



PM for friendly revenue system to encourage people pay tax voluntarily

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today emphasized making the tax management and collection procedures simple, corruption- and harassment-free and transforming the National Board of Revenue (NBR) into a trusted and people-friendly institution so that people feel comfortable paying taxes voluntarily. "Tax management and collection procedures must be simple, corruption- and

harassment-free so that people feel comfortable paying taxes voluntarily," he said.

"Repeatedly increasing the tax burden on the same taxpayers is not a sustainable way to increase revenue. Rather, it is very necessary to identify the people who are able to pay tax and bring them under tax net through proper measures. Thus, there is no alternative to building a digitally modern, data-driven tax administration," the premier added.

Tarique Rahman said this while addressing the Revenue Conference 2026, organized by NBR, as the chief guest at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city. Describing VAT as an important source of revenue in a modern economy, he said its success depends on effective implementation. The premier also stressed that complexities in VAT administration must not hamper business and

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Agriculture Minister denies fertiliser shortage, says disruptions 'part of conspiracy'

Staff correspondent

Agriculture Minister Mohammed Aminur Rashid on Tuesday claimed that there is no shortage of fertiliser in the country, saying the disorder surrounding its distribution despite adequate stocks is part of a planned conspiracy. "There is no problem with fertiliser. We have more fertiliser in stock than we had at the same time last year. In many places, government warehouses do not even have enough space to store the available fertiliser," he said. The minister made the remarks while talking to reporters at a press briefing at the Secretariat on measures to improve airport facilities, including cold storage and cool-room facilities at the cargo village, to boost agricultural exports. The government has introduced a new policy on fertiliser distribution and those who believe they will be deprived under the new

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AI auto-fine system to be introduced on all highways: Salahuddin

Staff correspondent

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed today said the government will gradually introduce an artificial intelligence (AI)-based automated fine system on all highways across the country after evaluating the performance of the system launched on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway. "The initiative would bring a major change in highway traffic management by ensuring greater road safety, maintaining traffic discipline, reducing accidents and

enabling swift, effective and transparent action against traffic law violations," he said. The minister made the announcement while inaugurating the AI-powered 'Auto Fine System' at the Highway Police's Command, Control and Monitoring Centre at Meghnaghat in Sonargaon, Narayanganj. "After evaluating the success and experience of the system implemented on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, the AI-based automated system will be introduced on all highways in

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Greater private sector engagement needed to address social challenges: PM

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Tuesday urged greater private sector engagement in humanitarian and social initiatives, saying collective contributions could help address major challenges.

“As members of society, if everyone comes forward and contributes in their own way, many major problems can be solved,” he said while launching a programme to distribute 20,000 raincoats among tea garden workers in Sylhet division. The Prime Minister formally handed over raincoats to 10 tea workers at the Prime Minister’s Office at Secretariat, said a release issued by the PM’s Press Wing. Executive Branch He also enquired about their wellbeing and exchanged views with them. The initiative has been taken by the Social Welfare Ministry to help ensure protection for tea garden workers in Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Habiganj during adverse weather and contribute to creating a safer working environment. Under the programme, a total of 20,000 raincoats will be distributed.

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2 joint taskforces proposed to boost Bangladesh-India trade

Staff correspondent

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has proposed forming two joint business-to-business taskforces to accelerate trade and investment cooperation between Bangladesh and India, with a focus on digital transformation and infrastructure investment and financing. The proposal came at a meeting between a CII delegation and Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktadir at the Ministry of Commerce today, said a press release. Indian business leaders and representatives of several leading companies, including firms already investing in Bangladesh, attended the meeting. Talking to reporters after the meeting, the commerce minister said Indian businesses operating in Bangladesh highlighted difficulties in transporting raw materials and goods through land ports, particularly the Benapole land port. "More efficient cargo handling at

Benapole and smoother movement of goods across the border will reduce transportation and raw material costs for businesses. This will ultimately help increase bilateral trade," he said.

The Indian business delegation proposed forming two B2B taskforces involving businesses from both countries. One taskforce would focus on sharing India's experience and cooperation in digital transformation, while the other would explore ways to increase Indian investment and financing in Bangladesh's infrastructure sector. Welcoming the initiative, the commerce minister said substantial infrastructure investment would be required if Bangladesh is to become a trillion-dollar economy. "Bangladesh needs huge investment in new railways, highways, ports, LNG infrastructure and other sectors. If Indian investors are interested in these areas and such investment is

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Govt to procure 2 cargoes of LNG

Staff correspondent

The government today approved a purchase proposal of two cargoes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from BP Singapore Pte Ltd at a combined cost of more than Taka 1,850 crore, including advance income tax, amid continued efforts to ensure uninterrupted gas supply. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) held at Bangladesh Secretariat today with Finance Minister amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury in the chair. The purchase proposal was placed by the Energy and Mineral Resources Division under the international Request for Quotation (RFQ) process in accordance with Rule 105(3) (a) of the Public Procurement Rules (PPR), 2025. According to the proposal, one cargo for delivery on Aug 23-24 was recommended for purchase from BP Singapore at \$21.878 per million British

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Biman donates Tk 4.67 crore to Workers Welfare Foundation for the first time

Special Correspondent

For the first time in the history of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, the national flag carrier has donated a share of its profits to the Workers' Welfare Foundation Fund. A check of Tk 4.67 crore for the 2024-25 fiscal year has been given to the Workers' Welfare Foundation Fund. A Biman delegation met with Labor and Employment Minister Ariful Haque Chowdhury at the Ministry of Labor and Employment on Tuesday (August 18). At that time, a check for the share of profits was handed over to the minister. The delegation, led by Biman Bangladesh Airlines Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Kaiser Sohel Ahmed, included Biman's Deputy Managing Director and Deputy CEO, Director Finance and General Manager-level officials.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines said that according to Section 234 of the Bangladesh Labor Act, 2006, there is a provision to donate 10 percent of 5 percent of the net profit of a company to the Bangladesh Workers' Welfare Foundation Fund. According to this provision, 10 percent of the amount paid to the Workers' Profit Participation Fund for the fiscal year 2024-25, i.e. 4 crore 67 lakh

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174 more
Bangladeshis
repatriated
from Libya

Staff correspondent

A total of 174 Bangladeshi nationals detained at the Gafuda Detention Centre in Benghazi, Libya, returned home early today under a coordinated repatriation initiative. The returnees arrived in Dhaka at around 6 am on a special Buraq Air flight, according to a foreign ministry press release. The repatriation was facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh Embassy in Libya and Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, with cooperation from the Libyan government and International Organization for Migration (IOM). According to the release, most of the returnees had entered Libya irregularly with the encouragement and assistance of human traffickers, intending to reach Europe illegally by

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Bangladesh, India seek fresh momentum in economic partnership

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh and India have stressed the need for greater trade and investment cooperation by removing commercial barriers, easing visa procedures and promoting joint initiatives in infrastructure and emerging technologies. Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktarid made the remarks at a meeting with the delegation of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), led by its Director General Chandrajit Banerjee, at the Secretariat here today, said a press release. The meeting discussed bilateral trade and investment relations, existing challenges and potential areas of future cooperation. The commerce minister said the geographical proximity of Bangladesh and India offers sig-

nificant opportunities to transform connectivity into economic benefits through increased trade, investment and industrial cooperation. Despite differences in size, population and economic strength, the two countries can benefit from their geographical realities, particularly by expanding trade, connectivity and investment involving Bangladesh and India's northeastern region, he said. Mukhtadir also stressed the importance of increasing economic connectivity in South Asia, saying that although the region has a large combined economy, intra-regional trade remains relatively low. He said stronger economic integration could create new opportunities for industrialisation, investment and employment. Regarding recent trade restrictions between Bangladesh

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HC clears 62,637 old cases in 12 days, boosting public confidence in judiciary

Staff correspondent

High Court (HC) has disposed of 62,637 old cases in just 12 working days, marking a significant stride toward reducing case backlogs and ensuring speedy justice, a development expected to further strengthen public confidence in the country's judiciary.

"Case backlog has long been one of the major challenges facing Bangladesh's judicial system. Therefore, the initiative to expedite the disposal of old cases will not only bring an end to the prolonged wait of litigants but also further strengthen public confidence and trust in the judiciary," said Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal.

The chief state counsel further said that under the direction of the Chief Justice, the High Court Division of the Supreme Court has disposed of 62,637 old cases in just 12 working days through a special initiative to expedite the disposal of long-pending cases. "This is undoubtedly a significant and encouraging achievement. Particularly commendable is the disposal of 5,405 old criminal miscellaneous cases in a single day," he added.

Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal said that the Chief Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury, all the judges of the High Court Division and the Supreme Court administration deserved appreciation and thanks for such a timely and effective initiative having been taken to reduce the case backlog.

He said that more such effective and timely initiatives were expected to be taken under the leadership of the Chief Justice so that cases could be disposed of swiftly, the prolonged wait of justice-seekers could be brought to an end, and people's right to justice could be made easier, faster and more effective.

Kazal also stated that the Attorney General's Office would continue to cooperate to facilitate the speedy disposal of cases.

Supreme Court public relations officer Md Shafiqul Islam said a total of 5,405 old criminal miscellaneous cases were disposed of by 13 criminal motion benches of the High Court Division on August 13.

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Widespyread Irregularities, Bribery and Sale of Government Sacks Against Food Warehouse Officials in Dimla



Mohinul Islam Sujon, Crime Reporter

Two officials of the food warehouse in Dimla, Nilgahmari, have been accused of widespread irregularities and bribery, including allegedly collecting bribes from dealers under the Food-Friendly Programme, supplying less rice than allocated, providing low-quality rice, selling new government sacks, and collecting Boro paddy in old, torn and damaged sacks. Earlier, several reports were published in the media against these two officials over alleged bribery, causing losses of crores of taka to the government, supplying low-quality rice to TCB dealers, collecting money

received rice in 30-kg sacks, while 37 dealers received rice in 50-kg sacks. During the distribution of rice in 50-kg sacks to the 37 dealers, Food Warehouse Officer-in-Charge (OC-LSD) Nawab allegedly collected bribes ranging from Tk 3,000 to Tk 5,000 from each dealer. The dealers also alleged that they were supplied with less rice and low-quality rice.

In addition, before the rice was distributed, Food Controller Mamunur Rashid allegedly collected Tk 60,000 from the dealers on the pretext of obtaining permission from the District Government Pleader (GP) or Public Prosecutor (PP) regarding a High Court writ.

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Unfinished bridges must be fixed first

It is very disappointing to see the fate of numerous bridge projects initiated by the former Awami League government years ago, but left unfinished due to planning, design, and management failures. The Tk 1,042-crore bridge over the Payra river in Patuakhali is a case in point. Scheduled for completion by the end of 2023, the 1.6-kilometre bridge was expected to provide a direct road link from Patuakhali to Khulna and Mongla via Pirojpur. Nearly three years after the deadline, the project remains far from complete, with physical progress at 26 percent. Across the country, people continue to suffer because bridges remain unfinished or unusable despite substantial public spending. In Chattogram's Fatikchhari, the incomplete Panchpukuria-Siddhashram bridge has left around 25,000 residents facing severe travel difficulties.

Nearly three years after the deadline, the project remains far from complete, with physical progress at 26 percent. Across the country, people continue to suffer because bridges remain unfinished or unusable despite substantial public spending. In Chattogram's Fatikchhari, the incomplete Panchpukuria-Siddhashram bridge has left around 25,000 residents facing severe travel difficulties.

been completed, but the road to approach it remains unfinished even after the deadline expired, forcing locals to build a bamboo footbridge to reach it. Faulty design is another recurring problem in bridge projects. In Jashore, for example, construction of eight bridges across four rivers has remained stalled for more than two years after it emerged that their designs did not meet the required clearance for waterways. The bridges, costing Tk 41.71 crore in total, were designed without approval from the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, and their girders are reportedly only 6–8 feet above the highest water level, against the required 15 feet. This is a stark example of how inadequate planning and failure to follow established rules can turn development projects into costly failures. Equally concerning is the amount of public money that has been wasted on structures that remain incomplete and unusable. Many of these projects were undertaken by the Awami League government and left unfinished following the political changeover in August 2025. But now that a new government has assumed office, it must urgently resolve the problems holding up these projects and ensure that communities do not have to wait indefinitely for essential infrastructure. The authorities must update the feasibility studies of these projects to address the changing conditions, properly scrutinise designs and secure all necessary approvals before construction resumes. They must also hold contractors, consultants, and government agencies accountable for their failure to complete projects on time. Most importantly, the government must learn from these failures and ensure that future projects are properly planned, completed within the stipulated time and cost, and deliver the benefits promised to people.

PM for friendly revenue

trade. "Customs, VAT or tax collection is not merely a matter of coercion. If a relationship of trust and confidence is established between taxpayers and the revenue administration, revenue collection becomes much easier," he said, stressing the need to make the NBR an institution that people trust rather than fear. Addressing revenue officials, the Prime Minister said, "I hope you be able to make the NBR a more trustworthy and reliable institution for the people. It is necessary to protect the interests of the institution as well as the country above all rather than individual interests."

Noting that it is time to 'turn around' in the fascism-free Bangladesh, the Prime Minister said, "We took charge of running the state amid a fragile economy. In a Bangladesh free from fascism, it is now our turn to bounce back. It is Bangladesh's turn to bounce back." In this case, he said, the success of the government's development plan adoption and implementation largely depends on the success of all the activities of the National Board of Revenue.

Stating that people, particularly taxpayers, now expect the NBR to become a reliable and trustworthy institution, the premier said, it is possible to gain the public trust through efficient and sustainable revenue management. Urging the revenue officials to take responsibility for meeting taxpayers' expectations by establishing an efficient and sustainable revenue management system, he said, "The present government wants to transform the NBR and the overall revenue structure into a people-friendly system." Referring to the fascist regime, the Prime Minister said the NBR, like other state institutions, could not remain free from the "curse" of one-and-a-half decades of fascist rule and exploitation.

He said that the institution had been questioned through arbitrary revenue collection, disregard for rules and policies, patronage of individuals or groups for personal or partisan interests, and discriminatory treatment. "These were among the reasons for the erosion of public confidence in the NBR. But in a Bangladesh free from fascism, it is now our turn to bounce back," he said.

Tarique Rahman said the global economy is changing rapidly with the emergence of advanced technologies, changing patterns of international trade, new business models and evolving international taxation and revenue management systems. He said revenue officials now need multidimensional skills to address the economic challenges and opportunities of the changing world.

"Clear knowledge of digital economy, e-commerce, transfer pricing, international taxation, trade and financial crimes, money laundering and artificial intelligence is now essential," the Prime Minister said. Noting that Bangladesh's tax-to-GDP ratio remains significantly below its potential, while a large part of the economy is still informal, Tarique said and called for reducing dependence on existing regular taxpayers and strengthening the relationship of trust between taxpayers and the revenue administration. He said the objective of modern tax administration around the world is not merely to collect more taxes, but also to encourage a larger number of people to pay taxes voluntarily. Just as the state will honor a taxpayer who is paying low taxes, it is necessary to make those who are deliberately evading taxes appropriately motivated to pay taxes, the premier said. He said his government wants to build a "new Bangladesh" by taking everyone along and respecting every citizen's contribution. "Problems exist and will continue to exist. We will try to find solutions to them gradually through discussion," Tarique Rahman said.

He urged government officials to work for nation-building

Why power corrupts, and how to keep it in check

Md. Neyamul Hossain

to an ally goes unquestioned. Tomorrow a critical journalist is quietly sidelined. In a year, an inconvenient court ruling is ignored. None of these steps alone feels like tyranny. That is exactly the danger, and the deeper meaning behind "absolute" power corrupting "absolutely." It is not that unchecked power makes bad people; it is that it removes the mechanisms that catch anyone, good or bad, before small ethical drift turns into entrenched abuse.

Is there something in our biology that makes this drift towards

It rarely looks like a coup—no tank in the street, no midnight arrest of a president. Instead, it is slow and almost always technically legal, which is precisely what makes it so hard to resist. The pattern follows a recognisable sequence. A leader first wins power through a fair election, earning real legitimacy. Then, gradually, the institutions meant to referee power get reshaped in the leader's favour—a court reorganised through convenient appointments, an election commission stripped of independence, an anti-corruption body defunded. Independent media face pressure not through outright bans but through advertising squeezes or selective prosecution of inconvenient journalists. Opposition politicians and civil society critics are recast, little by little, as enemies of the state rather than legitimate rivals. Finally, term limits or constitutional restraints are reinterpreted or amended away, through processes that look procedurally legal on paper. By the time the pattern is undeniable, the institutions citizens would need to reverse it—courts, watchdogs, a free press—have already been compromised. This is precisely why the moment to act is before the drift becomes obvious.

domination inevitable? Here the evidence offers hope. Humans share roughly 99 percent of their genes with chimpanzees—notorious for violent, alpha-male dominance hierarchies, where rank is won through aggression, intimidation, and shifting alliances. But we share almost the same percentage with bonobos, organised very differently: through cooperation, female-led coalitions, and remarkably little lethal aggression. In other words, our genes do not sentence us to tyranny. We carry the biological capacity for both extremes, and it is culture and circumstance, not DNA alone, that decides which one a society leans towards.

This reframes the entire question. Anthropologists who study early human societies, before the rise of civilisation, have found something striking: small nomadic bands were often fiercely egalitarian, and stayed that way on purpose. Anyone who tried to dominate the group was mocked, shunned, or in extreme cases driven out. Historians call this a reverse dominance hierarchy—ordinary people banding together to keep any single individual from accumulating too much control. If our ancestors could engineer restraint into small hunting bands with nothing more than social pressure, modern societies have far more powerful tools: constitutions, independent courts, a free press, the ballot box. We are not fighting our biology when we build these safeguards—we are doing, with

2 joint taskforces proposed

beneficial for Bangladesh, we will view the cooperation positively," he said. The minister said political and commercial relations between the two countries could not be viewed completely separately, adding that increased trade, investment and business connectivity would benefit both countries. Referring to the example of the European Union and other regional trade blocs, he said regional cooperation was important for achieving economic progress. Asked about the market situation six months after assuming office, Mukhtadir said that reducing prices was not merely a matter of market monitoring, as it was closely linked to energy and electricity prices, interest rates on loans, productivity, transportation and infrastructure. "Bangladesh's logistics costs are around 16 percent of GDP, compared with the global average of around 10 percent," he said, adding that higher logistics costs increase expenses from production centres to retail markets and ultimately affect consumers. He said better connectivity, uninterrupted and affordable energy supplies, and an efficient supply chain could create scope for reducing commodity prices. The minister cautioned against expecting immediate results in reducing prices, saying that developing necessary infrastructure and energy capacity takes time. He said the government is working to develop new LNG infrastructure, improve gas supplies and ensure uninterrupted operation of power plants. Regarding seasonal price increases of green chilli, onions and vegetables, Mukhtadir said supply shortages occurred during certain periods despite increased domestic production. He said the Ministry of Agriculture was taking initiatives, including contract farming, to increase planned production and reduce seasonal supply gaps. The commerce minister said coordinated improvements in energy, infrastructure, production and supply chains would help stabilise the market and gradually reduce the cost of living.

Agriculture Minister denies

policy are creating problems in different ways, he said adding "The situation will gradually return to normal." As the country has sufficient fertiliser stocks, there is no reason to be concerned about any conspiracy, he said. Addressing those creating disorder over fertiliser, he said, "This is not good. Please do not do this." On increasing agricultural exports, the minister said initiatives are being taken to improve infrastructure and storage facilities at airports. Besides, expanding cold storage and cool-room facilities at the cargo village would help exporters ship agricultural products more quickly while maintaining quality, he said.

AI auto-fine system to be

phases, he said. Under the project, AI cameras have already been installed on 490 pillars along the Dhaka-Chattogram highway. The cameras will automatically detect and record violations including speeding, dangerous overtaking, disobeying traffic signals and signs, driving on the wrong side of the road and illegal parking. Once a violation is detected, information about the vehicle will be transmitted directly to the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) database. Also, an SMS will then be sent to the registered owner's mobile phone with details of the offence and the applicable fine, while vehicle owners will be able to pay the fines from home through mobile financial services (MFS), according to the system. Under the automated system, repeated traffic violations could also lead to stricter administrative and legal measures, including cancellation of the registration of the offending vehicle in accordance with BRTA regulations. The minister warned that strict action would be taken against illegal toll col-

better tools, exactly what our species has always done to survive the presence of power in its midst. This brings us to the question that matters most for a democracy like ours: what happens when the checks meant to restrain power are themselves the target? Political scientists have a name for what many developing democracies experience: democratic backsliding. It rarely looks like a coup—no tank in the street, no midnight arrest of a president. Instead, it is slow and almost always technically legal, which is precisely what makes it so hard to resist. The pattern follows a recognisable sequence. A leader first wins power through a fair election, earning real legitimacy. Then, gradually, the institutions meant to referee

power get reshaped in the leader's favour—a court reorganised through convenient appointments, an election commission stripped of independence, an anti-corruption body defunded. Independent media face pressure not through outright bans but through advertising squeezes or selective prosecution of inconvenient journalists. Opposition politicians and civil society critics are recast, little by little, as enemies of the state rather than legitimate rivals. Finally, term limits or constitutional restraints are reinterpreted or amended away, through processes that look procedurally legal on paper. By the time the pattern is undeniable, the institutions citizens would need to reverse it—courts, watchdogs, a free press—have already been compromised. This is precisely why the moment to

act is before the drift becomes obvious. Citizens in a democracy are not powerless between elections, and the ballot box, while essential, is not the only tool available. A free press must be defended and supported, not merely consumed when convenient. The public must actively protect the independence of courts and election commissions, rather than treating them as political tools to be supported or attacked based on short-term partisan gains. Civil society acts as today's equivalent of the collective resistance our ancestors used in small tribes to keep power in check; it deserves protection, not suspicion. And perhaps most usefully, voters can judge leaders by how they behaved with small amounts of power long before they sought large ones, since character revealed early—in a local office, a party post, a student union—predicts future behaviour better than campaign promises. None of this guarantees that power will stop corrupting. The temptation of power is undeniable, driven by an ancient, deeply ingrained evolutionary urge for social status that we inherited from our primate ancestors. But the same evidence that explains the danger also points to the exit. Power corrupts most reliably when it goes unwatched, untested, and unchallenged. It rarely corrupts a society that insists, patiently and persistently, on watching.

lection on highways, regardless of whether those involved were from transport owners' groups, workers' federations or the police. He said CCTV and AI cameras would record such activities, helping curb illegal extortion and making highways safer and more disciplined. Salahuddin also said no unauthorised or unlicensed three-wheelers or non-motorised vehicles would be allowed to operate on highways and police would take immediate action against them under existing laws. At the same time, the minister instructed the Highway Police to ensure that essential issues, including access to local feeder roads and movement to CNG filling stations, were managed in a coordinated and disciplined manner. He called on the Highway Police, Bangladesh Police, transport owners and workers' organisations and the public to work together to make the technology-driven initiative successful. e also stressed the need for extensive public awareness campaigns through print, electronic and online media and social media platforms. Highway Police chief Additional Inspector General Faruk Ahmed chaired the programme. Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md Ali Hossain Fakir, Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation president and lawmaker Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas, and Narayanganj-3 lawmaker Azharul Islam Mannan attended the event.

Govt to procure 2

thermal units (MMBtu), costing Taka 927,50,60,833.92 including AIT. Another cargo for delivery on Sept 4-5 was recommended from the same supplier at \$21.778 per MMBtu, costing Taka 923,26,66,369.92 including AIT. The total cost of the two cargoes stands at around Taka 1,850.77 crore. The proposal was considered by the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase, with the LNG procurement being placed under the applicable provisions of the PPR 2025.

Biman donates Tk 4.67 crore to

42 thousand 714 taka, has been donated to the Foundation Fund.

Biman said that according to the provisions of the Labor Act, donating a fair share of profit to the Workers' Welfare Foundation Fund is part of the institutional responsibility of the company. It is committed to fulfilling this responsibility in the future through transparent and accountable financial management, respecting national laws and regulations. Biman Bangladesh Airlines' Public Relations Department said that this is the first time in the history of the company that a share of profit has been donated to the Workers' Welfare Foundation Fund.

174 more Bangladeshis

sea. Many of them were reportedly subjected to abduction and torture at different times during their stay in Libya. Officials from the foreign ministry, other relevant ministries and the IOM received the returnees at the airport. The foreign ministry urged them to share their harrowing experiences with others to raise public awareness about the dangers of irregular migration and human trafficking. The IOM provided each returnee with travel expenses, food items and primary healthcare assistance, along with temporary accommodation where necessary. The foreign ministry said it, along with the Bangladesh Embassy in Libya, the expatriates' welfare ministry and the IOM, is continuing coordinated efforts to facilitate the safe repatriation of Bangladeshi nationals detained at different detention centres in Libya.



BRTC launches women-only bus services in Dhaka, Chattogram, Bogura

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) today launched special women-only bus services in Dhaka, Chattogram and Bogura to ensure safe, comfortable and passenger-friendly public transport for women. A total of 14 buses will initially operate on 13 routes in the three cities. The buses will be operated by female drivers and attendants. The service will be gradually expanded across the country, with plans to add higher-quality buses for women.

The inauguration of the women-only bus service was held today at the BRTC office in Tejgaon in the capital. The service was inaugurated simultaneously in

Chattogram and Bogura through an online connection. The Road Transport Minister, State Minister, Secretary, Additional Secretary and senior officials from various ministries and agencies attended the ceremony. Local public representatives and officials from the divisional and district administrations of Chattogram and Bogura joined the ceremony online. At the inauguration ceremony, the Road Transport Minister said ensuring a safe and women-friendly transport system is part of the government's election pledge. He said women face various uncomfortable and risky situations while travelling on public transport. Considering these issues, he said, the special bus service has been

introduced to create a safe and comfortable environment for female passengers. Women are playing an important role in the economy, from household finances to the national economy. "Ensuring safe travel facilities is essential to utilise their capabilities for the needs of the state," he said. The minister said 14 buses would initially operate on 13 routes. In Dhaka, 10 buses would operate on 10 routes. Of these, one is a single-decker bus and nine are double-decker buses. In Chattogram, two double-decker buses will operate on one route, while two double-decker buses will operate on two routes in Bogura. Both the number of buses and routes will be

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People of Sarail Trapped Between Rhetoric of Development and Empty Promises

Taslima Khandaker Nusrat, Sarail, B.Barria

MPs come, Ministers come. With microphones in hand, they shower promises. "A tide of development will come, the face of Sarail will change." But years go by, governments change, the promises do not. In Sarail Upazila of Brahmanbaria-2 parliamentary constituency, the wheel of fate of the people is still stuck on broken roads. The touch of development seems to be forbidden here.

A visit to the field shows that the condition of most of the roads in Sarail is so deplorable that calling them "death traps" instead of roads would not be wrong. Sarail-Araihazar Road: The Monsoon Ordeal. This 14-kilometer road gets submerged every monsoon. At that time, communication between Sarail and Araihazar is cut off. Thousands of people wade through water and travel by boat, risking their lives. Sarail-Brahmanbaria

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Bangladesh flags concerns over recent Rohingya narrative based on "erroneous statistics"

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh on Tuesday conveyed its concerns to Myanmar and pointed out that Rohingyas are not 'Bengalis' as they have their own ethnic identities accepted by the Myanmar authority until recently. Booking Historical Guided Tours Director General (Myanmar wing) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Md. Toufiq-ur-Rahman conveyed Dhaka's concerns to Ambassador Kyaw Soe Moe of Myanmar at the Ministry. Referring to the latest press statement issued by the Myanmar Foreign Ministry on the Rohingya matter (dated 15 August), the DG

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Bobby Hajjaj stresses learning through play in primary education

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajjaj today stressed teaching children through play and enjoyment instead of rote learning in primary education. "It is possible to develop critical thinking, problem-solving and thinking abilities among children with learning through play," he said.

The state minister made the remarks while speaking as the special guest at a workshop titled "Learning through Play" on information booklet

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Attempt to Murder a Businessman in Sitakunda.4 Arrested Including a Woman

Md. Omar Faruk | Special Correspondent.

In Sitakunda, Chattogram, a businessman was allegedly hacked, beaten, had money and a mobile phone snatched, and was threatened with death for protesting a demand for extortion money. In connection with this incident, Sitakunda Model Police Station has arrested 4 people, including one woman, in a case filed.

They were arrested on Monday (17 August) around 5:00 PM during an operation. The arrested individuals are — Babul Das, Rakhal Das, Swapan Das, and Yashoda Rani Das. Police said there are multiple cases against the arrested individuals at the police station. They were later sent to court.

According to the FIR, Duryodhan Dash (Sajib), a businessman from Delipara area of North Salimpur, alleged that on the morning of 27 May, several people led by Babul Das went to his father's tea shop and demanded extortion money.

He alleged that when he refused to pay, he was beaten and an attempt was made to kill him by choking him. At one point, he was injured after being struck on the head with a sharp weapon. His younger brother, Pradip Dash, was also injured while trying to intervene.

The FIR further alleged that the attackers took the businessman's mobile phone and snatched 81,500 Taka from his mother. At the same time, they pressured him to pay an additional 5 lakh Taka in extortion money

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New four BNP standing committee members pay tribute at graves of Ziaur Rahman, Khaleda Zia

Staff correspondent

The four newly appointed members of the Standing Committee of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) today paid tribute at the graves of party founder and Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman and former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. They paid tribute at the graves of Ziaur Rahman and Begum Khaleda Zia situated at Zia Uddin in the capital. Later, prayers and a munajat were offered seeking eternal peace for their departed souls. The newly appointed members of the National Standing Committee are Advocate Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed,

Aman Ullah Aman, Professor Dr Farhad Halim Donar and Md Ismail Jabiullah.

BNP leaders Habibur Rahman Habib and Mir Sarafat Ali Sufu, among others, were present. On August 15, the four were appointed as new members of the BNP National Standing Committee. Talking to journalists after paying tribute, the newly appointed national standing committee members said they would work under the leadership of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to implement the BNP's election manifesto. Standing Committee member Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said, "The incumbent government

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One in Madukhali child rape attempt case 5 years imprisonment

Biplap Kumar Das, Staff Reporter:

A court has sentenced a person named Jamal Molla (65) to five years imprisonment for attempting to rape an eight-year-old child in Faridpur's Madukhali Upazila. At the same time, he was sentenced to another three years in prison without paying a fine of 10,000 taka.

On Monday (August 17) afternoon, learned Judge (District and Sessions Judge) Shamima Parveen of Faridpur Women and Child Torture Prevention Tribunal announced the verdict in the presence of the accused. Later he was sent to the district jail under police guard.

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690 prisoners still at large after escaping during July uprising

Staff correspondent

A total of 1,557 of the 2,247 prisoners who escaped from various jails during the July mass uprising have since been arrested and returned to custody while 690 remain at large, said Director General of the Department of Prisons Brig Gen Syed Md Motahar Hossain on Tuesday. "We have applied to the court to obtain information about them," he said at a press conference at the Department of Prisons headquarters in Old Dhaka. He said 826 prisoners escaped from Narsingdi Jail alone and the whereabouts of 166 of them remain unknown. Asked about militant prisoners who escaped during the unrest, the director general said nine listed militants fled from different

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Govt moves to modernize Rajshahi silk industry: State Minister

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Textiles and Jute Shariful Alam, MP, has said the government has taken various initiatives to modernize Rajshahi's traditional silk industry and restore its lost glory. He said the initiatives include promoting modern technology, research and training, improving sericulture methods, expanding mulberry cultivation and enhancing the quality of silk yarn. The state minister made the remarks while addressing a conference titled "Sericulture Research and Development in the Context of Strategic Cooperation between China and Bangladesh" as the chief guest in Rajshahi today.

The China-Bangladesh Silk Research Center organized the conference in cooperation with

the Bangladesh Sericulture Development Board (BSDB) at the conference room of the Bangladesh Sericulture Research and Training Institute (BSRTI). Earlier, Shariful Alam visited the Bangladesh Sericulture Factory and BSRTI. Recalling the historical significance of Rajshahi silk, he said the industry was once a symbol of aristocracy, beauty and Bengali heritage, but its prominence had declined over the years due to various crises. He said new initiatives in research, technology and international cooperation could help the industry regain its position, particularly by opening access to the large Chinese market. "Rajshahi silk is not just an industry; it is a part of the country's heritage and pride. The government is working to revive this sector

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Pink Bus for women

Launched in Chattogram from this morning, Fare for getting on and off is 10 Taka. The driver and helper will all be women. Kalurghat to Patenga Chattogram. -Omar Faruk

মেডিসিন, ডায়াবেটিস, বাত-ব্যথা
চর্ম ও শিশু রোগ অভিজ্ঞ

ডাঃ মানিক চন্দ্র নাথ

এম.বি.বি.এস (সি.ইউ)
এম ফিল (ফিজিওলজি-বি.এস.এম.এম.ইউ)
এমপিএইচ (এপিডেমিওলজি)
সি.সি.ডি (বারডেম)
সহযোগী অধ্যাপক ও বিভাগীয় প্রধান
বিজিসি ট্রাঙ্ক মেডিকেল কলেজ
BMDC Reg- A68436

সাক্ষাতের সময় :
প্রতি রবিবার ও বৃহস্পতিবার
বিকাল ৫ টা - রাত ৭ টা

সিরিয়ালের জন্য যোগাযোগ :
01675-271725
01815-092341

চেম্বার :
সীতাকুণ্ড ডক্টরস চেম্বার
সীতাকুণ্ড কামিল (এম.এ) মাদ্রাসার বিপরীত পার্শে
সীতাকুণ্ড বাজার, চট্টগ্রাম।
চেম্বারে আসার পূর্বে অবশ্যই মোবাইলে যোগাযোগ করে আসবেন।

A humanitarian doctor usually provides free treatment and medicine to poor, helpless, and destitute patients

BRTC launches women-only bus

increased in the future, he said.

The initiative was implemented under BRTC’s 180-day action plan to fulfil that commitment. The service was inaugurated immediately after completion of the 180-day action plan.BRTC Chairman Abdul L. atif Molla said although the service had initially started with 14 buses, there are plans to operate around 106 buses for female passengers in Dhaka metropolitan area, 12 in Chattogram and 16 in Bogura in phases. This means a total of 134 buses could eventually come under the special service.The government-fixed fares will be displayed on buses designated for women. An initiative has also been taken to prominently display the prescribed fares at the relevant counters. This will enable female passengers to easily know the fixed fares and reduce the scope for charging excess fares.Technology is also being used to make the new service modern and safe. BRTC said route-tracking facilities have been introduced on the buses.A Wi-Fi connection has been installed on one bus on a trial basis. The facility will gradually be extended to other buses. In addition, closed-circuit cameras have been installed on three buses. There are plans to install CCTV cameras on the other buses later.The BRTC official said the number of buses designated for women would also be increased when new buses are added to the corporation’s fleet. At the same time, there are plans to introduce new buses equipped with advanced technology.The BRTC chairman said initiatives have been taken to bring in higher-quality buses for women. For this purpose, the government has allocated Taka 400 crore for procuring 100 women-only buses and another Taka 400 crore for introducing electric buses in city services.

He said the government’s responsibility not end simply with launching the buses. The quality of the service introduced for female passengers must be improved continuously. Often, various government initiatives lose effectiveness within a few months of their inauguration.“This will not be allowed to happen in the case of the women’s bus service,” he said. BRTC and the concerned officials have been instructed to improve the quality of the service every day, he added. At the ceremony, BRTC officials said the government’s election manifesto had pledged to introduce a special bus service exclusively for women, operated by female drivers and female attendants, to ensure women’s round-the-clock mobility.

New four BNP standing commit

will build the country keeping the BNP’s philosophy in mind.”Aman Ullah Aman said, “With the efforts of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and the people, voting rights have been restored in the country. The country has been freed from fascism. This is a government of the people that will provide services to the people by standing beside them.”Professor Dr Farhad Halim Donar said, “Ziaur Rahman did in three years what he accomplished, and his worthy son, BNP Chairman and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, is moving forward at an even faster pace.”Md Ismail Jabiullah said, “The BNP is the possessor of a political tradition. This opportunity will be successfully fulfilled.”

People of Sarail Trapped Between

Road: 20 km of Suffering. This main road connecting to the district headquarters is in a dilapidated state. Full of potholes and broken. The Roads and Highways Department is talking about a Tk 235 crore project, saying a tender will be called. But no one knows when it will happen. Unpaved Road in the Union: 54 Years of Neglect. The 2-kilometer road in Dhitpur South village of Shahbazpur Union has not been paved even after 54 years of independence. Locals collect their own money and fill it with bricks to manage travel somehow. What the Authorities Say vs. Reality? Road Transport and Bridges Minister Sheikh Rabiul Alam told Parliament that the 28 km Brahmanbaria-Sarail section of the Cumilla-Brahmanbaria highway is being upgraded to 4 lanes. The work is being “expedited.” But locals ask: What good is a highway if the roads inside the villages remain death traps? "They say this and that with their mouths. But there is nothing when it comes to work. The touch of development does not reach us," said several aggrieved residents angrily. The people of Sarail have only one appeal to MP Rumin Farhana of Brahmanbaria-2 and to the local representatives — not promises, we want work this time. Otherwise, these broken roads will prove that development is limited only to paper and speeches.

Bangladesh flags concerns over

mentioned that many elements of the statement are based on erroneous statistics including the number of the displaced Rohingya population.Their data registered under the UN system reflects their accurate numbers. The DG also requested the Ambassador on expediting the verification process of the displaced Rohingyas based on agreed bilateral instruments including taking into account of the children born in the camps, and the new arrivals, forced to leave Rakhine after 2017.Bangladesh is in the process of registering them and the information of Rohingyas after the caseload of 828,824 would be shared with the Myanmar authorities in due course.The DG requested to duly reflect these added information in the verification exercise.Ambassador Soe Moe assured to convey Bangladesh’s concerns and observations to his capital and expressed his government’s commitment to expedite the verification process to begin the repatriation of the verified Rohingyas.The DG reiterated that the only sustainable solution of the crisis lies in safe, dignified, and voluntary repatriation of the Rohingyas to Rakhine.The United Council of Rohingya (UCR) has already categorically rejected and condemned the “misleading” press statement issued by the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs on August 15.This statement is a calculated attempt to rewrite history, whitewash state-sponsored crimes, and evade the international community’s calls for accountability, said the UCR in a statement.Bangladesh PM’s visit to India should take place much sooner: Dinesh TrivediMyanmar said Bangladesh sent 828,824 names of internally displaced persons to Myanmar, and as of 31st July, 2026, 426,545 names have been verified. BookingHistorical Guided ToursThe verification found 308,797 people with evidence of having lived in Rakhine State, 4,241 who had committed acts of terrorism, and 113,507 people with no evidence of having lived in Rakhine State, Myanmar claimed.“Therefore, based on these figures, we are concerned about the accusations that all those living in Bangladeshi camps are from Myanmar. Similarly, we strongly object to the accusations that boat refugees and those arriving in other countries under ethnic names that do not exist in Myanmar are from Myanmar,” Myanmar said. The UCR categorically rejected and condemned the misleading press statement.“We address the Government of Myanmar’s fallacies point by point: On Our Identity: We are Rohingya, not ‘Bengalis’. Myanmar’s continued refusal to acknowledge our ethnic identity is the root cause of our persecution. The term ‘Bengali’ is a weapon of erasure. We are the indigenous Rohingya people of Rakhine State, with a documented history and culture spanning centuries and Myanmar government recognized the Rohingya as an indigenous ethnic minority of Myanmar.. We demand the world to restore our identity as Rohingya, and we reject any nomenclature designed to deny our existence and our rights to citizenship,” said the UCR.The Myanmar government cynically blames the ARSA group for their plight. This is a complete inversion of

reality, UCR said.The Tatmadaw’s “clearance operations” in 2016 and 2017 were a systematic campaign of Genocide, ethnic cleansing, meticulously documented by the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission."These operations involved the mass rape of women, the torching of over 300 villages, and the summary execution of entire families.The isolated ARSA attacks were a desperate reaction to decades of apartheid, not the cause of our forced exodus. Myanmar's claim that their military acted in "defensive response" is an insult to the memory of the thousands massacred."The UCR rejected the figures cited by Myanmar.The statement claims 540,000 Bengalis fled to Bangladesh. BookingHistorical Guided ToursIn reality, over 700,000 Rohingya fled across the border in a matter of weeks during the 2017 genocide, joining over 200,000 who had fled earlier waves of persecution in 1991-1992.The claim that over 200,000 people still reside in Rakhine state is deeply misleading; these individuals are effectively interned in camps, denied freedom of movement, and stripped of all basic rights, said the UCR.The international community and the UN have unequivocally stated that over one million Rohingya are now displaced, and the Myanmar government cannot dispute verified UN statistics.

They said Myanmar’s verification process is a sham.Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, does not recognise the Rohingya as one of the country’s 135 lawful ethnic minorities, instead referring to them as Bengalis to imply they are natives from Bangladesh and are illegally settled in Myanmar.Myanmar said it will continue working with Bangladesh to receive verified former residents when the security situation in Rakhine becomes more stable.The Myanmar ministry also rejected claims that more than 1 million people were displaced from Rakhine, saying that more than 540,000 people crossed into Bangladesh after the violence in 2017 while more than 200,000 remained in northern Rakhine.Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed to a two-year repatriation process in 2018. However, security in Myanmar worsened following an army takeover in 2021 that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, triggering widespread armed resistance. Plans to repatriate the refugees have not succeeded. BookingHistorical Guided ToursThe renewed chaos brought about by fighting between the Rakhine-based ethnic Arakan Army group and the military over control of the region in 2023 forced more refugees to flee toward Bangladesh and elsewhere in a desperate move to save their lives.The Arakan Army controls much of Rakhine after capturing territory from the military in recent years.

Bobby Hajjaj stresses

review, organised by the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) in a city hotel, said a press release.He noted effective and sustainable education cannot be ensured merely by making children memorise lessons, saying “If opportunities for learning are created through sports and various activities in enjoyable surroundings, children’s learning ability, and creativity as well as thinking skills will develop further.” He added local games should be incorporated into the curriculum and textbooks, while school infrastructure should also be developed in a child-friendly manner suitable for play-based learning. Bobby Hajjaj said NAPE and its partner organisations have conducted research and collected information on sports and games at the local level. So far, 412 games have been documented, which can be used in schools through students’ participation. Besides, work has also been done on how more than 700 locally practised games can be regulated and incorporated into the school curriculum, he revealed.Referring to the experiences of China and Japan, Bobby Hajjaj said toys and games have been integrated with different subjects of the curriculum in those countries. Textbooks and curricula specify which toy or game should be used to teach which chapter of which subject in a particular class, he said, adding that in this regard, textbook publishers, toy manufacturers and curriculum developers work together.Informing that such an initiative would also be taken in Bangladesh, the state minister said discussions had been held with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) on the matter.“Very soon, necessary steps will be taken after sitting with the relevant stakeholders on how sports and toy-based learning can be incorporated more effectively into primary education,” he said.He said just formulating a curriculum would not be enough and its proper implementation must also be ensured. Accountability must be ensured at every stage of the construction and management of classrooms, play areas, learning environment and infrastructure in schools. Creating a joyful, safe and effective learning environment for children is one of the key objectives of primary education reform, he said.Minister for Education and Primary and Mass Education Dr A N M Ehsanul Hoque Milon was the chief guest at the programme. Director General of the National Academy for Primary Education Farid Ahmad presided over the programme. State Minister for Youth and Sports Md Aminul Haque, Save the Children Country Director Suman Sengupta and Director General of the Directorate of Primary Education Shahina Ferdousi were present as special guests.

One in Madukhali child

Convicted Jamal Molla (65) is the son of deceased Momin Molla of Majhkandi Paschimpara area of ??Jahapur Union of Madhukhali upazila. According to the report of the case, the child went to the neighboring tailor's house to get new clothes on May 3 this year around 4 pm. As the tailor was not at home, the child was playing with the accused's granddaughter. Jamal Molla skillfully took the child inside the residence and tried to rape her by holding her face. The child tried to run to save herself and fell on the stairs of the accused's house. At that time, the children's screams led the neighbors to come and rescue him. Jamal Mullah ran away from the house. Later a complaint was made to the police station. Golam Rabbani Bhuiyan Ratan, the public counsel of that court said, after the evidence of the case, the court found the accused Jamal Molla guilty and sentenced him to five years in prison and fined 10,000 taka. If he does not pay the fine, he will have to serve another three years in prison. PP of the court also said that justice has been established in this judgment of the court. We are happy.

690 prisoners still at large

prisons. Of them, six have been rearrested and returned to custody while three remain at large. The six rearrested militants include Jewel alias Jewel Ustad, who was recently arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Unit, he said.Regarding allegations that drugs are being smuggled into prisons with the help of prison guards, Brig Gen Motahar said he has adopted a “zero tolerance” policy against drugs and financial corruption.“Over the last two years, 21 of our officials have been sent into compulsory retirement and 82 have been dismissed. Departmental proceedings have been initiated against 870 people, while 303 others have been transferred to different departments for minor offences,” he said.He said prison guards found involved in drug-related offences were handed over to police after criminal cases were filed against them.Regarding the use of mobile phones inside prisons, he said the authorities have no information about such use, but action would be taken if any complaint was received.Responding to allegations that Awami League leaders and activists are being allowed to use mobile phones in prisons, he said mobile phone use is strictly prohibited.On

prisoners’ food, the director general said automatic roti-making machines are being installed in prisons.The machines would save time and ensure quality by automating the entire process, from preparing flour to making and heating roti, he said. The initiative would also reduce security risks associated with keeping large numbers of prisoners outside at night for food preparation, he added.He said preparations are underway to keep accused in drug-related cases separately in two prisons- one in Feni and the other in Kishoreganj.Asked about the number of foreign nationals currently detained in Bangladeshi prisons, Brig Gen Motahar said 379 foreign nationals are in different prisons across the country.“Letters have been sent to the embassies concerned to repatriate 170 of them to their respective countries,” he said.

Attempt to Murder a Businessman

within the next year. It is also alleged that they threatened to kill the businessman and his family members and dispose of their bodies if the extortion money was not paid. According to the FIR, on 6 August the accused again went to the same place and demanded extortion money. At one point, it is alleged that the businessman was struck on the head and hacked with a sharp weapon with the intent to kill. Hearing his screams, locals came forward and the attackers fled. The injured were later given treatment at Sitakunda Upazila Health Complex. In this incident, a case has been filed under Sections 143, 447, 323, 324, 326, 307, 385, 379, 506, and 34 of the Penal Cod. OC Md. Mohinul Islam of Sitakunda Model Police Station said 4 people, including one woman, have been arrested in connection with the case. There are multiple cases against them at the police station. There are also allegations of harassing ordinary people in the area. The plaintiff in the case, Duryodhan Dash (Sajib) said that he and the locals are relieved that the 4 accused have been arrested.

Govt moves to modernize

through modern technology, research and training,” he said. The state minister said, in line with the election manifesto, initiatives have also been taken to reopen closed state-owned factories and mills, expand markets and attract domestic and foreign investment.He said work is underway to formulate a marketing policy for the development of Rajshahi’s silk industry. Shariful Alam said China, one of the world’s largest silk producers and consumers, offers a promising market for Bangladeshi silk. Establishing a strong presence there could directly benefit silk farmers, weavers and entrepreneurs in Rajshahi.He also stressed the need for quality silk yarn and fabrics alongside modern designs, packaging, branding and marketing strategies to establish “Rajshahi Silk” as a strong international brand.Among others, Abu Sayeed Chand, MP; Secretary of the Ministry of Textiles and Jute Sharaf Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury; Professor Xu Qiuji, Vice Dean of the School of Fashion Design and Engineering at Zhejiang Sci-Tech University; and Professor Nusrat Jahan Nipa, project initiator and chief coordinator of the China-Bangladesh Silk Research Center, attended the conference as special guests.BSDB Director General Toufiq Al Mahmud chaired the event, while BSRTI Senior Scientific Officer Dr Shakawat Hossain presented the keynote paper.The conference also highlighted the historical importance and future prospects of Bangladesh’s silk industry.

Bangladesh, India seek fresh

and India, the commerce minister called for discussions to restore bilateral trade to a normal footing.He expressed hope that positive progress would be achieved within the next few months.Visa-related difficulties faced by business people and professionals also came up for discussion.Muktadir said it was not practical for people who regularly travel for business, medical treatment and other purposes to apply for new visas every few months.He stressed the need for cooperation between the two countries to introduce longer-term visa arrangements for regular travellers.The CII delegation proposed forming two joint task forces to enhance cooperation in infrastructure and high-technology sectors.One task force would focus on promoting private investment and public-private partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure, while the other would work on future-oriented industries such as semiconductors, green hydrogen, battery storage and data centres.The CII said around Rs 25 lakh crore was invested in India’s infrastructure sector last year, with a significant portion coming from the private sector.It said Bangladesh could also attract domestic and foreign institutional investment by drawing on India’s experience.The meeting also highlighted the importance of utilising the capacity of local manufacturing industries. Indian business representatives said many local enterprises have the capability to manufacture products domestically but have weakened due to various challenges.They said strengthening local production could reduce import dependence and accelerate project implementation.Citing the example of a joint initiative with Energypac, a CII representative said Bangladesh still imports many products despite having the capacity to manufacture them locally.Imports through land ports can take as long as 40-45 days, he said, adding that revitalising local industries could significantly reduce such delays.The CII also expressed interest in investing in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.It proposed establishing a modern integrated manufacturing facility near Dhaka for products including soap, home-care insecticides and fragrances.The delegation also stressed the need for an effective regulatory framework to ensure quality control of unregistered products. The CII representatives further called for adjustments to the tariff structure to encourage the use of energy-efficient technologies in industries.They said their steam-related technologies could reduce gas consumption by 10-35 percent in the textile, readymade garment and food industries, but tariff discrimination was discouraging their adoption.The Indian industry body also proposed creating internship opportunities for Bangladeshi youth in Indian companies and extending cooperation to resolve visa-related difficulties faced by Bangladeshi engineers seeking employment in third countries. Both sides emphasised the importance of moving beyond formal discussions by undertaking specific initiatives, increasing private-sector engagement and establishing institutional mechanisms to make Bangladesh-India economic relations more effective and result-oriented.

HC clears 662,637 old

With this, a total of 55,730 old criminal miscellaneous cases were disposed of in just 12 working days. Since the launch of the special initiative for the disposal of old cases, a total of 62,637 old cases, including criminal miscellaneous and writ cases, have so far been disposed of.

Shafiqul Islam further said that the special initiative was launched on May 7, under which judges of the Criminal Motion and Writ Motion Benches of the High Court Division were instructed to prioritise the disposal of long-pending cases and to dispose of old criminal miscellaneous and writ cases on designated days each week. “The initiative to dispose of old cases would continue,” the Supreme Court public relations officer added.

Widespyread Irregularities

A Food-Friendly Programme dealer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, “I had to pay Tk 3,000 to the OC-LSD to receive rice in large sacks. Besides, Tk 60,000 was given to the Food Controller on behalf of all the dealers for obtaining permission from the PP or GP regarding the High Court docu-

ments and for office expenses.”

Two other dealers alleged that they had to pay Tk 5,000 each to the OC-LSD for receiving rice in large sacks.

“I have never seen an OC-LSD like him in my life. From household expenses, including even the cost of chilies, to all family and personal expenses, everything allegedly comes from money paid by dealers and businessmen,” one dealer said.

One of the dealers also alleged that he received less rice than his allocation.

Another dealer said, “I also had to pay Tk 4,000 to the OC-LSD for receiving rice in large sacks. The same practice of taking money is continuing as before.”

The allegations are not limited to collecting money during rice distribution. According to the allegations, official records showed around 42,000 sacks as old, while more than 9,000 new 50-kg-capacity sacks, locally known as “calendar” sacks, were allegedly secretly sold at higher prices.

Later, old, torn and damaged sacks were allegedly purchased at lower prices and used for collecting Boro paddy, through which several lakh taka were allegedly misappropriated.

Of these sacks, around 6,500 were allegedly removed secretly in the early hours of July 5 and 6. Later, another 2,500 sacks were allegedly transported on July 13 in a truck bearing registration number Dhaka Metro-T-16-5885.

Meanwhile, immediately after the August rice distribution to dealers was completed, and while several days still remained before September began, rice allocated for September was allegedly being supplied to dealers in advance, reportedly after collecting bribes, as had allegedly happened the previous month.

There are also allegations that contracted mills for paddy processing were given only a small portion of the paddy from the food warehouse as a formality. Most of the paddy was allegedly supplied directly from outside to the contracted mills for processing without proper quality inspection or being brought into the warehouse, allegedly in exchange for bribes.

The allegations further state that the paddy was subsequently shown as having been stocked at the warehouse, and bills were prepared in the names of different farmers.

It is also alleged that although several media outlets have previously published reports about various irregularities and bribery involving officials of the Dimla food warehouse, the concerned higher authorities have not taken effective action. Instead, an investigation committee headed by an officer of the same rank was reportedly formed.

Local dealers and concerned individuals have questioned why effective action has not been taken despite repeated allegations of irregularities and bribery against the same officials. Local residents have demanded a fair and impartial investigation into the allegations and appropriate action against those found responsible.

When contacted, Food Warehouse Officer-in-Charge (OC-LSD) Nawab said, “Bring the person who made the allegation to the office.”

Food Controller Mamunur Rashid said, “This time we obtained permission from the GP, not the PR. I did not speak to anyone in this regard this time, nor was I involved in any kind of transaction. There may have been some new smaller sacks among the 42,000 sacks at the warehouse, and the OC-LSD may have sold them.”

District Food Controller Syed Atikul Haque did not answer phone calls. However, in response to a text message, he said, “I have appointed an investigation officer after seeing your message. Please wait for two or three days.”

Dimla Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Imranuzzaman said, “If anyone is found to have financial involvement, we will take a hard line this time. If anyone is found to have committed wrongdoing and financial involvement is established, disciplinary action will be taken against them.”

Several attempts were made to contact Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammad Nairuzzaman, but he did not answer the calls. No response was received despite sending him a text message.

HSBC launches Export Excellence Awards 2026

Staff correspondent

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited in Bangladesh has announced the launching of the ‘HSBC Export Excellence Awards 2026’, recognizing and honouring exporters from Bangladesh for their contribution to the sustainable growth of the country.Exporters will be able to nominate themselves for the title of ‘Exporter of the Year’ in four categories by filling in a simple nomination form. The categories of HSBC Export Excellence Awards 2026 are:1. Export Excellence: Ready-made GarmentsExport Revenue of \$100 million and above. All apparel products that are part of mainstream RMG sector 2. Export Excellence: Ready-made garments backward linkage. Export revenue of \$50 million and above - Products that support the RMG and other manufacturing sectors.3. Export Excellence: Non-traditional and emerging sectors – Manufacturing. Export revenue of \$10 million and above - Electronics, light engineering, plastics, furniture, footwear, leather goods, agro-processing and automotive components, etc.4. Export Excellence: Non-traditional and Emerging Sectors - Service. Export revenue of US\$ 5 million and above - Professional, digital, or knowledge-based services.The HSBC Export Excellence Awards is assisted by programme partners: Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh and The British High Commission Dhaka. Technical partner, who will be engaged for auditing will be Ernst & Young (EY), said a press release. Adjudication will be done by a Jury Board comprising members from HSBC senior management team, Ministry of Commerce and British High Commission Dhaka. Winners will be selected based on aspects such as, annual contribution to the national exports and economy, diversity, responsibility, sustainable business practices, governance strengths, regulatory compliance etc.

The awards programme is not exclusive to HSBC customers and is open to all enterprises and entrepreneurs operating in Bangladesh. There is no entry fee or financial recognition.Speaking on the initiative Md Mahbub ur Rahman, Chief Executive Officer, HSBC Bangladesh remarked, “This award honours the trailblazing enterprises redefining Bangladesh’s footprint in the global economy.

From high-tech innovation and digital services to sustainable manufacturing, we celebrate those championing the ‘Made in Bangladesh narrative through excellence, creativity, and a commitment to long-term sustainable growth” Talukdar Noman Anwar, Country Head of Communications, HSBC Bangladesh, also spoke at the launch conference and shared the rules and regulations of the programme.Past Export Excellence Award winners, Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, Chairman & CEO, PRAN-RFL Group and, Enayetur Rahman, CEO & President, Ulkasemi, Asif Ashraf, Director & CEO of Urmi Group also exchanged their views on the Bangladesh Export arena and their journey of winning the awards, over a short discussion session conducted by HSBC Bangladesh CEO, Md Mahbub ur Rahman.Saiyab Ahmed, Deputy Director of Trade & Investment, British High Commission Dhaka and Naushad Ekramullah, Partner and Managing Director, EY Bangladesh was also present. Nomination forms and other details of the programme are available at www.business.hsbc.com.bd/EEA2026.



60-day deadline for Iran peace deal expires with sides still far apart

International Desk

A 60-day deadline set by U.S. President Donald Trump for ending the war with Iran and reaching an agreement on its nuclear program expired Monday, with the two sides appearing farther apart than when the agreement was signed.

The deal, signed by Trump at Versailles in June, was intended to halt the conflict and pave the way for a permanent settlement. But negotiations have made little progress, focusing largely on reopening the Strait of Hormuz and lifting a U.S. blockade on Iran, both of which were supposed to happen under the interim agreement. There has been no indication of a compromise over the strait or that substantive talks on Iran's nuclear program have even begun.

The United States also faces difficult choices over how to end the war it launched alongside Israel.

Accepting Iran's latest demands would effectively give Tehran control over a vital international waterway through which about one-fifth of the world's traded oil and gas passed before the war. Such a move could be viewed as an admission of defeat.

Escalating the already unpopular conflict, meanwhile, could further deplete U.S. supplies of advanced missile interceptors, disrupt the global economy and push up fuel prices ahead of U.S. congressional elections.

As a result, both sides have hardened their positions, apparently hoping the other will make the first concession. So far, neither has.

Interim deal collapsed weeks later

The June agreement, known as the Memorandum of Understanding, called for an end to all military operations and established a 60-day deadline for reaching a permanent agreement to end the war and settle the long-standing dispute over Iran's nuclear activities.

It also called for reopening the Strait of Hormuz while giving Iran a vaguely defined role in facilitating maritime traffic, leaving open the possibility that Tehran could impose fees after the 60-day period. Iran has cited that provision in asserting control over the waterway.

A week after the agreement was signed, Iran began firing on vessels using a route along Oman's coast on the opposite side of the strait. The route is monitored by the U.S. military and was intended to bypass Iranian control. The United States responded with strikes on Iran, which retaliated by attacking Arab countries hosting American forces, including Jordan, Kuwait and Bahrain.

Washington also canceled waivers under the agreement that had allowed Iran to sell oil internationally, while Trump reinstated a blockade of Iranian ports.

Both sides accused each other of violating the June agreement, much of which has since fallen apart.

The fighting eventually subsided. A related ceasefire in Lebanon between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah has largely held, although Israeli forces continue to occupy large parts of southern Lebanon. The June agreement had called for Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty to be protected.

Iranian officials say they stopped direct negotiations with the United States in June, although they acknowledge that messages have continued to be exchanged through intermediaries. Trump, however, says talks have continued and has occasionally claimed progress after backing away from threats of major strikes.

Pakistan, which played a key role in brokering the June agreement, pointed to Monday's deadline last week while expressing hope that it could be extended.

"We are not closing the chapter," Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman Tahir Andrabi said. "Pakistan is making all-out efforts to bring the two parties to the negotiating table."

Iran seeks to force Trump to concede on strait

Earlier this month, Iran issued demands for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, including an end to the U.S. blockade, the withdrawal of American forces from around Iran and compensation for damage caused during the war launched by the United States and Israel on Feb. 28.

Iran has also said it would retain control of the strait, and potentially impose fees, through an agreement it is negotiating with Oman. Tehran says the waterway will not return to the open, toll-free route it was before the war.

Meanwhile, Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen have begun attacking Saudi oil tankers in the Red Sea, threatening another important trade route that had helped ease pressure caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump has rejected Iran's demands, saying Tehran should instead pay war reparations and claiming that the United States controls the strait. He appears to be relying on economic pressure, including the blockade and long-standing sanctions, to force Iran's leadership to back down.

Iran's economy has been severely affected by the war and international isolation, while inflation has surged. The worsening crisis could fuel renewed anti-government protests similar to those that were violently suppressed in January.

Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz increased immediately after the interim agreement but has since fallen to a small fraction of prewar levels. Fuel and other commodity prices are expected to rise further the longer the disruption continues, with consequences extending well beyond the Middle East.

The pressure remains on both sides as the diplomatic clock continues to run.

China mourns former premier Zhu Rongji with flags lowered, funeral

International Desk

Former Chinese premier Zhu Rongji was mourned on Tuesday with lowered flags and social media commemorations, ahead of a funeral for the reforming trailblazer who died last week at 97.

Known for his decisive restructuring of the Chinese economy during a five-year premiership starting in 1998, Zhu has been praised since his Wednesday passing by state news agency Xinhua as "an outstanding proletarian revolutionist (and) statesman".

Flags were lowered at government buildings across Beijing on Tuesday, AFP journalists saw, as well as on Tiananmen Square, the expansive and highly securitised site in the capital city's centre.

Online, the Tiananmen tribute was the top trending topic on Chinese microblogging site Weibo.

"Thank you for everything you have done for this land -- we will always remember you," wrote one commenter on Weibo. Zhu's remains will be cremated on Tuesday in Beijing, Xinhua said Sunday, with a farewell gathering attended by senior leaders of China's ruling Communist Party expected before, according to standard protocol.

Born in 1928 in central China and later ascending the ranks of the party following the 1949 culmination of a revolution led by Mao Zedong, Zhu's political roles included being mayor of Shanghai, followed by national vice premier and premier.

His premiership coincided with the presidency of Jiang Zemin, the gregarious, bespectacled economic reformer who died in 2022.

Zhu became known for his ardent anti-corruption drive, controversial dismantling of inefficient state-owned firms and integration of China with the global economy.

Asked once by a reporter how he'd like to be remembered, Zhu said: "I only hope that after I step down, people across the country will say that 'he was an honest official, not a corrupt one', and I'll be very satisfied with that".



Kushner, Netanyahu discuss Gaza road map after U.S. negotiator meets Hamas

International Desk

Mideast negotiator Jared Kushner met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Monday after the premier rejected a 15-point, U.S.-backed road map for a Gaza truce.

The discussion follows Kushner's two-hour meeting Sunday in Egypt with Hamas chief Khalil al-Hayya and officials from Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey. Al-Hayya demanded Israel halt attacks and withdraw to the undefined "yellow line" before beginning implementation. While Hamas accepted the road map, Israel-which controls 60% of Gaza-insists Hamas fully disarm before any withdrawal.

Israeli minister calls for hanging Palestinian prisoners 'one by one'

The road map envisions a technocratic committee and a pathway to Palestinian statehood. However, Hamas links surrendering heavy weapons to sovereignty, a condition Netanyahu's government rejects. Consequently, international force deployment and reconstruction remain stalled.

Regional powers, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Jordan, Pakistan, and Indonesia, issued a statement condemning Israel's rejection. Netanyahu, facing a challenging Oct. 27 election with a hardline coalition, has not yet responded to the mounting pressure.

Ship attacked while transiting Strait of Hormuz

International Desk

A vessel was struck by a projectile early Tuesday while attempting to leave the Strait of Hormuz, according to the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO), a British military maritime monitoring agency.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the incident. The attack underscores the continued risks facing commercial vessels using the strategic waterway, as Iran maintains restrictions on shipping traffic while negotiating with Oman over arrangements for managing transit through the strait.

Here are the latest developments from the Iran war and the broader Middle East:

Vessel damaged during Strait of Hormuz transit

An unidentified projectile struck a vessel's engine room early Tuesday as it was passing through the Strait of Hormuz off Oman, causing damage and leaving one crew member affected, the UKMTO said, citing the vessel's security office.

The agency did not identify the ship or provide information about its cargo. It also did not clarify whether the crew member was killed or injured. The Omani Coast Guard was assisting the remaining crew, while authorities launched an investigation.

The incident comes amid concerns over possible oil pollution in the Persian Gulf and surrounding waters from vessels damaged while attempting to cross the strait. No environmental damage was reported in Tuesday's attack, according to the UKMTO.

Iran effectively shut down traffic through the Strait of Hormuz — a crucial global energy route that handled around one-fifth of the world's traded oil before the war — after Israel and the United States launched attacks on Iran on Feb. 28.

The United States is also maintaining a blockade of Iranian shipping through the waterway.

With U.S.-Iran negotiations stalled, Tehran has been holding separate discussions with Oman over a mechanism to regulate maritime traffic through the strait. Iran said Monday that the details of a joint statement with Oman were being finalized.

U.S. President Donald Trump reacted angrily to the development and reportedly warned Fox News corre-



spondent Trey Yingst in a phone interview that Washington could bomb Oman if it "gets in the way."

Erdogan urges Trump to pursue diplomacy

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called on U.S. President Donald Trump to continue pursuing a diplomatic solution to the conflict with Iran.

The two leaders spoke by phone late Monday as a 60-day period for reaching a peace agreement between Washington and Tehran came to an end. There was no immediate indication that the negotiating period would be extended, while the two sides appeared to remain far apart.

"President Erdogan said it is important to make maximum use of diplomacy amid tensions between Iran and the United States," Turkey's presidential communications office said in a statement. He also expressed hope that negotiations would continue and reaffirmed Turkey's support for peace efforts.

Erdogan also raised concerns about intensified Israeli actions against Palestinians as efforts continue to advance the second phase of the Gaza agreement, according to the statement.

Turkey, which is a NATO member and shares a border with Iran, signed a joint defense agreement earlier this month with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The agreement states that an armed attack against any one of the three countries would be considered an attack against all three.

Trump welcomed the agreement, saying it demonstrated that Middle Eastern countries were moving closer together and strengthening their ability to defend themselves.

During his conversation with Trump, Erdogan said the agreement represented a firm commitment to regional security and stability.

Trump administration pauses controversial border wall work in Texas

International Desk

The Trump administration has temporarily halted construction of a controversial border wall project in Big Bend National Park in southern Texas while the head of the agency responsible for building the wall visits the area for an on-the-ground assessment.

The project has drawn strong bipartisan opposition from critics who argue that the construction is damaging a pristine natural environment. They also say the rugged and remote terrain of the region already acts as a natural deterrent to migrants and smugglers.

Rodney Scott, head of Customs and

Border Protection, said on X that he was traveling to Texas to personally evaluate the project.

"CBP is pausing all construction activity in Big Bend National Park while I visit and conduct a personal, on-the-ground evaluation," Scott said.

Congress approved \$46 billion for the Trump administration last summer to build a border wall stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. The administration has moved quickly to expand construction, waiving numerous regulations in an effort to speed up the project. Scott has said he expects the first layer of the wall to be completed by the end of next year.

Israeli Minister calls for killing 30-40 Gazans nightly

International Desk

Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has publicly advocated for killing "30 to 40" people in Gaza every night through targeted assassinations, claiming they are "not even people" and "not worthy of life".

Speaking on a podcast with former hostage Rom Braslavski, Ben-Gvir criticized Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent drawdown of strikes, which reportedly served as a concession to U.S. President Donald Trump. Ben-Gvir, who oversees police and prisons but lacks military authority, also proposed mass Palestinian expulsion and Israeli resettlement of the enclave - actions international lawyers warned could constitute ethnic cleansing.

Zambia President Hichilema reelected for second term

International Desk

Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema has been reelected for a second five-year term, the Electoral Commission of Zambia announced early Tuesday.

Hichilema was declared the outright winner of last Thursday's presidential election after securing 61.4% of the nearly 5 million votes cast, eliminating the need for a runoff.

According to the commission, Hichilema received 2,965,326 votes, while his closest rival, opposition leader Brian Mumbile, secured 1,856,217 votes, or about 38% of the total.

"I therefore declare, Hichilema Hakainde S, to be president-elect of the Republic of Zambia this 18th day of August, 2026," commission chairperson Mwangala Zaloumis said.

In a statement Tuesday, Hichilema welcomed the results and thanked Zambians for giving him another term. He also extended a message to those who supported the opposition.

"To those citizens who preferred the ideas presented by our opponents, we hear you, and we will continue to work for you to ensure that every Zambian benefits from the development we are delivering," he said.

There was no immediate reaction from Mumbile.

Hichilema's victory came after a closely watched election in which vote counting was suspended Friday and resumed several hours later under heightened security.

The commission said some polling station officials had been attacked and ballot papers stolen.

The government also confirmed that several prominent opposition figures were arrested on election night, with



police accusing them of posing a threat to state security.

Mumbile said police raided his home in what he described as an attempt on his life.

The election was widely viewed as a test of Hichilema's economic recovery efforts after Zambia, a copper-rich country, was plunged into a debt crisis in 2020.

Hichilema was first elected in 2021 and oversaw the restructuring of the country's sovereign debt while reducing inflation and helping stabilize the currency.

International observers, including the European Union, said the election was largely peaceful but noted that the wider electoral process took place in an environment that restricted fundamental freedoms.

"Late legal changes, legal uncertainty, and unequal campaign conditions distorted the playing field," said Michael McNamara, head of the EU election observation mission.

In a pastoral statement, the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops also raised concerns over the deployment of the army during the vote-counting process.

"The maintenance of order by the elections is constitutionally and statutorily the responsibility of the Zambia Police Service," the bishops said.



Shakira pledges to build schools in earthquake-hit Colombia during surprise visit

Entertainment Desk

Colombian superstar Shakira has pledged to help build at least 10 new schools in a remote and severely affected region of her home country following last week's devastating earthquake that killed hundreds of people and damaged thousands of educational facilities across western Colombia.

The globally acclaimed singer made the commitment Monday during a surprise visit to Quibdó, capital of the province of Chocó, where she toured damaged schools, hugged students and posed for photos with them. "What worries me the most is that schools are not rebuilt once this emergency is over," Shakira told reporters. "Every day that children don't go to school is a day they miss out on their future."

She was accompanied by Howard Buffett, son of billionaire philanthropist Warren Buffett and a long-time donor to Colombia who has previously helped Shakira establish schools in the country. The Howard G. Buffett Foundation will work with Shakira's Fundación Pies Descalzos, or Barefoot Foundation, on the project.

"When she calls, I come," Buffett said during the visit. Shakira also announced \$500,000 commitments from Global Citizen and Live Nation to support the initiative.

The magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck a large part of western Colombia on Aug. 10, killing at least 287 people and destroying more than 26,000 homes, according to authorities. The government has reported 194 people missing, while other civilian-run databases put the number at more than 4,100. The quake's epicenter was in

Chocó, one of Colombia's poorest regions. According to the latest report from the regional government Monday, at least 3,100 homes were destroyed and more than 265 educational facilities were affected.

"It's a place I love, a place where I've seen our students grow in our classrooms," Shakira said in a video posted on X by Colombian news outlet La FM. Her foundation, which works to improve educational access for young people in Colombia, has operated in Chocó for 22 years and runs two schools from which hundreds of students have graduated, she said. "I really want to see it rebuild again," she said.

Aid organizations have faced difficulties assessing the full extent of the damage in Chocó, an area roughly the size of Switzerland where communications are challenging. The province has limited road connections with the rest of Colombia, while many towns and villages are accessible mainly by rivers and unpaved roads.

About 600,000 people live in Chocó, most of them in poverty, according to figures released last year by Colombia's national government. The province is largely home to Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.

"There is not a way to alleviate the pain of so many, there are no magic solutions," Shakira said during a visit to a large high school in Quibdó.

"But what there is, is commitment to be here alongside those from Chocó, to not abandon El Chocó like it historically has been abandoned, until every Colombian and every person from Chocó can return to their normal lives like they deserve and all the children can return to their schools and dream of the futures

they deserve," she said.

The Grammy-winning singer, known for hits including "Whenever, Wherever" and "La Tortura," as well as the 2026 FIFA World Cup anthem "Dai Dai," has long supported education initiatives. She told reporters Monday that she planned to devote all her "personal efforts" to rebuilding a local technological university in Chocó.

Shakira, 49, has drawn significant attention to both her music and philanthropic causes. She headlined the halftime show at the 2026 FIFA World Cup final in July and performed in May at Brazil's Copacabana Beach before an estimated crowd of 2 million people.

Following Venezuela's twin earthquakes in June, Shakira announced that the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund would provide \$500,000 for education recovery efforts there. Her latest pledge is among several commitments by prominent Colombians and other Latin American artists to support earthquake relief efforts in Colombia and Venezuela. On Sunday, Marc Anthony and Chayanne joined dozens of other artists at a benefit concert and live fundraiser in Miami for the two countries.

Colombian singer Karol G pledged to match fan donations to her Con Cora Foundation during her three-night performances at SoFi Stadium near Los Angeles last weekend. She is also scheduled to join Maluma, Sebastián Yatra and others at a benefit concert in Bogotá on Sunday. The Colombian Football Federation and South American Football Confederation jointly pledged \$1 million last week to Colombian First Lady Ana Lucía Pineda's "Colombia, one heart" recovery fund.

Vaani Kapoor attracts attention in ethnic look

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood's glamorous actress Vaani Kapoor has not only won the hearts of her fans for her acting but also for her great fashion sense.

Recently, the actress took the internet by storm by being captured in a traditional ethnic look. Fans were mesmerised by her colorful and regal look in a gorgeous Kutch-embroidered suit designed by famous designer Mayur Girotra.

Vani shared some beautiful pictures of this royal outfit on her official Instagram handle.

She wrote in the caption, "Love for all things beautiful." The suit, selected from Mayur Girotra Couture's new collection, showcases traditional Indian textiles and art-work.

Vaani's long, straight-cut kurta featured exquisite 'Kutch work' and eye-catching applique embroidery. The dress was a beautiful combination of black, ivory, red, pink, blue, green and gold.

Every part of this kurta, decorated with various geometric motifs and floral designs, was worth seeing.



Popular US TV actress Hayden Panettiere dies at 36

Entertainment Desk

Popular American actress Hayden Panettiere has died. The actress, known for her roles in popular television series such as 'Heroes' and 'Nashville', was only 36 years old. Her death was announced in a statement by her family.

The cause of Hayden's death was not immediately known, Reuters reported on Monday. Hayden, who was nominated for a Grammy Award and two Golden Globes, said the matter was under investigation, his publicist Casey Kitchen said. Hayden, who began her career as a child artiste, voiced the young ant princess Dot in Pixar's animated film 'A Bug's Life' in 1998.

She also received a Grammy nomination for Best Spoken Word Album for Children for her work on the film's read-along album. Hayden rose to international fame in 2006 when she starred as Claire Bennett in the popular NBC series 'Heroes'. The role of a teenage cheerleader with superhuman powers brought her international stardom.

Shajal, Bhabna pair up for survival thriller 'Jajabor'

Entertainment Desk

Abdun Noor Shajal and Ashna Habib Bhabna are set to share the big screen for the first time in Tanvir Hasan's upcoming film titled 'Jajabor'.

The two actors formally signed on to the project last month, and filming is expected to begin towards the end of this month, according to director Tanvir Hasan.

Shajal and Bhabna have both worked in the entertainment industry for many years and have appeared together in several television dramas and tele-fictions. However, 'Jajabor' will mark their first collaboration in a feature film.

Describing the project, director Tanvir Hasan said, "Jajabor" is a survival thriller action film. Audiences will get to see a film packed with adventure and violence.

There will be suspense in almost every scene of the story. Shajal and Bhabna were finalised for the roles because the story demanded them.

They both really liked the story. I believe those who go to the theatres to watch the film will not be able to leave before the story ends."

He said the film is currently in pre-production, with discussions under way regarding the actors' schedules. "We are planning to begin shooting towards the end of this month. We have already started discussing schedules with the artistes.

The plan is to complete 80 to 90 per cent of the shooting continuously, then take a break before beginning the final portion," he stated.



Alongside directing, Tanvir Hasan has also written the story, dialogues and screenplay for 'Jajabor'. Actor Shajal said he was drawn to the film's story and was looking forward to working with Bhabna on a film for the first time.

He shared his feeling by this way, "I liked the story of the film. If we can execute it properly, I think the audience will like it too. Bhabna is a talented actress. This is the first time I am pairing up with her for a film. I hope something great will come out of it."

On the other hand, actress Bhabna also expressed enthusiasm about the collaboration.

She said, "Shajal Bhai is an experienced actor. It is a pleasure for me to work with him.

The story of the film is wonderful. I hope all of us together will be able to present the audience with a good film."

The cast also includes Fazlur Rahman Babu, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Evan Sair, Sadman Samir, Atika Afsana, Omar Malik, among others.

Sadie Sink's Jupiter is exalted

Entertainment Desk

'Stranger Things' star Sadie Sink's Jupiter is now at its peak. She is getting big movies in Hollywood after catching the attention through the famous Netflix series.

Ever since she was seen in the movie 'Spider-Man: Brand New Day' released last month, there was speculation among fans about her joining the 'X-Men' franchise. Finally, the official announcement has come. Marvel Studios has announced the names of several new actors for the new 'X-Men' reboot movie.

Sadie Sink is one of them. The 24-year-old American actress will play the role of Jean Grey. "It feels amazing. After months of speculation, I can finally talk about the character," Sadie Sink said at Disney's fan event D23 in Anaheim, California, last Friday.

The names of the actors who will play seven roles in the untitled new film, including Sadie Sink, were revealed. It will also star 'Star Wars' star Adam Driver. He joined the event via video link.

His character was then revealed. He will play the villain Nathaniel Milbury, also known as 'Mr Sinister'.

Driver told fans that he has been talking about the possibility of joining the Marvel Cinematic Universe for 'many years'. He feels he has finally found 'the right movie at the right time'. The film in the 'X-Men' franchise will be directed by Jake Schreier.

It is scheduled to be released in theatres in May 2028. Other actors announced for the new 'X-Men' movie include 'Heartstopper' star Kit Connor as Cyclops, Christopher Abbott as Professor Charles Xavier or Professor X, Samara Weaving as Emma Frost, Inde Navarrete as Rogue and Maya Boyd as Storm.



Rizia Parveen busy with stage shows in US thru Oct

Entertainment Desk

Rizia Parveen is a popular singer in Bangladesh. She is set to remain busy with a series of stage shows in the United States through October.

Rizia first travelled to the US to perform at a stage show in 1995. She received \$500 as her first payment there.

Since then, the singer has travelled to the US for stage performances almost every year.

She recently returned to the country and performed at an event in Ozone Park, New York, on August 9.

The singer is scheduled to perform at another event at Queens Palace in New York on August 23, alongside singers Kamruzzaman Babul and Trinia.

The event will be hosted by New York-based presenter Sonia.

On September 20, Rizia will perform at an event commemorating Maulana Bhashani.

She is also scheduled to perform at several other stage shows in September and October, keeping her schedule packed through the autumn. Meanwhile, Rizia will celebrate her birthday on August 20. Several small events are also being organised in New York to mark the occasion. Rizia Parveen has remained a familiar name to



Bangladeshi music audiences for decades.

Some of her popular songs include 'Tumi Amar Chand Ami Chanderi Alo', 'Premer Name Mithye Bolo Na', 'Sobar Jibone Prem Ashe', 'Akashete Lokkho Tara' and 'Tumi Sokha Amar Bondhu Lago'.

Speaking about her long association with the US and her performances there, Rizia Parveen told this correspondent, "I have been travelling to the United States, particularly New York, for more than 30 years.

Whenever I come here, I get opportunities to perform at several events. I try to represent my country and my language through music.

Since I am here around my birthday this year, a few

events are also being organised to mark it. I am always grateful to my fans and listeners.

Their love continues to inspire me, allowing me to move forward in the world of music without interruption. I seek everyone's prayers." Rizia's father, Abdul Hasid, died in 1985, while her mother, Ruma Hasid, passed away in 1997. She remains in regular contact with her close friends Nancy, Jesmin, Shirin and Chayna. The singer is scheduled to return to Bangladesh on November 5.



India extend lead to 294 in first Sri Lanka Test



Sports Desk

India tightened their grip on the first Test against Sri Lanka, reaching 116-4 at lunch to extend their lead to 294 runs on day four in Galle on Tuesday.

With six wickets in hand on a pitch increasingly assisting spin with turn and bounce, the tourists are strongly placed to force a result and take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series. At lunch Rishabh Pant was batting on 21 off 22 balls with a four and six,

wicket. Dinesh Chandimal hurt himself while fielding when his head hit the ground. He was examined by the physiotherapist before being taken to hospital for precautionary scans.

Lamour leaves key FIFA position after criticising Infantino

Sports Desk

Frenchman Kevin Lamour has left his role as FIFA's chief operating officer after criticising president Gianni Infantino's scrapped private investor plan, world football's governing body confirmed Monday. Lamour was the third highest-ranking FIFA official. "FIFA can confirm that the working relationship between FIFA and Kevin Lamour as FIFA's chief operating officer has ended on August 17, 2026," a FIFA spokesperson told AFP, confirming a report in The Athletic. "FIFA thanks Kevin for his two years of service and wishes him the best of luck for the future." A former employee of European governing body UEFA, Lamour had served as FIFA COO since November 2024. He was one of the highest-ranking FIFA figures to speak out against Infantino's proposal to sell stakes in competitions, including the World Cup, to private investors. Lamour described the plan as "the project of one person". "The time has now come for football political leaders to ask themselves the right questions and make the right decisions," he said in a statement sent to the Associated Press (AP) and published on July 31.



"If that means I lose my job, then so be it," he added. "I will understand and respect that decision. At least I'll sleep well tonight." Secretary general Mattias Grafstrom, considered Infantino's number two, and chief of global football development Arsene Wenger both later welcomed the decision to ditch the proposal. Former Arsenal manager Wenger said it was "absolutely necessary" to scrap it. The controversy has left Infantino's position under threat for the first time since he was first elected in 2016. European football's governing body UEFA, North and Central America's CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation released a joint letter earlier this month declaring "football belongs to no individual".

Boehly and Walter consider selling Chelsea stake to Clearlake Capital

Sports Desk

Chelsea chairman Todd Boehly and director Mark Walter are considering selling their stakes in the Premier League side to the club's majority owner Clearlake Capital, according to reports on Monday. American billionaires Boehly and Walter were two of the investors who partnered with Clearlake to buy Chelsea from Roman Abramovich for £2.5 billion (\$3.3 billion) in May 2022. Private equity company Clearlake currently owns 62 percent of Chelsea, with Boehly and Walter holding the remaining shares with fellow investor Hansjorg Wyss. Boehly, Walter and Wyss control 38 percent through Blueco Holdings. Boehly has reportedly been dissatisfied with the direction of Chelsea, notably regarding recruitment, managers and a potential new stadium plan. There have been reports that Boehly and Clearlake had attempted to buy each other out of Chelsea several times over the last two years. Boehly and Walter reportedly believe Chelsea are worth £5 billion if they do sell their stake.

Zverev advances at Cincinnati while Williams sisters fall

Sports Desk

Top seed Alexander Zverev battled into the fourth round of the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters on Monday while Serena and Venus Williams lost in their first doubles match together in four years. German star Zverev, who won Roland Garros and finished Wimbledon runner-up this year, won his ATP season-best 46th match of the campaign by defeating Terrance Atmane 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (8/6). Zverev finished off the Frenchman, a 2025 Cincinnati semi-finalist, with a sizzling backhand down the line. "He was playing incredibly aggressively, hitting forehands all over the court," said Zverev. "He made it difficult for you to play aggressive yourself."



The Williams sisters, with 14 Grand Slam titles and three Olympic gold medals together, were side-by-side for the first time since the 2022 US Open but lost to American Payton Stearns and Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine 6-2, 1-6, 10-8. "It was fun and special. We kicked off a little rust," Serena Williams said. "I didn't come here to win this tournament. It's about having fun and I did want to do the best I could." The siblings each lost serve once in the first set and lost six of the final seven games, but dominated the second set and rallied from 8-2 down in the 10-point tie-breaker third set only to fall on a Venus double fault. "It was weird to be in a full stadium. This is not my usual Monday night," said Serena, who noted the reunion is a limited-time attraction. "This is not forever. It's... not long," she said. "We don't have to play every week. It's a bit different." Men's fifth seed Alex de Minaur battled through multiple rain interruptions to defeat Arthur Fery 7-5, 7-6 (7/3). The Australian was up a set and 5-1 after a 30-minute stoppage before Wimbledon semi-finalist Fery caught fire, but he took the tie-break to advance despite 29 unforced errors. "You never want to go into a rain delay leading 5-1," he said. "It was a tough day with all the interruptions. I can't remember a match that started and stopped so many times. I'm happy with how I found a way." He next faces France's Arthur Fils, who dumped Czech ninth seed Jiri Lehecka 6-1, 6-7 (7/9), 6-3. Spanish teen Rafael Jodar dominated Alejandro Tabilo of Chile 6-2, 6-1 and next faces Roland Garros finalist Flavio Cobolli. The Italian rallied from a break down in the third set to beat Alexander Blockx 7-5, 4-6, 7-5. "A Masters 1000 is something I dreamed of as a kid," 12th-seeded Jodar said. "I'm grateful for the position I'm in now." Argentine Thiago Tirante, who ousted Novak Djokovic in the second round, defeated Spain's Martin Landaluce 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4). - 'A crazy day' - Two-time Grand Slam champion Elena Rybakina shook off two one-hour rain stoppages to beat Magdalena Frech 6-4, 7-6 (7/2). "It was a crazy day, to be honest, coming out every time into clouds and humidity," Rybakina said. "I was on top of the ball in the tie-break but it was a difficult one. "I had the opportunities on the three match points but when you are tired it's difficult to keep concentration." There were also wins for Iga Swiatek and tournament number three Jessica Pegula. Former world number one and defending champion Swiatek was done hours before the poor weather, turning the tables after losing the first set in defeating Maria Sakkari 4-6, 6-1, 6-1. Pegula, a 2024 finalist, dispatched US compatriot Emma Navarro 7-5, 6-2, ending with an ace.

Australian cricketer Warner ordered to use breathalyser vehicle lock

Sports Desk

Australian cricket great David Warner was fined and ordered to use a vehicle breathalyser lock Tuesday after admitting to drink driving. Warner, a world-renowned former opening batsman for Australia, pleaded guilty last month to a "middle range" drink-driving offence. The 39-year-old was accused of stopping short of a random testing site while driving a van in April, before being breath-tested, arrested and taken to a police station. Judge Clare Farnan formally convicted Warner of the crime and fined him Aus\$1,500, according to a court record of the sentencing at Sydney's Waverley Local Court.

Racist abuse spurred Suzuki as Japan goalkeeper set for Premier League

Sports Desk

Zion Suzuki has had to overcome costly mistakes and racist abuse on the way to becoming the most expensive Japanese goalkeeper in history. The 23-year-old will be the first Japanese goalkeeper in Premier League history when he seals his move to Aston Villa from Italian team Parma for up to 35 million euros (\$40 million). Suzuki, who was previously linked with Manchester United, was born in New Jersey to a Ghanaian father and Japanese mother and moved to Japan at a young age. After coming through Japanese football he moved to Belgium then Italy and has already won 28 caps for his country. Suzuki, who appeared set to join Champions League winners Paris Saint-Germain before Villa came calling, believes he has the tools to make it in the Premier League. "Of course big saves are important but above all I want to become a goalkeeper who brings stability to the team," Suzuki told FIFA's website ahead of the World Cup, where he played a central role in Japan reaching the last 32. "Doing the simple things well consistently. Playing with the determination not to concede." Suzuki rose through the ranks at J. League side Urawa Reds and made his international debut after only a handful of appearances for his club. He moved to Belgian side Sint-Truiden in 2023 despite reported interest from United, reasoning that he wanted to get more experience as a first choice. He was handed Japan's number one jersey for the Asian Cup in January 2024 but turned in a series of blundering performances before they were eliminated in the quarter-

finals. The young stopper suffered online racial abuse after a group-stage defeat to Iraq. Suzuki said of the abuse: "I'm not about to let it beat me. "I want to come back at them by producing good results." - Mental strength - Suzuki continued as Japan's number one after the Asian Cup and gradually built up his reputation. He moved to Parma in 2024 to become the first Japanese goalkeeper to play in Italy's Serie A. His team-mates called him "animale" because of his muscular 6ft 3ins frame. Suzuki broke his hand in late 2025 but returned in time for this summer's World Cup and excelled as Japan progressed from a group that also included the Netherlands, Tunisia and Sweden. He again impressed against Brazil in the last 32 but could not prevent his team from going out 2-1 after conceding a 95th-minute winner to Gabriel Martinelli. His imminent transfer to Villa means he will become only the second Japanese goalkeeper to play in English professional football, following Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi's short stint with second-tier Portsmouth in the early 2000s. Suzuki, whose first language is Japanese but speaks English, says he learnt from his early shortcomings. "At the beginning I made a series of mistakes and showed my inexperience as Japan's first-choice goalkeeper," he told FIFA's website. "Now I feel I can bring a sense of stability to the team through my mentality." Speaking as his reputation grew in Serie A, Suzuki said his aim was to be the best goalkeeper in the world. "I want to be the best both as an individual and as a team, winning titles like the Champions League and World Cup," he said.



England begin life after Bazball against Pakistan

Sports Desk

An under-pressure England head into their first Test since the exits of Bazball architects Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum when they face Pakistan at Headingley in a match starting Wednesday. Then captain Stokes dramatically announced his retirement from international cricket during the third Test against New Zealand at Trent Bridge in June, the all-rounder bowing out after a comprehensive 160-run defeat. McCullum was sacked as England's Test coach following the team's seventh red-ball loss in nine matches, although he remains in charge of the white-ball sides. England's devotion to their ultra-aggressive approach under McCullum and Stokes produced several thrilling wins but no series victories over powerhouses India and Australia. It also left them open to accusations of putting style above substance. England fans' frustration at a 4-1 Ashes series thumping Down Under in 2025/26 was compounded by the way Bangladesh inflicted a shock nine-wicket defeat of a full-strength Australia in Darwin last weekend. Joe Root, who begins his second stint as full-time captain having been Stokes's predecessor as skipper, said he would not "rip up" the playbook but look to "tweak" the team's approach. Root was reappointed when England decided against having white-ball captain Harry Brook lead the country in all three international formats. New Test coach Stephen Fleming -- like McCullum a former New Zealand captain -- will not take over until the tour of South Africa later this year. - 'Pair not the end of the world' - Stokes's place has been taken by recalled batsman Dan Lawrence, with Jordan Cox coming in for the injured Jacob Bethell at number three. Cox hopes advice he received from India batting great



Virat Kohli, his team-mate at IPL side Royal Challengers Bengaluru, will keep him on an even keel. "I could get a pair, but that's not the end of the world," Cox, who made his Test debut against New Zealand as a number seven in June, told the BBC. "I remember talking to Virat about it. He said, 'there are billions of people who don't even know who I am. The sun will come in the morning'." He added: "I'll keep (his advice in mind) forever... He's someone that I'll text if I'm ever feeling down or need a bit of help." Pakistan arrived at Headingley following a seven-wicket win in a three-day warm-up match where England opener Emilio Gay did bag a pair after being dismissed for nought in both innings. They have fitness doubts over captain Babar Azam, with the batsman battling to overcome a finger injury. It is 30 years since Pakistan last enjoyed a triumphant Test campaign in England but they managed a series-leveling win in the second Test against the West Indies in Trinidad earlier this month. Pakistan also have several players experienced in English conditions, notably 36-year-old seamer Mohammad Abbas -- the kind of 77-mph (124 kmh) bowler whose worth at elite level was often questioned by England's former management group. The skilled Abbas has taken 118 Test wickets at 22.38 -- a lower average than Pakistan fast-bowling greats Imran Khan, Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis -- and has also enjoyed several successful stints with English counties. "We won the last game against the West Indies, we played really good cricket and we will try to win this series," Abbas said Monday of a Pakistan side seventh in the Test rankings compared to England's fifth place. "I have played here (England) in the last 10 years so I have experience to play in hot weather, cold weather, different conditions. I will try my best to add something special for my country."

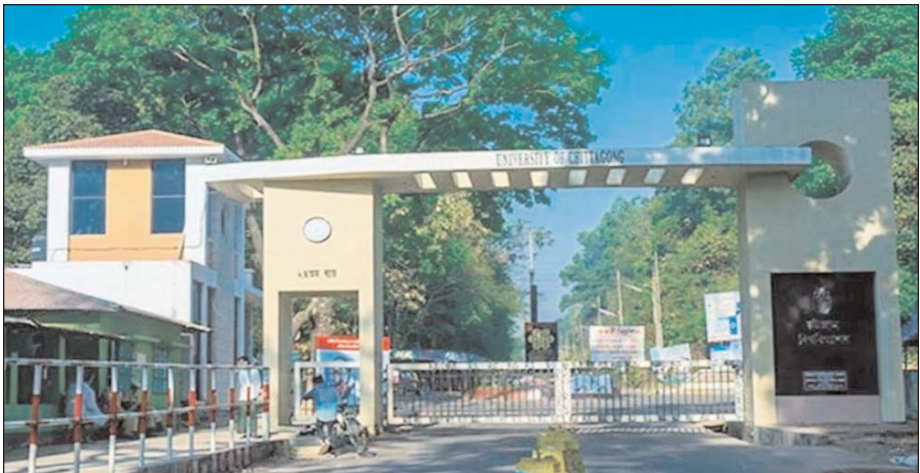


Drinkwell holds meeting with RCC Administrator over installation of Water ATM booths

Staff correspondent

Minhaj Chowdhury, Chief Executive Officer of Drinkwell, held a view- exchange meeting with Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) Administrator Mahfuzur Rahman Riton regarding the installation and operation of Water ATM booths at various important locations in Rajshahi city. The meeting was held today at the office of the RCC Administrator at Nagar Bhaban. Fruitful discussions were held on the installation of Water ATM booths in different places in Rajshahi city. Various issues including selection of potential locations,

installation and operation of booths were discussed to ensure easy, safe and pure drinking water for the city dwellers. At that time, Managing Director of Drinkwell Imtiaz Mohsin, Head of Engineering Department Abdus Sattar, Assistant Manager Aminul Islam and Rajshahi Project Coordinator Mizanur Rahman were present. On behalf of RCC, Secretary Sohail Rana and Chief Conservancy Officer Sheikh Md. Mamun was present. During the meeting, RCC Administrator Mahfuzur Rahman Riton said if the initiative to set up Water ATM booths at various places in the city is implemented, the city dwellers will get the opportunity to get pure water easily and at an affordable price.



From residential halls to TSC: new plan in Tk 727 crore CU projects

Staff correspondent

Two major projects worth around Tk 727 crore have been proposed under the 50-year master plan of the Chittagong University (CU) to enhance its academic, residential, infrastructural and research capacities. Of the two, the Tk 678.14 crore project titled "Chittagong University Academic and Infrastructure Development and Research Capacity Enhancement Project" is currently under consideration by the Ministry of Education. The other, a Tk 49.34 crore project titled "Establishment of Teacher-Students Complex (TSC) at Chittagong University," is now with the National Planning Commission. Acting Director of the university's Planning and Development Office Md. Altaf-ul-Alam came up with the development. A review of the proposed Annual Development Programme (ADP) document for fiscal year (FY) 2026-27, published by the Planning and Development Office at the university's 36th Senate session held on August 8, showed that the total proposed cost of the two projects is Tk 727 crore 48 lakh 21 thousand. Under the proposed Tk 678 crore 14 lakh 54 thousand project titled "Chittagong University Academic and Infrastructure Development and Research Capacity Enhancement Project," targets have been set to develop academic buildings, research infrastructure, residential facilities and basic infrastructure on the campus. New academic build-

ings account for much of the project's largest expenditures. A proposed around Tk 137.55 crore has been estimated for construction of the Second Faculty of Science Building and Faculty of Engineering Building. The same amount, around Tk 137.55 crore has been proposed for the Second Faculty of Social Sciences Building. Around Tk 83.57 crore has been proposed for construction of the Second Faculty of Business Administration Building. Besides, around Tk 91.42 crore has been proposed for construction of a ten-storey residential hall for female students, around Tk 36.55 crore for a ten-storey administrative (annex) and Senate building and around Tk 8.98 crore for a five-storey residential building for female hall provosts and house tutors. In addition, around Tk 2.85 crore has been earmarked for the upward expansion of Masterda Surya Sen Hall by two floors. There is also significant investment to enhance research capacity. A nine-storey Center for Excellence building has been proposed at a cost of around Tk 49.30 crore, while a five-storey Center for Scientific and Advanced Biological Research building has been proposed at a cost of around Tk 15.63 crore. Besides, Tk 12 crore has been proposed for purchasing laboratory equipment and Tk 10 crore for procuring chemicals. Another around Tk 2.38 crore has been estimated for construction of an animal house for the Faculty of Biological Sciences. Alongside academic buildings.



3 Arrested with Yaba Tablets and Locally Made Liquor in Jorarganj

Jwel Nag, Mirsarai Correspondent

Police in Jorarganj, Mirsharai, Chattogram, have arrested three people in separate operations and recovered 150 yaba tablets and 5 liters of locally made liquor. According to police, two people—Omar Faruk (24) and Saiful Islam (28)—were arrested with 150 yaba tablets from the Jamalpur Khalpar area of Ward No. 5, Baraiyarahat Municipality, at around 10:45 pm on August 16. In a separate operation, police arrested Abdul Jalil (60) from the North Sonapahar area of Jorarganj Union at around 9:30 pm the same day. Five liters of locally made liquor were recovered from his possession, police said. The arrested individuals have been sent to court, according to police.

From hobby to livelihood: Patuakhali youth makes over Tk 100,000 a month from ornamental fish

Staff correspondent

Rows of plastic bottles and glass jars filled with vividly coloured fish line the courtyard of a home in Patuakhali town, creating an unusual sight in the neighbourhood. Red, blue, yellow and multicoloured bettas, mollies, guppies and swordtails dart through the water. Behind the colourful display is a young entrepreneur whose hobby has grown into a thriving business earning him more than Tk 100,000 a month. Meherab Emon started breeding ornamental fish in 2021, shortly after completing his studies. What began as a personal interest soon became a commercial venture, despite a difficult start in which most of his first fish died. Nowadays, his home-based farm in Kalatala area of Patuakhali municipality houses thousands of ornamental fish of different varieties. Emon's interest began during a visit to his sister's home in Dhaka, where he saw betta fish in different colours. Fascinated by them, he borrowed money from friends to buy his first five pairs and began breeding them. But the venture almost failed at the beginning. With little knowledge of fish care, Emon lost most of his initial stock. Instead of giving up, he turned to online videos and other sources to learn about water quality, feeding, temperature control and breeding. He then began conducting his own experiments. "At first, I knew very little about fish farming. I started with five pairs simply as a hobby, but many of the fish died," Emon said. "I realised that keeping fish is not just about buying them.

Foundation stone laid for Jamalganj-Dharmapasha flyover in Sunamganj

Staff correspondent

The foundation stone of over 11-km Jamalganj-Dharmapasha flyover was laid today in Jamalganj upazila of the district under the "Haor Area Elevated Road and Physical Infrastructure Improvement Project (HAERIIP)", aimed at transforming connectivity and strengthening rural infrastructure in the haor region. Lawmaker of Sunamganj-1 (Tahirpur-Jamalganj-Dharmapasha-Madhyanagar) constituency Kamaruzzaman Kamrul laid the foundation stone of the flyover as the chief guest at a ceremony held at Sachna Bazar High School playground. Speaking at the event, Kamrul said the bridge would play an important role in improving the lives of haor residents and developing the region's communication network.



Quiz competition in Fakirhat

S A Kalam, Fakirhat, Bagerhat

In Fakirhat Upazila of Bagerhat, as part of National Fisheries Party celebrations, students' quiz competition on fisheries was held. At the end of the competition, its evaluation and prizes are distributed to the winners. Prizes were distributed at the end of the quiz competition at Attaka Keramat Ali Pilot Secondary School auditorium on Tuesday (August 16) at 12 noon under the initiative of Upazila National Fisheries Party Celebration Committee. Senior upazila fisheries officer Sheikh Asadullah, upazila agriculture officer agriculturist Sheikh Sakawat Hossain, head teacher

of the school (in charge) Suranjit Kumar Halder, assistant teacher Khairul Basar Jewel, Prashant Bepari, Sabuj Kumar Das, Prabash Biswas and teachers and students of various educational institutions were present. Students of various secondary schools of the upazila participated in the quiz competition. Shwetav Kar, a class 10 student of Mulghar Government High School, got the first position, Arif Mahmood, a class 8 student of Attaka Keramat Ali Pilot Secondary School, and Shayla Alam, a class 9 student of Naldha Secondary School, got the third position. Speakers in the event said that meeting the needs of people for animal meat, creating employment and income



Trader fined Tk 30,000 for illegal fertilizer hoarding in Puthia

Staff correspondent

A mobile court today fined a fertilizer trader Tk 30,000 for illegally hoarding fertilizer at Dhopapara Bazar in Puthia upazila of Rajshahi. The mobile court, led by Assistant Commissioner (Land) and Executive Magistrate Shib Das, also seized 34 sacks of TSP and eight sacks of DAP fertilizer that had been illegally stockpiled. Shib Das said the seized fertilizer was later sold to local farmers at government-fixed prices. Farmers and traders present during the drive said illegal hoarding creates artificial shortages and forces farmers to buy fertilizer at higher prices. They called for regular drives to curb such practices and ensure fair prices. Local farmer Rafiqul Islam said regular monitoring was needed to prevent hoarding and artificial crises in the fertilizer market. Another trader said such drives help maintain market transparency, protect legitimate businesses and ensure that farmers can purchase fertilizer at fair prices. Shib Das said drives against illegal hoarding and other irregularities would continue to protect farmers' interests and maintain discipline in the fertilizer market.

3 youth sentenced to life imprisonment for raping school girl in Bowlmari



Bioplak Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

The court has sentenced three youths to life imprisonment for raping a class IX schoolgirl in Faridpur's Bowlmari. At the same time each has been ordered to pay a fine of one lakh taka, in default of which one more year of rigorous imprisonment has been ordered. The tribunal directed the District Collector to pay the recovered fine to the victim's family. On Tuesday afternoon Faridpur women and children torture suppression tribunal judge (district and session judge). Abul Bashir

a case was filed on behalf of the victim at Boalmari police station, after the investigation, the police filed a charge sheet against the accused in the court. After reviewing the evidence and documents presented by the state party, the court ruled that the allegations were proven beyond doubt. Prosecution Counsel (PP) Advocate Golam Rabbani Ratan confirmed the verdict and said that the prosecution has successfully proved the crime against the accused and the court has awarded appropriate punishment.

RpMP files 59 cases, seizes 65 auto-rickshaws in Rangpur

Staff correspondent

Rangpur Metropolitan Police (RpMP) filed 59 cases and seized illegal 65 auto-rickshaws in special drives conducted today to relieve traffic congestion and ensure safe movement of the public across the city. The special drive was conducted under the direction of RpMP Commissioner Mohammad Abdul Mabud to relieve traffic congestion, maintain order on the roads and control the movement of illegal auto-rickshaws in the metropolis, said a press release. Special check post drives were conducted on

important roads and points of the city under the leadership of Deputy Police Commissioner (Traffic) Maruf Ahmed, and legal action was taken against auto-rickshaws violating traffic laws and illegally plying. As many as 59 cases were filed, 65 auto-rickshaws were seized and 23 auto-rickshaws were wrecked in the drives.

Regular drives will continue against illegal auto-rickshaws and traffic violators to restore order on the roads of Rangpur metropolitan, control traffic congestion and ensure safe and smooth movement of the public, the release added.

Bhanga lost control of motorcycle and hit the railing: 1 killed, 1 injured

Bioplak Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

A youth named Nafiz Sheikh (18) was killed when he lost control of his motorcycle and hit the road railing in Bonga, Faridpur. Another rider named Suman Sheikh (19) was seriously injured in this incident.

The accident took place on Tuesday (August 18) afternoon at the Bhanga Bishwaroad roundabout on the Bhanga-Mawa-Dhaka Expressway.

The deceased Nafiz Sheikh is the son of Jahangir Sheikh of Hazrakanda village of Gharua Union of Bhanga Upazila and the injured Suman Sheikh is the son of Delwar Sheikh of the same village.

Police and eyewitnesses said that Nafiz and Suman were going towards Maligram on a motorcycle in the opposite direction from Bishwa Road Roundabout. While overtaking an autorickshaw on the way, he lost control of the motorcycle and hit the roadside railing hard. The two riders on the motorcycle were seriously injured.

On receiving the news, Bhanga Highway Police Station and local residents rescued them and took them to Bhanga Upazila Health Complex. The doctor on duty there declared Nafiz Sheikh dead. On the other hand, when the condition of seriously injured Suman Sheikh deteriorated, he was sent to Dhaka for better treatment.

Bhanga Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Dr. Sohag Mia confirmed the death in a road accident.



Rajshahi District Police holds tree plantation drive

Staff correspondent

Rajshahi District Police today launched a tree plantation program and distributed free saplings among students as part of efforts to protect the environment, maintain ecological balance and build a greener Bangladesh. The program was held at the drill shed of Rajshahi Police Lines as part of a nationwide initiative to plant 25 crore trees over the next five years. DIG of Rajshahi Range Ashik Sayeed attended the event as the chief guest, while Superintendent of Police of Rajshahi District Mohammad Naimul Hasan presided over and coordinated the program. Speaking at the event, Ashik Sayeed said tree plantation is essential to mitigate the impacts of climate change and protect the environment. He called upon people from all walks of life to come forward from their respective positions to plant and nurture trees to ensure a green and livable environment. Saplings of various species were distributed among students of Shaheed Mamun Mahmud Police Line School and College. Later, DIG Ashik Sayeed, his wife and Adviser of Police Women Welfare Association (PUNAK) Rajshahi Range Shamim Ara Haque, SP Mohammad Naimul Hasan, his wife and President of District PUNAK Taposi Rabeya planted saplings on the Police Lines premises. Additional Superintendents of Police Shariful Islam.