comes up in the conversation. In the film, which also starred Ilias Kanchan. Based on this, Suchanda and Champa request to sing a song. At the beginning, Kanchan sang 'Aar Jabo Na America' from the film 'Achena' (starring Kanchan and Champa). Suchanda and Champa also joined him in this song. Such a moment of the three stars created a rare memory, which is also special for the audience. After that, Kanchan sang parts of a few more songs.

What Nabila says about her past, mistakes

Entertainment Desk

Masuma Rahman Nabila is an acclaimed name in the country's acting scene. Although she started her journey with presenting, she has also developed herself in fluent acting. She has always shown discretion in choosing work and characters. Nabila is a person who is conscious about life and living. At this time, she often thinks about the days she has left behind. She also weighs the good and the bad. She expressed that realisation this evening, in a Facebook message. Posting a picture, Nabila wrote, "These days, there is a lot of self-reflection. I often think about when and where I made a mistake in my life. Most of the time, the reason and responsibility for my mistakes do not lie solely with me. But for whatever reason, if the mistake was made by me,



then I have to take responsibility for it, apologise for the mistake." Nabila believes, "If you have made a mistake in life, you should apologise for it." She says, "Life is too short; don't think later that you didn't have time to apologise." The actress also asked a question with this post, "Do you also have such self-awareness?" Many are also responding to Nabila's question. Someone wrote, "Yes, sometimes I think a lot, who did I hurt, who do I need to say sorry to"; another wrote, "Yes, I also have such self-realisation. With time, you can learn to understand your mistakes." Nabila was last seen on the big screen in Masud Hasan Ujjal's film 'Bonolota Sen'. It depicts some aspects of the poet's life based on the famous poem by Jibanananda Das. Khairul Basar plays the role of the poet in the film.

Amitabh Bachchan teases Preity Zinta over unanswered birthday wishes on KBC 18

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan playfully called out actress Preity Zinta for not responding to his birthday wishes during the premiere episode of the 18th season of popular quiz show Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC). Preity Zinta, actor Sunny Deol and filmmaker Aamir Khan appeared as special guests on the opening episode of the show. During the episode, Bachchan reminded Zinta that he sends her a birthday message every January 31 but has never received a reply. "I have a complaint with you. I wish you every January 31 on your birthday, but you never reply to me," Bachchan said. Zinta quickly responded that she does reply, but sometimes takes about a week to do so. Bachchan then displayed an old post from his X account on the show's big screen, in which he had wished Zinta a happy birthday while joking that she had not replied to his message. The exchange left Zinta momentarily speechless and drew laughter from the audience. Bachchan and Zinta previously worked together in Karan Johar's 2006 film Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna. During another light-hearted moment, Zinta revealed



that Bachchan is especially popular with her children — but not because of his films. She said her children enjoy one of Bachchan's songs and refer to it as the "sherwala gana". Bachchan responded by saying that parents often tell him their young children recognise him as "KBC uncle" whenever they see him on television.

Zinta, who has worked in the film industry for more than two decades, joked that despite her long career, her children do not remember her by any particular character, while Bachchan is widely recognised through KBC. Bachchan has hosted the quiz show for most of its run and has become closely associated with the programme, which has attracted viewers across genera-

tions. The 83-year-old actor has also spoken about the demanding schedule involved in filming the latest season. In a recent blog post, he said he worked for 24 hours, starting at 7am one day and finishing at the same time the following morning. He said he had to complete the work on time because KBC's new season was scheduled to begin broadcasting the following day. Kaun Banega Crorepati 18 airs on Sony Entertainment Television and is also available on Sony LIV.

Transformation of Hasan Masud

Entertainment Desk

Actor Hasan Masud, who was once a regular face on the small screen, is no longer seen as much as before. Although he is occasionally seen in advertisements, he has not been in dramas or movies for a long time. He has also given up his long-standing habit of reading books. He has focused on religious activities. In a recent interview given to a media outlet, the actor revealed the reason for his change. Hasan Masud said, "I have withdrawn myself. I no longer act. I only do it if I get an advertisement job, otherwise I don't. In fact, there has been a change in my life. I have become a little prophetic. I have become religious. This time I performed Hajj. I was in Mecca and Medina for 41 days. The change, however, started even before that. Now I have completely changed." Even though he is not acting now, he regrets the visual content of this time. He also said, "There is not even good content now. The thing that creates a negative reaction in me is that people have to laugh. This is a motto that is being worked on, which I am not used to."



Apurba's emotional message after his New York concert

Entertainment Desk

Popular Bangladeshi TV actor Ziaul Faruq Apurba has given an emotional message to his fans around the world after the success of his first solo musical performance 'Apurba Musical Night' held in New York, USA. In a post on social media early Monday (August 10) Bangladesh time, he expressed special thanks and gratitude to his fans in Bangladesh and other parts of the world. Expressing his feelings on social media, Apurba wrote, "No distance or management complications could dim the magic of our bond."

Hit by a car while crossing the road Meghla Mukta opens up about the accident

Entertainment Desk

Promising actress of Dhallywood Meghla Mukta is going through the most difficult and dark chapter of her life. She was involved in a horrific road accident while crossing the road and had to face ICU and a complex surgery that lasted for about 9 to 10 hours. However, with everyone's endless prayers and the efforts of doctors, she is now finally out of danger after coming back from the door of death. However, the actress is suffering from severe facial damage in the accident, as well as physical pain. She has decided to keep herself away from the public for a while to facilitate her recovery. On Monday, Meghla Mukta shared details about her current physical condition, the accident and her future plans in an emotional long message on her official Facebook page. In the post on social media, Meghla Mukta wrote, "Alhamdulillah. Thanks to all of you, I am largely out of danger today. I am extremely grateful to all of you who have dropped work from far and wide to see me at the hospital, and to those who could not come but prayed for me from afar. I have also heard that during my 9 to 10 hour operation, many people stood outside the hospital and prayed for me. This love can never be repaid." Despite her life being spared, the impact of the accident is clear from the scars on the actress' face. Highlighting the damage to her face and her current mental state, she wrote, "Alhamdulillah, I am out of danger at the moment. However, there are some wounds and scars left on my body, especially on my face, which may take a long time to heal. The impact of the accident went all over my face. Many stitches, many scars are still visible." Referring to the difficult reality of facing the mirror, she added, "The most difficult time is probably now, having to stand in front of the mirror and look at myself anew every day, and wondering how I will accept this change, how I will rebuild myself from here. I believe, Allah willing, I will

be able to."

Expressing her feelings about the importance of appearance in professional life and setbacks in her career, the actress wrote, "You all know that I am an actress. Acting is my job, my love, my dream. You all probably understand how important her appearance is to an actress. And when you suddenly see so many wounds, stitches and scars on that face, it is really impossible to express in words how difficult it is mentally. Even then, I don't want to give up." Dispelling the rumors spread after the accident and confirming legal action, actress Meghla said, "Many kinds of things have already been spread about the accident. But the information that has been released from my admin panel is true. I was a victim of an accident while crossing the road and a complaint has

already been filed with Banani Police Station in this regard. I do not want to say anything in detail about it now. InshaAllah, when I am physically better, I will come before you very soon and tell you the whole matter in detail about what happened, what steps have been taken and what will be done in the future, everything." Finally, she said, "I had a lot of work planned. I had read many scripts, some of which were supposed to start very soon. Maybe some of them will be delayed now, maybe I won't be able to do some work on time. These things also bother me. But life has taught me once again that before anything else, the most important thing is to survive, recover, and stand up again. I will try my best to get the best treatment, whether in country or abroad, wherever it is needed. I believe that with time, treatment, my own mental strength, and your prayers, I will be able to stand before you again one day."





Bangladesh set for direct World Cup qualification as West Indies face qualifiers again

Sports Desk

Bangladesh are set to qualify directly for the 2027 ODI World Cup after Afghanistan's win over Ireland strengthened their position in the ICC ODI rankings. The qualification list will not be official until the rankings cutoff on Sept. 30. But with less than seven weeks to go, Bangladesh are in the top eight and cannot realistically be overtaken. The top eight teams in the ODI rankings on Sept. 30, excluding the two host nations, will qualify directly for the World Cup. South Africa and Zimbabwe have already qualified as co-hosts. Afghanistan secured a place in the top eight by beating Ireland by three wickets in Belfast on Sunday. The result left Australia, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka,

England, Afghanistan and Bangladesh in the eight direct-qualification spots. Bangladesh are therefore on course to avoid the qualifying tournament and go straight into the World Cup, which will be hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia next year. Their place will be confirmed after the Sept. 30 cutoff. West Indies, meanwhile, will have to take the longer route. The two-time world champions are ranked 10th and cannot break into the top eight even if they win their two remaining ODIs against India before the cutoff. They will have to play in the World Cup Qualifier in February and March next year. It will be the third consecutive World Cup cycle in which West Indies have had to go through the qualifiers. They failed to qualify for the 2023 World Cup after finishing fifth in the

Super Six stage, missing the tournament for the first time in their history. That failure also kept them out of the 2025 Champions Trophy, a tournament they have not played since 2013. The 2027 Qualifier will include West Indies and Ireland, the two lowest-ranked non-host Full Members, along with teams advancing from World Cup League 2 and the Qualifier Playoff. The qualification route has also changed. The Qualifier winner will advance directly to the second round of the World Cup, while the teams finishing second through fourth will enter a Super Series. The winner of that series will also advance to the second round. Bangladesh, barring a late change in the rankings, will not have to take that route.

Govt. plans to develop 4,599 new playgrounds across country

Sports Desk

The Youth and Sports Ministry has embarked upon a plan to improve sports facilities in the City Corporation and union levels across the country, with a target of developing 4,599 new playgrounds. State Minister for Youth and Sports Md. Aminul Haque chaired a meeting at the ministry today (Monday), attended by administrators and chief executive officers of all city corporations, who presented their views and plans for improving sports facilities in their respective areas. The State Minister said there was no alternative to sports in building a physically and mentally healthy future generation. He said the long-term plan was adopted in line with the Prime Minister's election manifesto. Various timely measures, including sports stipends, are being implemented to establish sports not merely as entertainment but as a profession. Aminul also highlighted the success of



the first edition of "Notun Kuri Sports," a nationwide talent identification programme, and said registration for its second edition is currently underway. Under the proposed infrastructure plan, one playground will be built for every two to three wards in each city corporation, while every ward will have a modern futsal ground. The Youth and Sports Ministry will provide necessary support to implement the plan. The government also plans to establish one playground in every union to expand sports opportunities in rural areas. The initiative aims to create a total of 4,599 new playgrounds across the country.

Turkish journalist detained over 'fake' transfer news, say reports

Sports Desk

Turkish sports journalist Burhan Can Terzi was detained by police after reporting that Galatasaray were close to signing Bayern Munich midfielder Jamal Musiala, according to various media reports. Terzi reportedly made the claim on July 26, saying the Turkish club were nearing a deal for the Germany international. Galatasaray later denied the report, describing claims of a move for Musiala as completely unfounded and suggesting they were part of an attempt to discredit the club's transfer operations. According to Turkish outlet Haberler, Terzi was detained as part of an investigation ordered by the Bakirköy Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on allegations of "public dissemination of misleading information".



Swiatek races past Shnaider into Toronto semi-finals

Sports Desk

Former world number one Iga Swiatek raced into the Toronto Masters semi-finals on Monday, taking just 64 minutes to sweep past Russian Diana Shnaider 6-2, 6-1. Poland's Swiatek, a six-time Grand Slam champion, will face either Ukraine's Elina Svitolina or Russia's seed Ekaterina Alexandrova On Wednesday for a place in the final. Swiatek, 25, has not reached a final since winning her 26th WTA tour title at the Korea Open in Seoul almost a year ago, and has tumbled down the rankings to world number eight. Swiatek dropped only three points on her first serve and took 11 of 16 points returning Shnaider's second serves. Shnaider, a left-hander, swatted a backhand over the baseline to surrender a break in the opening game. Swiatek took a 5-2 lead, breaking again when Shnaider netted a backhand, and served out to take the first set in 31 minutes. Swiatek broke for a 2-1 lead in the second when Shnaider netted a forehand. She smashed a forehand winner to break a second time for a 4-1 advantage and again in the final game when Shnaider sent a forehand long.

UEFA, CONCACAF and AFC accuse FIFA of 'deception' and 'breach of trust' over World Cup plan

Sports Desk

Soccer authorities in Europe, North and Central America and the Caribbean, and Asia have accused FIFA President Gianni Infantino of a "fundamental breach of trust" over his recently abandoned plan to sell an interest in the World Cup to private equity investors. In an "open letter to the football family" released Monday, UEFA, CONCACAF and the AFC said that breaking trust through deception and placing an individual above the collective represented a failure of duty. UEFA governs soccer in Europe, CONCACAF oversees the sport in North, Central America and the Caribbean, while the AFC is the governing body for Asian soccer. The letter was signed by UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin, AFC President Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, CONCACAF President Victor Montagliani and the general secretaries of the three continental governing bodies. "Football is the world's greatest shared passion. It belongs to no individual and no institution," the letter said, adding that the sport belongs to its players, fans, clubs, member associations and institutions responsible for protecting its future. The statement came as Infantino faces growing opposition following the failure of his plan to sell stakes in the World Cup to private equity investors. "It is not the conduct of a custodian of the game, but of one who believes the game is answerable to him," the letter said. It added that the decision to take a joint stance was made out of responsibility to the sport and not lightly. Infantino received some support outside soccer, with U.S. President Donald Trump defending the FIFA president in a social media post Monday night. "FIFA would be making a terrible mistake if, for any reason, they even considered replacing President Gianni Infantino," Trump wrote, praising him for presiding over what he described as the most successful World Cup ever. UEFA had previously threatened to boycott the World



Cup and other FIFA competitions, despite FIFA abandoning the plan and apologizing for the controversy. Norway's soccer federation has called for Infantino to resign, while England's Football Association has withdrawn its support for his re-election next March. "Football's strength has always been its unity. We call for that unity to be honored now," the letter said, calling for leadership that serves football rather than seeks to control it. Last Wednesday, FIFA said it had apologized for mistakes made in connection with the failed plan. It also said senior officials at a crisis meeting in Morocco had "reaffirmed their full support" for Infantino's presidency. However, the meeting itself has drawn criticism from the three continental federations. "FIFA's own letter also confirms that only one elected official was present at the leadership meeting in Morocco," UEFA, CONCACAF and AFC said. "No FIFA Council members or Member Associations were invited to participate. Only the management committee, composed of FIFA-employed senior staff, was present." The federations said FIFA needed to go beyond acknowledging that mistakes had been made. They criticized FIFA for treating the controversy as a communication failure rather than a failure of judgment, saying the attempt to sell an interest in the World Cup represented a "fundamental breach of trust" with the institutions FIFA is meant to serve. In a statement released Saturday, FIFA defended Infantino against what it described as a "concerted and ongoing effort" to undermine his leadership of the organization.

Nepal defender Bimala BK arrives to join Rajshahi Stars

Sports Desk

Nepalese defender Bimala BK has arrived in the capital today (Tuesday) to join Bangladesh Women's Football League champions Rajshahi Stars FC for their historic AFC Women's Champions League campaign.



Bimala was received at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport by Rajshahi Stars' team manager and assistant coach. She is returning to the club for a second spell and said she was proud to have the opportunity to represent Rajshahi and Bangladesh in one of Asia's biggest women's club competitions. "I am happy to be playing for Rajshahi for the second time. I am even more excited to play in the AFC competition. It's great honour to compete on such a big stage, especially as Rajshahi and Bangladesh are appearing in the competition for the first time," Bimala said. Despite the limited preparation time and respecting the strength of opponents, she has expressed her firm determination to give her best in the match. "We don't take our opponents lightly, but that does not mean we are weak either. We want to win every match, become group champions and advance to the next round. We need your support for that," said the Nepalese defender.



Rajshahi Stars continuing training in full swing

Sports Desk

Bangladesh Women's Football League champions Rajshahi Stars FC are stepping up their preparations ahead of their debut in the AFC Women's Champions League, Asia's premier women's club competition. The Rajshahi side held its third training session at Kamalapur Stadium on Tuesday as they prepare for the preliminary stage, which will begin in Malaysia on August 17. The players trained for an extended period under head coach Golam Robbani Choton despite the sunny weather. While the first two sessions focused on physical fitness and team coordination, Tuesday's training centred on match situations, passing, positioning and coordination in attack. Nepalese defender Bimala B.K. has also arrived in Dhaka and joined the squad. Assistant coach Md. Zahir Iqbal said the team was optimistic about its preparations and was continuing to train according to its plans without putting additional pressure on the players. Alpi Akter, Rajshahi Stars' top scorer in the last Women's Football League, is expected to play a key role in attack. She said her goal was to perform to the best of her ability on the Asian stage.

Robi honors World Cup campaign winners'

Sports Desk

Robi Axiata has rewarded 26 winners of four customer engagement campaigns organised to mark the Football World Cup. A special prize distribution ceremony was held today (Tuesday) at Robi's head office in Tejgaon in the capital, said a press release. Robi Managing Director & CEO Ziad Shatara, chief corporate and regulatory officer Shahed Alam and head of marketing Md. Shawkat Kader Chowdhury, along with other senior company officials, attended the event and presented awards to the campaign winners. As part of its World Cup activities, Robi streamed live matches on the My Robi app under the campaign slogan "World Cup On, You Could Be the Champion; on My Robi App" and organised a range of campaigns for customers across digital and non-digital platforms. It also ran product-based campaigns during the tournament. Speaking at the event, Ziad Shatara, managing director & CEO of Robi Axiata PLC, said, "Our World Cup campaigns were designed to create a more engaging and enjoyable experience for our customers. The overwhelming enthusiasm and participation we received were truly inspiring. We remain committed to delivering greater value and creating memorable experiences



through innovative digital initiatives and customer engagement programs in the future." At the "Quizmaster" campaign, customers took part in a football quiz everyday throughout the World Cup using the My Robi app. Participants competed for the top positions on the leaderboard based on their scores and the time taken to earn them. A total of 11 winners were selected based on the final leaderboard. The "Photo in Front of Graffiti" campaign invited customers across the country to take photographs in front of Robi's World Cup-themed graffiti and share them as part of the competition. Eleven winners' were selected based on the number of reactions their photographs received. The "Who Will Be Football's Octopus?" challenge involved predicting the results of World Cup matches. Participants predicted match outcomes in advance, with three winners selected based on the number of the fastest correct predictions.



Mango trade picks up in Chapainawabganj as season nears end

Chapainawabganj Correspondent

Mango trading has become brisk in the district as the season nears its end, with large numbers of buyers and sellers gathering at the district’s major mango markets. Although trading has gained momentum in the final phase of the season, many growers say they failed to receive prices that matched their production costs throughout most of the season. While prices have increased somewhat toward the end, disappointment still lingers among many farmers. Traders, however, reportedly enjoyed a profitable season. At Kansat, the district’s largest mango market, trading of late-season and year-round varieties -- including Ashwina, BARI-4, BARI-8, Gaurmati, Banana and Katimon -- is continuing in full swing. Thousands of maunds of mangoes are being traded at the market every day, and the presence of buyers and sellers remains noticeable even at the tail end of the season. Speaking at Kansat market on Tuesday morning, mango grower Hasibul Hasan Babu of Binodpur union in Shibganj upazila said the mango season was almost over. He said he sold Ashwina mangoes for Taka 3,800 per maund that day, but the price was not satisfactory considering production costs. Another grower, Monirul Islam of Durlabhpur union, sold BARI-4 mangoes at Taka7,000 per maund at Kansat market. He said the variety used to fetch a much higher price several years ago. Although prices are somewhat better now, he added, growers failed to get their expected returns at the beginning of the season. Mango grower and media worker Farhad Ali brought Katimon mangoes to the market and sold them for Taka 6,000 per maund. While he was somewhat satisfied with the price, he also expressed disappointment over the overall mango market this year. Abdur Razzak, a trader who has been involved in online mango trading for a long time, said mango prices had increased slightly toward the end of the season, but the market remained unstable throughout the year. Traders like him, however, managed to make profits, he said.

Nasima Qadir Molla High School, Homes of Narsingdi best in country again with 100% GPA 5

Narsingdi Correspondent

Nasima Qadir Molla High School and Homes in Narsingdi has consistently achieved the best results in the country in the SSC results. This year, 382 students participated in the exam and 382 of them got a 100% pass rate and a GPA of 5. This information was confirmed by the school's headmaster Md. Emon Hossain after the SSC results were announced online at 12 noon today, Monday (August 10). The school's founders, Abdul Qadir Mollah and Mrs. Nasima Mollah, expressed satisfaction with the institution's consistent success. Earlier, the institution achieved the best results in the country by obtaining 100% pass rate and 100% GPA-5 in 2022, 2017, 2015 and 2025. According to the school's administrative department, Nasima Qadir Molla High School and Homes has been occupying the top spot in the country's board almost every year since its establishment in 2008, with 100% pass rate in PEC, JSC and SSC. In continuation of this, this time 376 candidates from the science department and 6 candidates from the business education department participated in the SSC examination, and all 382 students got 100% pass rate and GPA 5. Earlier, last year, 320 students participated in the exam and 320 of them got GPA-5. Earlier, in 2024, 294 students participated in the exam and 293 of them got GPA 5. In 2023, 278 students participated in the exam and 270 of them got GPA 5 with a 100% pass rate. In 2022, 266 students participated in the exam and 266 of them got GPA 5 with a 100% pass rate. In addition, in 2021, 247 students participated in the exam and 237 got a GPA of 5 with a 100% pass rate. In 2020, 214 students participated in the exam and 200 got a GPA of 5 with a 100% pass rate. In 2019, 171 students participated in the exam and 168 got a GPA of 5 with a 100% pass rate. In 2018, 139 students participated in the exam and 137 got a GPA of 5 with a 100% pass



rate, and in the 2017 SSC exam, 164 students participated and all got a GPA of 5. Mushfiqur Hasan Siam, a student from the science department who got a GPA of 5, said, "Due to various adversities in the country, there were many disruptions in studies. We were able to overcome them with the hard work of the teachers. Today, all the sorrows and hardships will be erased with the best results in our country." Another student who got a GPA of 5 in the science department said, "This good result was possible due to the tireless work of the teachers under the guidance of our school chairman, proper guidance, regular classes, special classes, regular home visits by guide teachers, tutorials, and monthly examinations." Abdul Qadir Molla, the founding president of Nasima Qadir Molla High School and Homes and the chairman of Thermex Group, said, "Our educational institution has always been doing good results. This time, we have continued the streak of the best results in the country by getting 100% pass rate and 100% GPA 5. If we analyze the overall results of the country, we hope to be in the best position in the country. My wife Nasima Begum and I founded the school with the promise of providing quality education in a rural town like Narsingdi. We have always wanted students to become human resources through good education. So that our society does not create educated unemployed people with certificates. He further said, "There are four pillars of an educational institution. Board of Directors, Teachers, Students and Parents. The main reason for our good results is that we never allow ourselves to be separated from each other." The school's headmaster Md. Emon Hossain said, "The main mantra for good results in a school is the coordination between the school's board of directors, teachers, students and administrators. And our main mantra is Abdul Qadir Molla. Our results continue to be achieved with Sir's innovative thinking and timely guidance. In addition, our teachers and students

3 killed, 15 injured in bus-truck collision in Chandpur

Chandpur Correspondent

At least three people were killed and 15 others injured in a head-on collision between a passenger bus and a sand-laden truck in Shahrashiti upazila of the district this morning. The accident occurred around 8.00am in Baniyachong area on the Chandpur-Cumilla regional highway. The identities of the deceased and injured could not be confirmed immediately. According to police and local sources, a passenger bus of Al-Arafah Paribahan, travelling from Noakhali to Jashore, collided head-on with a sand-carrying truck coming from the opposite direction. The front portions of both vehicles were badly mangled in the collision, leaving several passengers trapped inside the bus. The injured were rescued and taken to Shahrashiti Upazila Health Complex. Shahrashiti Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Aklima Akter told that 15 injured people had been brought to the hospital from the accident site. Three of them were in critical condition and were referred to Cumilla Medical College Hospital after receiving initial treatment.

Smuggled Indian goods seized along Cumilla-Brahmanbaria border

Cumilla Correspondent

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel seized a large quantity of Indian goods worth an estimated Taka 30.063 lakh during separate drives in different areas along the Cumilla-Brahmanbaria border. Lt Col SM Shariful Islam, commander of Sultanpur Battalion (60 BGB) disclosed the information to this afternoon. According to the BGB, acting on specific intelligence, separate operations were conducted on Tuesday in border areas of Akhaura and Kasba upazilas in Brahmanbaria and Brahmanpara and Burichang upazilas in Cumilla under the direction of the battalion commander. Patrol teams from Kasba, Moimpur, Madla, Khadla, Saldanadi, Shankuchail and Kharera Border Observation Posts (BOPs) took part in the drives.



Three food shops fined Tk 6 lakh in Sonargaon

Narayanganj Correspondent

Three food establishments in Sonargaon of the district have been fined a total of Taka 600,000 for preparing and selling food in unhygienic conditions. A mobile court conducted the drive on Tuesday afternoon in Mogorapara Chowrasta area of Sonargaon. Assistant Commissioner (Land) of the Sonargaon- Kanchpur Revenue Circle and Executive Magistrate Fairuz Tasnim led the operation. The fined establishments are Boishakhi Restaurant, Shikdar Dine and Isha Kha Mishti Ghar. According to the mobile court authorities, the establishments were found preparing, storing and processing food in unhygienic conditions. The businesses were fined under relevant provisions of food safety and consumer rights protection laws, and the fines were collected immediately. Fairuz Tasnim said the drive was conducted to ensure public health and food safety in the area. Such drives will continue regularly to ensure the health and safety of consumers, she said. During the operation, the authorities instructed the establishments to maintain hygienic conditions while preparing and selling food in the future. Sonargaon Upazila Sanitary Inspector Mosharraf Hossain and a team of Sonargaon police were present during the drive.

SSC Exam success 50 out of 51 students get GPA-5 in Mirzapur Cadet College

Tangail Correspondent

Out of a total of 51 students in the SSC and equivalent exams at Mirzapur Cadet College in Tangail, 50 all got GPA-5 and 43 passed with Golden GPA-5. According to the information, like every time, a total of 51 students participated in the SSC 2026 exam this year. Out of these, 43 got Golden GPA-5. It is known that all the students have achieved this result from the science department. In this regard, the (Acting) principal of Mirzapur Cadet College, Dr. Md. Abul Kalam Azad said, behind this extraordinary achievement is the single-minded perseverance and dedication of the cadets, the round-the-clock supervision of the college authorities, the relentless work and proper guidance of the teachers, and the motivation and cooperation of the guardians.

Fishing resumes in Kaptai Lake after 105-day ban

Rangamati Correspondent

Fishing, fish supply and marketing have resumed in Kaptai Lake, the country's largest artificial lake, after a 105-day ban imposed to protect fish breeding and ensure sustainable development of its fish resources. Fishermen resumed catching fish from midnight on Monday after the ban was lifted, bringing renewed activity to the BFDC landing ghat in Rangamati, where fishermen and fish traders gathered early today. All ice factories in the district have also reopened following the resumption of fishing, while fish started arriving at the four fish landing centres in Rangamati from this morning. The Rangamati district administration imposed the fishing ban from midnight on April 24 to ensure the natural breeding of carp species, facilitate the healthy growth of juvenile fish and create a favourable environment for the sustainable development of fish resources in Kaptai Lake. The ban was lifted at midnight on Monday after 105 days, allowing fishermen to resume fishing in the lake. Abdul Shukkur, general secretary of the Rangamati Fish Traders Association, told that fish traders and others involved in the sector were delighted at the resumption of fishing



after the prolonged suspension. "The size of the fish appears to be somewhat smaller this time. We will have a clearer picture of the catch over the next few days. If larger fish are caught, we expect to make a profit," he said. Rangamati BFDC Manager Commander Md Foyez Al Karim said a large quantity of fish arrived at the BFDC landing ghat on the first day after fishing resumed. He said natural breeding and reproduction of fish in Kaptai Lake would help increase production and could enable the lake to surpass previous production records in the future. The vast water resources of Kaptai Lake are closely linked to the economy of Rangamati and the livelihoods of a large number of people. Every year, authorities impose a temporary fishing ban during the breeding season to allow fish to reproduce and grow before reopening fishing under regulated conditions.

KCC administrator stresses quality women’s education

Khulna Correspondent

Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Administrator Nazrul Islam Manju has described Khulna Collegiate Girls’ School and KCC Women’s College as one of the leading institutions for women’s education in the southwestern region, saying the institution has been making significant contributions to promoting female education since its inception. He expressed gratitude to former KCC mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, the founder of the institution, saying the model educational institution for women could be established through his sincere efforts. The KCC administrator was speaking at the chief guest at an orientation programme for first-year honours students of Khulna Collegiate Girls’ School and KCC Women’s College this morning. Wishing the new students a bright future, Manju urged them to concentrate on their studies, develop their talents, establish themselves in life and contribute to the welfare of



the country. He also called upon teachers to be more responsible in teaching, maintain discipline and help female students become ideal citizens. He stressed the need to develop not only the institution but also all educational institutions in the city as model institutions. Principal Prof Dr Md Shahidur Rahman chaired the programme, while school governing body member and KCC Chief Engineer Mashuazzaman Khan attended as a special guest. Head of the Department of Food and Nutritional Science Dr Nasrin Nahar Begum delivered the welcome address.

Miscreants set fire to July Memorial in Kushtia, chanting ‘Joy Bangla’

Kushtia Correspondent

Miscreants set fire to a July Memorial in front of Shaheed Abrar Fahad Stadium in Kushtia district town after pouring petrol on it early Tuesday. A video clip of the incident went viral on social media in the afternoon. In the video, a man is heard chanting slogans, including “Joy Bangla” and “Joy Bangabandhu,” and saying that received Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will return to Bangladesh in December. Almas Hossain, a leader of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, described the incident as a planned act. He also claimed that they had received prior information that such an incident could take place and had informed the police of it beforehand.

Ambulance catches fire at Bagerhat hospital; driver injured, nine bikes burnt

Bagerhat Correspondent

An ambulance caught fire on the 250-bed Bagerhat District Hospital premises on Tuesday, leaving its driver injured and nine motorcycles burnt. Eight patients and their relatives were also injured amid chaos during the fire, hospital authorities said. The injured driver, Farid Hossain, 68, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition after being given first aid at the hospital.

Unsatisfactory SSC, Dakhil, Vocational Exam Rmresults in Moheshkhali

Cox’s Bazar Correspondent

The overall pass rates for this year's SSC, Dakhil, and Vocational examinations in Moheshkhali upazila have been reported as unsatisfactory, standing at 54%, 55.58%, and 37.77% respectively. According to data released by the Moheshkhali Upazila Secondary Education Office, 1,034 out of 1,924 SSC candidates passed (50 GPA-5), led by Moheshkhali Island High School with an 87.01% pass rate, while Chhota Mahesh Khali Model High School recorded the lowest at 25.93%. In the Dakhil examinations, 408 out of 734 candidates passed (17 GPA-5), with Al-Iman Adarsh Mahila Alim Madrasa achieving the top pass rate at 89.29%. Meanwhile, the Vocational stream saw only 71 out of 188 candidates pass, with a single student securing a GPA-5. Reflecting on the overall performance, Moheshkhali Upazila Secondary Education Officer Mohammad Zahidur Rahman remarked that results can improve in the future if parents and teachers take greater responsibility and students remain more attentive to their studies.



Rajshahi Range DIG exchanges views with bus-truck owners

Rajshahi Correspondent

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Rajshahi Range Ashiq Sayeed has exchanged views with representatives of the Bus-Truck Owners Association of districts under the Range on various transport-related issues. The meeting was held at the Padma conference room of the Range DIG Office on Monday afternoon. The discussion focused on addressing problems faced by transport owners on highways, ensuring smooth passenger and goods transportation, and improving road safety. The transport owners highlighted various problems and their expectations, while the DIG assured them of taking effective measures to address them. He also instructed officials concerned to remain vigilant and take necessary measures to stop the operation of unfit vehicles, reckless driving and overloading of passengers or goods to prevent road accidents. The DIG also stressed strict compliance with traffic laws and safe and responsible driving. The meeting was attended by the Additional DIG (Crime Management), Superintendents of Police and other senior officials of the Range Office.