



ECNEC clears 10 projects involving Tk 9,333cr

Staff correspondent

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on Wednesday approved 10 projects involving a total cost of Tk 9,333.58 crore. These included six new and four revised projects. Of the total project cost, Tk 8,488.71 crore will come from the government's own funds, while Tk 936.36 crore will be financed through project loans. The approval came at an

ECNEC meeting held at the NEC Conference Room at the Planning Commission with Prime Minister and ECNEC Chairperson Tarique Rahman in the chair. The approved projects include two under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. These are the replacement and reconstruction of unusable structures at Dhaka Medical College and construction of 19 modern hostel buildings for students of 10 medical colleges. The Roads and Highways

Department's project titled "Capacity Development for Smart Maintenance Technology of Bridges under Roads and Highways Department in Bangladesh" was also approved. Two projects under the Ministry of Water Resources involve protecting Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila from erosion along the right bank of the Dharla River and strengthening the coastal embankment at Bashbaria ferry ghat in Sitakunda, Chattogram, and the stretch from

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Faqir Mahbub urges mobile operators to improve telecom services

Staff correspondent

Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam today urged mobile operators to address public complaints about call drops and package-related issues while ensuring better telecom services for customers. "Another complaint I constantly receive, and our adviser also receives, is about call drops. There is also talk about packages. . .," he said.

Faqir Mahbub Anam, who is also the Science and Technology Minister, made the remarks as the chief guest at the "Powering the Future: Robi Completes Dhaka Modernisation" event at Robi Corporate Office. Prime Minister's Adviser on the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology

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DIG Abdul Kuddus Chowdhury at Feni District Police Master Parade: Stresses Uncompromising Professionalism and Discipline



Jahangir Alam, ?Staff Reporter.

Chittagong Range Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Abdul Kuddus Chowdhury, PPM, inspected the annual Master Parade and central armory of the Feni District Police, emphasizing professional competence, physical fitness, and discipline among force members. On Wednesday morning (August 19, 2026), he attended the event as the chief guest at the Feni Police Lines ground and received the ceremonial salute. During the parade inspection, the DIG evaluated the drill, physical endurance, turn-out, and adherence to dress codes across all ranks of participating officers and personnel. Expressing satisfac-

tion with the overall performance, he awarded 'Good Service' (GS) marks to the top-performing police personnel. Addressing the force after the parade, DIG Abdul Kuddus Chowdhury said, "Mental toughness, physical fitness, and discipline are the cornerstones of field-level policing. Daily PT and parades are not mere routine exercises; they enhance professional capabilities and ensure peak readiness to tackle any challenge." He urged all members to perform their duties with dedication while maintaining high professional standards under all circumstances. Following the parade, the Range DIG physically inspected the district police's central armory. He instructed officials to strictly maintain scientific management, routine servicing, and maximum security for the stored weaponry and modern riot-control equipment. Feni Superintendent of Police (SP) Protyush Kumar Majumder, alongside senior officials and police personnel of various ranks, was present at the event.

About suspended bank account information, Instructions to inform BFIU

Special correspondent

If the BFIU orders to suspend or freeze a bank account due to money laundering or any crime, the current status of that account and other related information must be immediately informed to the agency. The financial intelligence agency Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) has issued new instructions in this regard to all banks, financial institutions, and reporting agencies in the country. On Wednesday (August 19), a circular (Circular Letter No. 5)



signed by BFIU Director AKM Golam Mahmud was sent to the managing directors and chief executive officers of all reporting agencies in the country. The circular states that if the BFIU orders to suspend an account as per Rule 26(4) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Rules, 2019, the reporting agency concerned must immediately

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Fakhrul expresses condolence over the death of Shayrul Kabir's sister

Staff correspondent

Sheuli Khanam had been admitted to the hospital on August 15 after a massive brain stroke. She is survived by her husband, children, parents, brother, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchildren and a large number of relatives and well-wishers. Shayrul Kabir Khan has asked everyone to pray for the eternal peace of his sister's departed soul. Meanwhile, BNP Presidential candidate and former Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of Sheuli Khanam. In a condolence message issued today, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said the deceased was respected by her neighbours as a benevolent and religious woman. "I, too, am deeply grieved and saddened by the death of Sheuli Khanam, like her neighbours, family members and relatives. I pray to the Almighty Allah to grant the deceased Sheuli Khanam a place in Jannatul Ferdous," he said. Mirza Fakhrul prayed for the eternal peace

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Law Minister calls for Bar Council reforms to uplift legal profession

Staff correspondent

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Md. Asaduzzaman today called for reforming the Bangladesh Bar Council to make the legal profession more attractive to the next generation by enhancing lawyers' skills, training and professional standards. He made the call while speaking as the chief guest at the inauguration of a new sub-branch of Dhaka Bank at the Bangladesh Bar Council building in Ramna this evening. He said lawyers, like professionals in other fields, need institutional training and that an initiative has been taken to allocate Tk 50 crore this year for their training, which may be increased gradually. "After receiving a certificate, a lawyer mainly gains experience by working with a senior. Alongside this experience, an effective training

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Padma Barrage plan to be made operational by early next year: Anee

Staff correspondent

Water Resources Minister Md. Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anee today pledged to make the Padma Barrage plan operational and visible by January-February next year, saying the interests of seven crore people in 24 to 26 districts are closely linked to the project. He also expressed hope that Prime Minister would present a strong statement in favour of Bangladesh on the Ganges Water Treaty at the United Nations next month. The minister made the remarks while addressing a seminar titled "Ganges Water Treaty: Issues for Renegotiation" as the chief guest at the Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) auditorium in Dhanmondi. Referring to recommendations made at the seminar, Anee stressed the need to establish the right to information in all future water-sharing treaties and revive the "guaran-

tee clause" scrapped in the 1977 treaty. State Minister for Water Resources Forhad Hossain Azad also spoke as the special guest. He highlighted the lack of navigability of the country's 54 rivers and called for greater awareness to ensure Bangladesh's future water security. Former adviser to the Interim Government and Dhaka University Law Professor Asif Nazrul presented the keynote paper, "Ganges Treaty: New Thinking Needed". BILIA Honorary Director and Dhaka University Law Professor Muhammad Ekramul Haque delivered the welcome address.

Prof. Dr. M. Feroze Ahmed, Emeritus Professor of Stamford University Bangladesh and former BUET professor, participated as discussant. He stressed reviewing Bangladesh's sector-wise water requirements under Integrated Water Resource Management

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Government Canal in Rajapur Encroached to Build a Building

Rajapur (Jhalokathi) Correspondent

In Rajapur, Jhalokathi, allegations have been raised that a multi-storied building is being constructed by encroaching on government canal land. Despite being ordered to stop construction multiple times, the work is allegedly continuing, sparking anger among locals. The allegation surrounds a building under construction on the north side of the bridge adjacent to the Kacha Bazar in the upazila headquarters, in Mathbari Union. The owner is Md. Abul Kalam Azad, son of late Muzaffar Hawladar. He currently resides in the Bagri Mridha Bari area. Locals allege that during construction, the administration surveyed the land and identified that a portion on the south side of the building falls on government land. Later, they were ordered to cut off that portion of the balcony and demolish the roof to vacate the government land. However, it is further alleged that later the balcony was extended again onto the government canal land, flooring was cast, stairs were built connecting to the bridge, and fencing was put up. Locals also claim that recently the cut-off balcony rods were welded back together under the cover of night and concrete was poured again. Local resident Md. Shahidul Islam said, The matter should be properly

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Nationwide first time vessel census to begin Today

Staff correspondent

The nationwide data collection for the country's first-ever Vessel Census 2026 will officially begin tomorrow under a project titled "Creation of Vessel Database and Capacity Building in Vessel Management," being implemented by the Department of Shipping under the Ministry of Shipping. The initiative has been taken to make the country's shipping sector safer, more orderly, modern and data-driven. The Department of Shipping and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) will jointly conduct the census to collect updated information on all engine-powered vessels operating in the country's maritime, coastal and inland waters and to create an integrated database. The nationwide vessel census will be conducted from August 20 to 29, 2026. Through the census, information on the number, types, ownership and

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Govt may need up to 2 years to overcome energy crisis: State Minister Saki

Staff correspondent

The government may need one and a half to two years to overcome the existing energy crisis and make the fuel and power sector suitable for supporting the country's productive economy, State Minister for Planning Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki said on Wednesday. "The energy sector is one of the most important areas. We cannot move forward without resolving its problems," he told reporters after an ECNEC meeting. He said the government is working to increase emergency oil reserves from the current one and a half months to three months, with plans to establish another storage unit to eventually raise the reserve to six months. He said the government is also exploring new sources in

different countries to meet the immediate fuel requirement through imports. However, importing gas alone would not solve the problem, as LNG receiving and conversion facilities are also required, he said, adding that setting up such infrastructure would take time. "So, people will have to give us the minimum time required to implement these projects," the state minister said expressing hope that people would understand the need for the transition period. He described the power and energy sector as a major challenge, saying it was made heavily import-dependent and became an area of widespread irregularities. The state minister said the recent power and gas crisis was partly caused

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Five new children's hospitals to begin operations by October: Muhit

Staff Correspondent

Five full-fledged children's hospitals will begin operations in five divisions of the country by October, State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr MA Muhit said today. "By October, five newly constructed full-fledged children's hospitals in five divisional and district cities across the country will formally begin providing medical services," he said. He made the remarks while addressing a workshop on "Measles Spread and Genetic Surveillance" and a research grant award ceremony at Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. The hospital's Department of Epidemiology and Research and icddr jointly organized the event, where the findings of research on the issue were presented. Dr Muhit said every 50-bed Upazila Health Complex

in the country is being upgraded to 150 beds to strengthen healthcare services at the grassroots level. At the upazila level, four core areas—pediatrics, medicine, surgery and gynecology—will receive the highest priority, he added. He said the current epidemic was the result of the immunity gap created by the failure to take timely initiatives and policy negligence during the 2024 vaccination campaign. "The surge in deaths cannot be stopped by installing a thousand ventilators or ICU beds. Prevention and vaccination are the only solution," he added, saying there is no scope for unrealistic assurances, he said even if the pace of vaccination is increased by 100 percent, it would take another two to three months to bring the outbreak under full control. However, efforts are underway to reduce child deaths through maximum treatment and

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HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS

Acting Editor



Md. Neyamul Hossain
Acting Editor

THE Daily Bangla @ Sky Newspaper
Appointing healthy with the fitness with e agents
rapid beto her's boost of success.

Puvs and sonnet

Stop trafficking of women to China

We are deeply concerned about the ordeal of Bangladeshi women being trafficked to China through sham marriages. The harrowing story of a 19-year-old woman from Bagerhat, who was promised a domestic job in Dhaka but instead allegedly drugged, threatened with compromising videos and

According to a report by this daily, a distant female relative lured her to Dhaka, while local intermediaries arranged her marriage and travel documents. Messages on her husband's phones indicated that Tk 2.5 lakh had been paid to a Bangladeshi intermediary to arrange the marriage, while her family was later asked for Tk 3.5 lakh to secure her return. Several such cases have recently been filed with the police across the.

married off to a Chinese man, exposes the disturbing methods used by trafficking networks. She was later taken to China, where she was allegedly confined, beaten and sexually abused before managing to escape and return home on August 4. According to a report by this daily, a distant female relative lured her to Dhaka, while local intermediaries arranged her marriage and travel documents. Messages on her husband's phones indicated that Tk 2.5 lakh had been paid to a Bangladeshi intermediary to arrange the marriage, while her family was later asked for Tk 3.5 lakh to secure her return. Several such cases have recently been filed with the police across the country, while the CID's

Trafficking in Persons unit is currently handling four China-related cases. According to the Chinese embassy, more than 1,100 family visas were issued for China in 2025, and an estimated 600 recipients may have already travelled there. Why this disregard for migrant deaths? Female migrants, too, remain highly vulnerable to exploitation by trafficking networks. This daily recently reported the story of a woman who went to Saudi Arabia through a broker hoping to escape poverty, but returned pregnant after allegedly enduring forced labour, sexual exploitation, confinement and imprisonment. Hundreds of Bangladeshis have also recently been rescued from scam compounds in Cambodia after being lured abroad with promises of well-paid jobs. Many were allegedly taken to guarded compounds after their passports were confiscated, and were forced to work in online scams, sometimes facing torture when they refused. These cases, alongside the growing cases of women being trafficked through sham marriages, expose the vulnerabilities in our overseas migration system that the authorities must urgently address. We urge the police and immigration authorities to identify and dismantle the local trafficking networks facilitating these marriages by verifying the identities and marital status of Chinese spouses, scrutinising intermediaries, and investigating how passports, visas and marriage documents are obtained. Immigration authorities should also maintain a database of women travelling to China on family visas and contact their families when necessary. At the same time, Bangladesh and China should establish an effective mechanism to share information, investigate suspected trafficking networks.

The National Human Rights Commission and other decorative objects

Md. Neyamul Hossain

2026 law describes the commission as independent but deletes the explicit protection against ministerial subordination. Independence is thus retained as a description, while its legal shelter is quietly shown the door.

The old anxiety that commissioners might be selected through a process too distant from the executive has also been wisely addressed. The political branches now hover close enough to

The draft 2026 law keeps neither the function nor the machinery. Legal assistance survives only as a possible use of the Commission's Fund.We should not underestimate the administrative convenience of this design. Rights are least disruptive when the people who need them cannot afford to activate them.

The 2009 act allows the NHRC to open offices at divisional, district and upazila levels as needed. The 2025 ordinance guaranteed divisional office, with district and upazila offices if necessary. The draft 2026 law, with admirable sensitivity to administrative order, requires government approval before the commission can open offices outside Dhaka. A landless woman, an Indigenous community, a worker or a family seeking answers after custodial abuse may still approach the commission.

the doorway to ensure that no one excessively independent wanders in by accident. The selection committee is to be chaired by the Speaker of the House, with government figures occupying five of the nine seats. For each post, the committee is to send two names to the president, whose final choice is circumscribed by a constitutional arrangement where the prime minister's advice carries the day.

By the time the final appointment is made, independence has been so thoroughly introduced to its benefactors that one can hardly expect it to behave rudely later.

Under the 2025 ordinance, the government had to consider the commission's own budget proposal. The draft 2026 law removes even that modest requirement. An institution expected to scrutinise the executive is thus invited to depend on the executive's generosity, which is a charming arrangement if one believes watchdogs should first apply for lunch money. Pluralism, meanwhile, is converted from guarantee into suggestion. The 2025 ordinance required the commission to include a member of an ethnic community. The draft 2026 law merely asks that such candidates be given consideration, if found qualified. A commission may therefore now be lawfully formed with no member from any ethnic or disadvantaged minority community. This is unfortunate only if one thinks that communities most likely to experience state violence, land dispossession, discrimination, and distrust of public institutions should have a guaranteed voice inside the nation-

al body established to protect rights.

The poor, meanwhile, are offered the most elegant right of all: the right to proceed without the means to proceed. The 2009 act makes legal assistance to complainants one of the commission's functions and allows the commission to take a proven victim to the High Court. The 2025 Ordinance went further by creating a Legal Action Branch and a panel of experienced lawyers. The draft 2026 law keeps neither the function nor the machinery. Legal assistance survives only as a possible use of the Commission's Fund.We should not underestimate the

administrative convenience of this design. Rights are least disruptive when the people who need them cannot afford to activate them.

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The 2026 draft law also trims the commission's mandate with impressive confidence. Gone are the broader powers to scrutinise proposed laws before they are passed, to adequately train law enforcement agencies, to ask why the same violations keep returning like badly behaved relations

tives, and to do whatever else may be necessary when human rights abuse refuses, inconsiderately, to fit into a pre-approved box.

A human rights commission requires flexibility because violations are flexible. The draft 2026 law, however, appears to prefer a commission less adaptable than the violations it must confront.

The weakness of the draft law does not lie in a few unfortunate clauses that may be tidied up later. The deeper problem is that it misunderstands, or perhaps understands too well, the purpose of a national human rights organisation. One does not summon such a body into existence because the state is in the habit of behaving well. One does so because, from time to time, the state misplaces its manners, its records, its detainees, and occasionally its conscience.

A party that so recently stood at the receiving end of repression might have been expected to draw a lesson or two from history. It appears, instead, to have drawn the wrong ones. Having known what it means for institutions to be captured, it now seems content to preserve the commission as another decorative object in the national architecture of reform: polished, funded just enough, empowered just enough, independent just enough, and placed exactly where it can do the least harm to power.

And the republic may once again congratulate itself for strengthening human rights without troubling those who violate them.

ECNEC clears 10 projects

the ferry ghat to Kumira ghat.The ECNEC also approved a project for rehabilitation and strengthening of rural roads under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives.A project for strengthening the capacity of the Department of Livestock Services was approved under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock.Two power sector projects were also approved- construction of a 100 MW solar power plant at Madarganj in Jamalpur and expansion and strengthening of electrical infrastructure in the DESCO area of Dhaka.The ECNEC further approved an infrastructure development project for Ramu Cantonment under the Ministry of Defence.Meanwhile, the meeting was informed nine projects costing less than Tk 50 crore that have already been approved by the Planning Minister.The projects include a feasibility study for establishing a BSL-3 laboratory and enhancing vaccine and biologics research capacity, the Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation (BEST) project, the Sundarbans Protection Project. History Besides, expansion of the south-western transmission grid, construction of a 132/33/11 kV underground grid substation in Gulshan, improvement of the electricity distribution system under DPDC, expansion and strengthening of mosque libraries, optimal use of new media for public service delivery, and improvement of pre-primary and primary education in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh district and Bhahashan Char of Noakhali district.

Fakhrul expresses condolence

of the departed soul and conveyed his profound sympathy to the bereaved family, relatives and well-wishers.

Padma Barrage plan to be made

before formulating demands.BILIA Chairman and Dhaka University Law Professor Dr. Borhan Uddin Khan delivered the concluding remarks. Senior government officials, lawyers, academics, researchers, diplomats and university students attended the seminar.

Faqir Mahbub urges mobile

Rehan Asif Asad and Chairman of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) Major General Md Emdad Ul Bari (Retd.) were also present.Mentioning that public satisfaction and welfare are the government's top priorities, Faqir Mahbub said he is fully aware of the challenges and prospects of the telecommunications sector.He said the government recently took an important initiative to withdraw the SIM tax in response to a longstanding demand, adding that the expectation from such a public-friendly government measure was that its benefits would reach ordinary customers directly rather than remain limited to mobile operators.Referring to the successful implementation of the Dhaka Modernisation Project and the improvement in customer services through the project, the minister said it gives them hope and encouragement for the future."I hope customers across the country will also receive similar improved service facilities in the future," he said.The minister congratulated Robi on its modernisation and 5G rollout in Dhaka city but urged the operator to extend similar services to rural areas."I would request you (Robi), we want to see your service in villages," he said.

Faqir Mahbub said that when he visits his constituency, he receives many phone calls from people but sees comparatively fewer Robi numbers, despite the operator having 58.57 million subscribers.

"So I would request the Robi team here not to remain only within the cities," he said, adding that people living in villages should not be left behind and should also receive Robi's serv-

ices properly.He also urged Robi to extend its services to villages, riverine areas and mountainous regions so that more people could use Robi's mobile services.The minister said tower sharing could make it easier for operators to expand their services.Faqir Mahbub also called on Robi to communicate more clearly with customers about call drops and package-related issues."I don't know, from your business point of view, what you think, but I am talking about the people's perception and the complaints we receive," he said.He urged the operators to explain to customers why call drops occur and said customers are not charged for dropped calls and that the amount is refunded to them.Referring to package-related complaints, he said some customers complain that, for instance, they buy a Tk 500 package, have money remaining, but lose it when the validity period expires."If you explain these issues, then we will be a little better off, because people keep complaining to us and say that you should do something," he said.The minister also urged Robi to use the media or other forms of messaging to communicate such issues to its subscribers.He said such communication would help reduce the complaints and questions they receive from the public.Faqir Mahbub said investment is being considered one of the key driving forces for achieving the government's goals, with the government giving the highest importance to attracting and encouraging foreign investment.Referring to Malaysia as a longtime friend of Bangladesh, he said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman recently visited Malaysia and held talks with the Malaysian prime minister.He said the Axiata Group is a Malaysia-based business conglomerate and expressed the expectation that relations with Malaysia, including economic and friendship ties, would continue to develop. The minister expressed his belief that Robi would continue to invest in improving network service quality and provide more value-added and quality services to customers.

Law Minister calls for Bar

system under the Bar Council is needed to further refine professional skills and knowledge," he said.The minister said initiatives have also been taken to ensure transparency in the Bar Council's financial activities through internal and external audits.He said the government has entrusted the Bar Council with responsibility as an independent regulatory authority and pledged cooperation to strengthen the institution.There is no need to turn the Bar Council into a centre of political activities or corruption. Rather, it must be transformed into an institution combining education, merit, wisdom, hard work and professional skills," he said. Bangladesh Bar Council Vice Chairman Senior Advocate Zainul Abedin MP, Attorney General Barrister Md Ruhul Quddus Kajal, Supreme Court Senior Advocate Barrister Md Badruddoza Badal and Dhaka Bank Chairman Abdul Hai Sarker also spoke.

Government Canal in Rajapur

investigated and necessary action taken.However, Abul Kalam Azad denied the allegation of encroaching on government land. He said, I am occupying even less land than the amount I purchased. I laid brick soling on government land for movement and built stairs for getting up and down.Assistant Commissioner (Land) of Rajapur, Md. Shamim Reza Sajeb said,The land will be surveyed soon by a government surveyor. If it is proven that it has encroached on government canal land, legal action will be taken.

Nationwide first

registration of vessels, along with other necessary data, will be collected.

The database prepared on the basis of the collected information will play an important role in planning, managing and

ensuring the safety of the country's shipping sector, as well as in policymaking.The census will provide a reliable, updated and comprehensive statistical picture of the country's vessel sector.

As a result, necessary data will become more readily available to make vessel registration and management activities more effective, strengthen navigational safety, improve waterway management and formulate future plans.To ensure the successful completion of the census, vessel owners, masters, workers and other stakeholders have been requested to extend all-out cooperation to the census personnel appointed by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).All concerned have also been urged to sincerely cooperate with the Vessel Census 2026 by providing the data collectors engaged in the census with necessary and accurate information. The first-ever Vessel Census 2026 is being considered an important and timely initiative to present an accurate picture of the country's shipping sector and make future development plans more effective and realistic.

Govt may need up to

by faults in several boilers, which have already been repaired.As a result, the situation has improved to a relatively tolerable level compared with the situation a month ago, he added."Even then, we do not have enough fuel and electricity to meet the existing demand for gas, power and other energy," he said.Saki said the government is making all-out efforts to increase domestic gas production while simultaneously pursuing a major shift towards renewable energy.Referring to the government's Five-Year Strategic Framework for Reform and Development, he said the government inherited a fragile and damaged economy and would therefore have to pass through a recovery period before moving towards transformation and reconstruction."The first two years will be the recovery period, the next three years will be the transition period, and within five years we aim to rebuild the economy with acceleration," he said. Saki said the government has prepared a roadmap titled "From Fragility to Prosperity" to guide the country towards a democratic, humane and welfare-oriented Bangladesh.

About suspended bank account i

inform the BFIU about the status of that account and other information related to the account.The BFIU has issued this directive under the powers conferred by Section 23(1)(d) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2012 (amended 2015) and Section 15(1)(d) of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009 (amended 2013).

Five new children's hospitals

field-level surveillance during this period, he added.r M A Muhiith said a major recruitment drive would be undertaken to address structural weaknesses in the health system. One lakh new health field workers would be recruited very soon to take primary healthcare and maternal and child health services to households across the country, he added. To overcome the crisis, he said, the recruitment process for 5,000 new doctors will be completed soon, followed by the recruitment of the required number of nurses and medical technologists in phases.Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services Professor Dr Prabhat Chandra Biswas, Director (Hospitals) Dr Md Nurul Islam and IEDCR Director Dr Kazi Ahmed Zaki also spoke at the event with Professor Dr A K M Azizul Haque, Chairman of the Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute, in the chair.The key research findings and data were jointly presented by Professor Dr Mirza Md Ziaul Islam of the Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute and Dr Mustafizur Rahman, chief scientist of the Virology Department at icddr,b.

Govt to plant 2cr Keora trees

has also taken an initiative to implement a carbon credit programme for the first time under the project.The state minister made the remarks while addressing the concluding session of a two-day programme titled "Sustainable Plastic Waste Management Practices in Jahangirnagar University (Source Segregation Campaign)" at the JannatulFerdous Senate Building of Jahangirnagar University (JU) this afternoon.The programme was jointly organised by the Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (JUCSU) and NextEra for Environment, Equity & Rights (NEER).Shaikh Faridul Islam said plastic pollution, microplastic pollution and lead contamination have become major threats to the country's environment and public health.The government recently published the gazette of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy, he said, adding that under the policy, manufacturers of plastic products would have to take responsibility for managing the plastic waste generated from their products.The government has also taken an initiative to formulate a new law to build a lead-free Bangladesh, he said."Enacting laws and policies alone will not be enough. Source-based waste segregation must be ensured, while the sources of plastic and lead pollution need to be identified and effective measures taken," the state minister said.Indiscriminate dumping of waste into rivers, canals and water bodies is causing severe environmental damage, he said, urging everyone to act responsibly to protect the environment.The state minister stressed the implementation of the "Four Rs" - Reject, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle - in plastic waste management. He also called for the use of biodegradable bags where alternatives to plastic are available.He urged students to raise environmental awareness in their respective communities and take the lead in plastic waste management.Calling upon JU authorities to make the university a single-use plastic-free campus, he said the initiative would set an example for other universities in the country.Presiding over the event, JU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Mohammad Kamrul Ahsan said effective initiatives and their implementation were more important than merely organizing programmes for environmental protection.He sought government cooperation in constructing green barriers along the highway adjacent to the female residential halls to reduce noise and air pollution, installing effluent treatment plants (ETPs) to protect water bodies and developing a modern waste management system on the campus. nJU Pro-VC (Academic) Prof Dr Shamsul Alam, Pro-VC (Administration) Prof Dr Mohammad Nazrul Islam, Treasurer Prof Dr Sohel Rana, Director of the Students-Teacher Counselling Centre Prof Jamal Uddin, a UNIDO Bangladesh delegation, leaders of different student organisations and general students were also present.

BFIU asks to immediately report details of related accounts after freeze orders

Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) has directed all reporting organisations to immediately inform it of details of other accounts related to any account after receiving an order to suspend transactions in that account.The directive was issued today, addressed to managing directors and chief executive officers of all reporting organisations.According to the circular, once a reporting organisation receives an order from the BFIU to suspend transactions in any account, it must promptly provide the BFIU with information on the concerned account as well as details of other accounts associated with it.



Halal food culture, values can be asset for human civilisation: Swapon

Staff correspondent

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon today said halal food culture and values can become a great asset and strength not only for the Muslim world but also for the entire human civilisation. He said the development of halal products and culture is not merely a religious or cultural issue, but it is also directly related to the global economy and human welfare. "There is

a huge global market for halal food, and both consumers and investors are ready to explore the potential of this sector," he said. The information minister made the remarks while addressing a seminar titled 'Think Halal, Grow Global', organised by Malaysian High Commission in Dhaka, at a city hotel here.

Referring to the common values of Bangladesh and Malaysia in the religious and social fields, Swapon said the

both countries can jointly play an important role in developing the halal industry and expanding its scope in the global market by utilising their common values, culture and experience. Highlighting the global demand of halal products, he called upon entrepreneurs, investors, traders and other institutions concerned to work to this end in a coordinated manner. "The proper ideas, information, knowledge and specific business structures must

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No deficit in preparation for Today's Presidential election: CEC

Staff correspondent

Describing the Presidential election as a historic one, Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin on Wednesday expressed optimism that they will be able to conduct the polls in a nice manner. "We don't have any sort of deficit in our preparation," he said at a press conference in the city's Nirbachan Bhaban, a day before the balloting scheduled to be held Thursday. "We expect we will be able to conduct this historical election in a nice manner," he said. Nasir Uddin said the election result will be published in the official gazette on Thursday, hours after the balloting. The voting will be held in the session chamber of the Jatiya Sangsad from 2pm to 5pm on Thursday. BNP candidate Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and the opposition Jamaat-led 11-party alliance contender Col (ret'd) Oli Ahmad are running in the election. A total of 249 Members of Parliament are eligible to cast their votes. With BNP holding an absolute majority in parliament, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir is widely expected

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Bangladesh, Malaysia explore enhanced cooperation in tourism

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh and Malaysia have explored avenues for enhanced cooperation in tourism, focusing on connectivity, visa facilitation,

skills development and cultural exchanges to create more enriching experiences for travellers from both countries. The issues were discussed at a meeting between State Minister for Civil

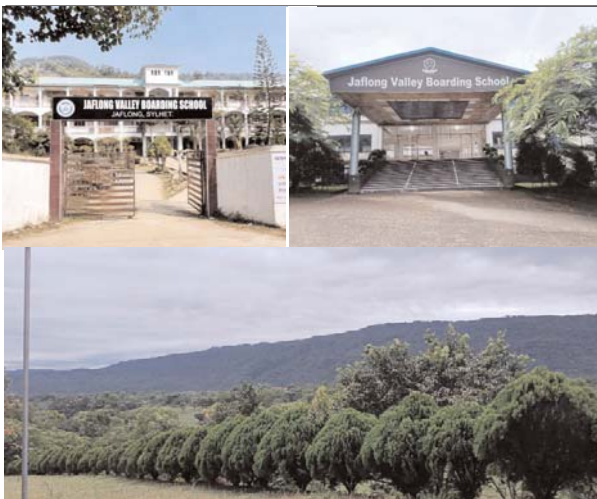
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Neglected Seed Store in Sonagazi, Feni

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

The traditional seed store of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Ahmedpur village under Amirabad Union of Sonagazi upazila has virtually turned into a garbage dump. Plagued by sheer negligence and continuous waste dumping by local residents, the dilapidated structure is now completely unusable, depriving hundreds of local farmers of modern agricultural facilities. According to local farmers, the facility once regularly distributed high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and various government agricultural incentives. However, over time, the authorities' extreme apathy has left the building in a miserable condition. Some unaware locals have turned the area into a waste disposal site, severely polluting both the interior and the surrounding environment of the building.

Farmers of Ahmedpur village stated that the scope of agriculture in this region is vast. Without a functional union-level seed store, they are facing immense hardship in accessing essential agricultural services and expert advice. The aggrieved farmers have strongly demanded that higher authorities take immediate measures to remove the garbage, renovate the dilapidated infrastructure, and restore the facility's operations for the benefit of the local farming community.



Jaflong Valley Boarding School: A Promising Beginning, a Silent End—Time to Bring It Back to Life

Naeem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat, Sylhet

Jaflong Valley Boarding School was established amid the breathtaking natural beauty of Jaflong in Jaintapur Upazila of Sylhet. At one time, the institution was surrounded by dreams and promising educational opportunities. Students from Sylhet, Dhaka, and various other districts across the country came here to pursue their studies. However, over time, the institution began facing a shortage of students for various reasons. In particular, the high cost of education made it difficult for many students from the local area and other parts of the country to continue their studies there. Gradually, the number of students declined, and eventually, the institution's educational activities came to a halt. Today, the institution stands amid the magnificent beauty of nature, seemingly reflecting silence and solitude. Yet, with proper planning and effective initiatives, the existing infrastructure could once again be utilized to establish a vibrant educational institution. In this situation, an appeal is made to the Honorable Minister of Sylhet to hold discussions with the authorities of Jaflong Valley Boarding School and take initiatives to utilize the existing infrastructure and potential. A nursing college, a healthcare-focused educational institution, a technical institute, or another modern and relevant

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Dhaka eyes equally beneficial economic partnership with New Delhi: Shama Obaed

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam has said Bangladesh wants to see an economic partnership with India that is "equally beneficial and brings tangible changes" to people's lives.

"I am confident that the business communities of our two countries have both the vision and the capacity to make this happen. We can collectively identify practical solutions to the challenges," she said, noting that greater predictability and ease of doing business would benefit businesses in both countries.

The State Minister made the remarks while speaking at a reception on Tuesday night that brought together a delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and leading members of the business community in Bangladesh for meaningful interactions aimed at advancing bilateral economic and commercial cooperation and fostering stronger business-to-business linkages between Bangladesh and India. Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Dinesh Trivedi hosted the reception in honour of leading Bangladeshi business leaders and members of the CII delegation.



Delegation leader and CII Director General Chandrajit Banerjee and Indian Deputy High Commissioner Pawan Badhe also spoke at the reception.

High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi highlighted the shared aspirations of the youth and the development goals of both countries. He underscored the important role of businesses in translating these aspirations into opportunities, building enduring partnerships and fostering long-lasting ties between India and Bangladesh. Shama Obaed held discussions with Indian business leaders, during which they identified several issues. She said the new government has a forward-looking approach to trade and investment, which the Indian business community may explore for mutually beneficial Bangladesh-India economic cooperation. "From my side, I have assured them that we will try our best to resolve those issues, and we want more vibrant trade, investment and communication between the two countries," she said, describing the meeting as productive and fruitful. The State Minister said business visas for Bangladeshis should be issued more quickly

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BGB brings back 24 Bangladeshi fishermen detained by Arakan Army

Staff correspondent

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) on Wednesday brought back 24 Bangladeshi fishermen who had been detained by Myanmar's Arakan Army in the Bay of Bengal. History A BGB delegation received the fishermen from the Arakan Army at the zero line of the Naf River and later brought them to the Teknaf jetty. The returning fishermen are currently undergoing identity verification and other necessary formalities in coordination with the local administration and law enforcement agencies. They will be handed over to their families after completion of the procedures, BGB said in a press release. According to the BGB, the fishermen had

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Anti-Drug Rally Held on District Police Initiative

Badal Khandaker (District Correspondent)

Brahmanbaria An anti-drug opinion-sharing meeting and rally with people from various classes, professions and citizens of the district was held at Niaz Muhammad High School in Brahmanbaria district. The chief guest at the meeting was Mr. Abdul Kuddus Chowdhury, PPM, DIG of Chattogram Range. The special guests present were Mr. Md. Abu Saeed, Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate of Brahmanbaria District, and Alhaj Sirajul Islam, Administrator of Brahmanbaria District Council. Dignitaries including political, religious and social leaders were also present at the meeting. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Shah Md. Abdur Rauf, Superintendent of

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Shops were gutted in Fakirhat Faltita Bazar, Bagerhat

S A Kalam, Fakirhat, Bagerhat

A terrible fire has taken place in Faltita market of Fakirhat upazila of Bagerhat. 13 small and big shops have been burnt to ashes. A fire service team brought the fire under control after about two hours of efforts. Fire service, affected shopkeepers and locals said

that the fire started on Wednesday (August 19) around 3:30 pm. In moments, flames spread around. On receiving information, a team of Fakirhat Fire Service reached the spot and tried to douse the fire. The fire was brought under control after about two hours of efforts. Out of this, 13 shops and the cash, goods and

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Journalist, 3 family members killed in Kolkata hotel fire

Staff correspondent

A journalist and three members of his family were killed in a fire at a hotel in Kolkata, India. The deceased were identified as Debashis Dutta, 40, Kushtia correspondent for Ajker Patrika and Channel Nine, his wife Afsana Simmin, 25, their three-year-old child Swarna Shish Dutta and his father-in-law Akram Ali, 64. According to family sources, Dutta travelled to Kolkata to seek medical treatment for his ailing wife. He is survived by another eight-year-old daughter as well as his parents. Gazi Mahub Rahman, former president of the Kushtia Press Club and editor of local newspaper Ajker Alo, said Dutta was serving as the

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60 modern life-support ambulances to be introduced on highways soon: RHD

Staff correspondent

A total of 60 state-of-the-art Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances are being introduced on the country's highways soon to quickly rescue and take injured people, who fall in road accidents, to hospitals and to utilise the important 'golden hour' after an accident. At the initial stage, the service will be started on pilot basis on some important highway corridors with these ambulances, said Chief Engineer of the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) Md Moniruzzaman in an exclusive interview with BSS at Sarak Bhaban here recently. He said after receiving the news of any accident, the nearest ambulance will be sent to the spot through the central call centre. There are plans to place trained volunteers or 'bystander care' workers at a certain distance along highways. Moniruzzaman said it is possible to save life to a large extent, if we can bring the injured person in a road accident at hospital immediately after the accident. But many times, there is a delay in getting an ambulance after the accident, and the injured person does not even have the necessary first aid facilities until he/she is taken from the accident spot to the hospital, the chief engineer said. For this reason, he said, an initiative has been taken to launch an integrated emergency ambulance service on the highways. Moniruzzaman said the main goal of this initiative is to utilise the 'golden hour' after the accident. The ambulance will reach the

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

ডাঃ মানিক চন্দ্র নাথ
এম.বি.বি.এস (সি.ইউ)
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এমপিএইচ (এপিডেমিওলজি)
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সহযোগী অধ্যাপক ও বিভাগীয় প্রধান
বিজিসি ট্রান্স মেডিকেল কলেজ
BMDC Reg- A68436

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বিকাল ৫ টা - রাত ৭ টা

সিরিয়ালের জন্য যোগাযোগ :
01675-271725
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চেম্বার :
সীতাকুণ্ড ডক্টরস চেম্বার
সীতাকুণ্ড কামিল (এম.এ) মাদ্রাসার বিপরীত পার্শে
সীতাকুণ্ড বাজার, চট্টগ্রাম।

DOCTOR'S CHAMBER

চেম্বারে আসার পূর্বে অবশ্যই মোবাইলে যোগাযোগ করে আসবেন।

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

Halal food culture, values can

be created for investors. If the ideas and knowledge can be properly combined, it will have a positive impact on the market and will increase the acceptance of halal products among ordinary consumers," the minister said.Recalling the Bangladesh Prime Minister's recent visit to Malaysia, he said the way Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim welcomed Prime Minister Tarique Rahman during his visit to Kuala Lumpur is a shining example of the deep friendship between the two countries. On behalf of the government and people of Bangladesh, he expressed gratitude to the Malaysian government and Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim as well.Swapon further said the foundation of Bangladesh-Malaysia relations is not limited to diplomatic contacts only but this relationship is sustained through people's values ??and mutual cooperation. The halal industry will serve as an important new area of ??economic and diplomatic cooperation between the two countries, he said.Malaysian High Commissioner in Dhaka Mohd Shuhada Othman and Bangladesh-Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industries President Anwar Shahid spoke at the seminar.Top businessmen, investors, entrepreneurs and representatives of relevant sectors from both Bangladesh and Malaysia participated in the event.

No deficit in preparation for

to be elected as the country's 23rd President. The voting is being required in the presidential election after nearly 35 years since 1991 in the country.

Dhaka eyes equally beneficial

so that businesspeople can travel to India more frequently."We want our businesses and private sectors to communicate with their counterparts in India more frequently," she said, noting that investment is an equally important pillar of the future economic relationship.Bangladesh has offered Indian companies a large and growing domestic market, a substantial industrial workforce, competitive production capabilities, geographical proximity and opportunities to connect with markets beyond Bangladesh."Our economic zones provide Indian companies with opportunities to establish dedicated manufacturing and export facilities. We would particularly welcome investments that bring technology, integrate local suppliers and create employment. And, in the process, connect Bangladeshi products to regional and global value chains," Shama Obaed said.She said the strength of the economic relationship between the two countries would ultimately be measured not only by government-to-government engagements and bilateral mechanisms but also by the contacts and partnerships that businesses establish with each other.She said Bangladesh and India are geographically proximate, historically connected and economically complementary."These advantages provide us with a strong foundation to build a more balanced, interdependent and mutually beneficial economic partnership, a partnership that may generate greater trade, investment, technology cooperation and integration of value chains, and expansion of markets," she said.The State Minister said India remains a major trading partner of Bangladesh in the region and that bilateral trade has grown significantly over the years."Yet we must also acknowledge that bilateral trade remains structurally imbalanced and much lower than its actual potential."The State Minister said the objective should be to expand the overall economic partnership, overcome challenges and create greater opportunities for trade, business and investment on both sides.Shama Obaed sees an important role for the Indian business community, saying Indian companies with established distribution networks can increase sourcing from Bangladesh in areas where Bangladeshi industries are already competitive, including ready-made garments, textiles, jute and jute products, leather and footwear, pharmaceuticals, agro-processing, ceramics, plastics and light engineering."We also recognise that there are challenges in doing business arising from non-tariff barriers, standards and testing-related difficulties, procedural delays and infrastructure constraints that affect the smooth movement of goods and services," she said.Shama Obaed requested the Indian business community, particularly members of the CII, who have considerable influence in India, to share the experiences and perspectives gained through this visit with the relevant authorities in India so that they can collectively identify practical solutions to the challenges.

Business community's roleHighlighting the importance of economic and people-to-people ties, High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi said the private sector has a crucial role in bridging differences between the two countries."No government in the world can provide everything. It always needs the private sector," he said, expressing gratitude to the business communities on both sides.

The envoy identified people-to-people relations, employment, education and health as key areas where Bangladesh and India can deepen cooperation.

"People all over the world have a big role to play in bridging this gap," he said, referring to the business community's role in strengthening bilateral ties.

The High Commissioner said India's "Neighbourhood First" policy reflects the importance New Delhi attaches to its relationship with Bangladesh.

Trivedi acknowledged that the two countries have gone through "hiccups" in their relationship but said such difficulties should not undermine their longstanding bonds.

"We have all gone through hiccups here and there. I think that's quite natural; that also happens in a family. But that doesn't mean that we move away," he said.

"We deeply understand the concerns of brothers and sisters of Bangladesh," he said, while stressing that the relationship should be viewed as "a partnership of equals."

"This would be a golden chapter in the history of the relationship between India and Bangladesh because we have a lot to share with you," he said.

Trivedi referred to the shared cultural heritage of the two countries and called for a renewed "melody of relationship."""Let's have this melody of relationship," he said, expressing confidence that the relationship could become "golden" and long-lasting.The CII Director General said the warmth they received from the Bangladesh government and the country's industries was "just awesome, absolutely great."""And this is something that we would like to live up to by creating more business opportunities," he said.The high-level Indian business delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) left Dhaka on Wednesday morning, an official told UNB. NewspapersDiscussions during the visit focused on addressing issues of mutual interest and benefit, identifying emerging areas of cooperation and facilitating greater engagement between businesses of the two countries.Both sides explored opportunities for greater economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries.The delegation, led by Chandrajit Banerjee, comprised business leaders representing prominent Indian companies and institutions, including Bharat Biotech International Limited, Infravision Foundation, Godrej Industries Group, Aravind Limited, Mahindra Group, Numaligarh Refinery Limited, Larsen & Toubro Limited, Godrej Consumer Products Limited, Forbes Marshall Pvt. Ltd., Beximco IOC Petroleum & Energy Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Apollo Hospitals, representing the consumer goods, automobile, petroleum and energy sectors. During the visit, the delegation met senior members of the Bangladesh government.

Bangladesh, Malaysia explore

Aviation and Tourism M. Rashiduzzaman Millat and Malaysian Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Chiew Choon Man in Putrajaya on Tuesday, according to a

press release received here today.During the talks, the two sides discussed a range of measures to deepen tourism cooperation, including increasing flight frequencies, facilitating visas and pre-verification, strengthening capacity building and expanding cultural exchanges.They also exchanged views on sharing expertise, experiences and best practices in tourism development as part of efforts to broaden mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

The two sides discussed cooperation in training and skills development in the hospitality industry, with a particular focus on increasing recruitment of trained Bangladeshi personnel in Malaysia's tourism service sector.The meeting underscored the importance of closer cooperation in promoting tourism, strengthening people-to-people connectivity and creating greater opportunities for cultural exchange and mutual understanding.The discussions also contributed to strengthening the longstanding bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Malaysia while identifying new areas for mutually beneficial collaboration.Bangladesh High Commissioner to Malaysia Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury was present at the meeting. Senior officials from Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC), Tourism Malaysia and the Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur also attended the meeting.

Anti-Drug Rally Held on

Police, Brahmanbaria.An important discussion was held on preventing the widespread spread of drugs, taking effective legal action against drug trafficking and supply, protecting the younger generation from the clutches of drugs, and building a drug-free society with the collective role of the police, administration, political leadership, civil society and people from all walks of life.The chief guest said in his speech that no drug user, dealer, distributor or anyone involved in drug trafficking will be spared. Everyone involved will be brought under the law. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's declared "Zero Tolerance" policy against drugs will be implemented to protect society and the youth from the dangers of drugs. He also sought full cooperation from conscious citizens, public representatives, teachers, guardians and civil society along with law enforcement agencies to eradicate drugs.The chief guest further said in his speech that drugs destroy not only an individual but also a family, a generation and ultimately the entire society. Therefore, building resistance against drugs is no longer the sole responsibility of law enforcement agencies; it is the collective responsibility of the entire society.The president of the meeting said in his speech that everyone must work together to build a drug-free Brahmanbaria.He urged everyone in society to inform the police about any information related to drugs to protect the younger generation from the grip of drugs and to prevent drug abuse."Along with the special guests, prominent personalities from the political, religious and civil society also spoke at the anti-drug meeting."The chief guest inaugurated the anti-drug rally and meeting at 5:30 PM. A large number of students from various educational institutions of Brahmanbaria district and representatives from different classes and professions who attended the meeting participated in the rally. With their spontaneous participation, the anti-drug rally and meeting became vibrant. The anti-drug rally started from the field of Niaz Muhammad High School and ended at Faruqi Park.The Superintendent of Police, Brahmanbaria, thanked everyone for participating in the anti-drug meeting and rally and making the event successful.Let's build a drug-free country, Bangladesh comes first.

BGB brings back 24 Bangladeshi

inadvertently crossed into Myanmar waters while fishing in the Bay of Bengal at different times in 2025 and 2026. The Arakan Army subsequently detained them and kept them in areas under its control inside Myanmar.Considering the concerns of the fishermen's families and the humanitarian aspects of the issue, BGB maintained communication and coordination with the relevant authorities to facilitate their safe return.Efforts are continuing to bring back the remaining detained fishermen safely, it added.

Lieutenant Colonel Md Hanifur Rahman Bhuiyan, commander of Teknaf Battalion (2 BGB), said ensuring the safety of people and their property, alongside border security, is one of BGB's key responsibilities.

Jaflong Valley Boarding School: A educational institution could be established here.Such an initiative would not only put the long-unsolved infrastructure to effective use but also create new educational opportunities and employment prospects for students in Greater Jainta and the Sylhet region.Let Jaflong Valley no longer remain lonely. May the institution once again come alive with the footsteps of students. Now is the time to breathe new life into this promising institution.

Shops were gutted in

belongings in the shops were gutted.Among these shops were two sweet shops, two rice hotels, two grocery shops, 1 fast food shop, other food shops.The affected shopkeepers Arif Sheikh, Md. Bakkar, Nimai, Roop Saha and others said that they came to the shop around 4 am and saw that everything had been burnt to ashes.Fakirhat Fire Service and Civil Defense station officer Md. Shahjahan Mia said, this fire can happen through electrical short circuit. The fire was brought under control after two hours of efforts.

Journalist, 3 family

executive editor of the newspaper and was also working as Kushtia correspondent for Channel 9 and Ajker Patrika.Dutta's home is in Arouapara Rajarhat area of Kushtia town while his father-in-law Akram Ali was from the Thanapara area.Five Bangladeshi nationals were among nine people killed in a fire that broke out at a hotel in Kolkata, India, early Wednesday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, citing local authorities."According to local authorities, nine people have so far died in the fire. Police have confirmed the identities of five of them as Bangladeshi nationals," the ministry said in a media release.Four of the Bangladeshi victims were members of the same family, it said, adding that local authorities have yet to confirm the identities of the remaining victims. Meanwhile, six Bangladeshi nationals injured in the fire have been released from hospital after receiving primary treatment.

60 modern life-support ambulances

spot quickly, provide basic life support to the injured person and take him/her to the nearest hospital as soon as possible, he said.Under the entire plan, state-of-the-art basic life support facility will be ensured in ambulances, he said.The chief engineer said instead of launching the entire system simultaneously, the ambulance service will be introduced first on pilot basis.To this end, he said, 60 ambulances are being deployed in specific corridors of highways initially. Several important highway corridors have been selected under the pilot programme.

Those include the highway corridor from Chandra-Elenga to Rangpur, Hatikumrul-Natore-Katakali corridor in Rajshahi and the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway, he said.Moniruzzaman said the ambulances will be strategically located in these corridors."There is a plan to keep ambulances at intervals of about 10 kilometre in a specific section. In this, there will be no need to wait for an ambulance to arrive from a distant place after receiving news of an accident. The nearest ambulance will be able to reach the spot quickly," he said.He said there will be an ambulance every 10 kilometre on the highway corridor from Chandra-Elenga to Rangpur. Similarly, he said, there will be

ambulances on the Hatikumrul-Natore-Katakali corridor in Rajshahi and on the designated part of the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.A central call centre is being set up to make the ambulance service effective, he said, adding that this call centre will remain open in 24/7. "In case of a road accident, after calling the designated hotline number, the call will go directly to the central call centre."

The chief engineer said the call centre officials will collect necessary information.In addition to identifying the location of the caller, information will be taken about the location of the accident site and the number of injured, he said. "After that, the nearest ambulance will be sent to the scene," he added.Moniruzzaman said the call centre will identify the location of the caller. Based on the information received from the caller, the nearest ambulance will be deployed there, he said.The chief engineer said at the same time, information will also be sent from the call centre to local trained volunteers at the accident site.It has been planned to have health technicians in each ambulance to ensure round-the-clock medical support, he said."They will remain on duty for eight hours. As a result, trained health workers will be available in the ambulance 24 hours a day. Similarly, the drivers will also have shift-based duties. As a result, the ambulance can leave for the spot after receiving news of an accident at any time of the day or night," he said.The chief engineer said importance is also being given to the qualifications of the health technicians.He said they will have relevant professional training and qualifications and will meet the necessary qualifications, including registration with the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council."These ambulances cannot be considered as ICU ambulances. They are basic-life-support ambulances. However, there will be necessary medical equipment, including oxygen bottles, to provide emergency basic life support to the injured patient on the way to the hospital," he said.Moniruzzaman said the emergency ambulance service is planned to be provided free of cost to the injured person in the accident.The patient will first be taken to the nearest hospital - Upazila Health Complex, District General Hospital or Medical College Hospital, he said. "If it is necessary to take the patient to Dhaka as per the doctor's advice, that arrangement will also be made. The entire service is planned to be provided free of cost."Under this system, he said, local people living along the highways will be trained to provide first aid to injured people.The chief engineer said when an accident occurs on the highway, locals are usually the first to rush to the spot.But, due to lack of training, many times they do not know how to help the injured person and sometimes, harm can also be caused while moving the patient incorrectly, he said.For this reason, Moniruzzaman said, an initiative has been taken to train local volunteers on specific sections of the highways.Two volunteers have been trained in every 200 to 300 metre on the designated highway corridor and they will be trained on first aid too, he said."These volunteers will work without remuneration. Each of them will be given a first aid box and will have separate clothes or identification dresses," he said.The chief engineer said practical experience will be gained through a pilot project instead of launching the entire system on a large scale since the beginning."The main purpose of piloting is to identify the problems. If any management does not work in reality, it will be corrected quickly," he said adding the first few minutes after an accident are crucial to save live."If trained local people can provide proper first aid to the injured persons before the ambulance arrives and at the same time the nearest ambulance can be sent to the spot through the central call centre, then it will be possible to conduct the entire rescue operation quickly," he said.He said if the piloting of 60 ambulances becomes successful, the service will be expanded later based on its experience.Moniruzzaman said the department aims to operate the ambulance service across the country by gradually bringing important corridors of the highways under this system.

BNP parliamentary party meets ahead of presidential election

Staff correspondent

A Parliamentary Party meeting of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has begun at the Sangsad Bhaban here ahead of tomorrow's presidential election.

The meeting of the BNP Parliamentary Party started at 4:00 pm at the ninth floor of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with Leader of the House and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in the chair, said Prime Minister's Deputy Press Secretary Jahidul Islam Rony.BNP-nominated presidential candidate Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir also joined the meeting.

Voting for electing the country's 23rd president will begin at 2:00 pm tomorrow in the Jatiya Sangsad chamber and continue until 5:00 pm.

For the first time in 35 years, more than one candidate is contesting the presidential election, making a vote necessary.

BNP and its allies nominated Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives and party's former secretary general, for the post.

The other candidate is Colonel (Retd) Oli Ahmed who has been nominated by the opposition 11-party alliance led by Jamaat-e-Islami.

A total of 349 members of parliament are eligible to vote in the presidential election.

5 Bangladeshis among 9 killed in Kolkata fire: MoFA

Staff correspondent

Five Bangladeshi nationals were among nine people killed in a devastating fire that broke out at a hotel in Kolkata, West Bengal, early today, said the foreign ministry here. Local police have confirmed the identities of five of the deceased as Bangladeshi nationals, while the identities of the remaining victims have yet to be confirmed, according to a foreign ministry press release issued here today.Of the five Bangladeshi victims, four were members of the same family, the release said.The Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata has already contacted the families of the deceased.Six other Bangladeshi nationals were injured in the fire. They were released after receiving primary medical treatment.Immediately after receiving reports of the incident, officials of the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission rushed to the spot and began collecting information about the deceased and injured.Deputy High Commission officials are maintaining round-the-clock contact with hospitals and local police to extend necessary assistance to the Bangladeshi nationals affected by the incident.The mission has also opened a 24-hour helpline to provide assistance and information related to the incident.The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka and the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata are maintaining close contact with the relevant Indian authorities over the situation.

HOPE worldwide Bangladesh expands quality education access with VFS Global support

Staff correspondent

HOPE worldwide Bangladesh has strengthened its commitment to inclusive and quality education with the inauguration of its second School of HOPE under its Primary Education

Programme, with support from VFS Global. GeographicReference The new school, inaugurated in Savar, builds on the successful launch of the organisation's first School of HOPE in Ashulia in November 2025, extending its holistic education and community-support model to another underserved community, said a media release on Wednesday.Together, the two schools now provide free primary education to more than 300 children, many of whom come from garment-worker families.Students receive school supplies, nutritious midday meals, regular medical camps, computer education and access to digital learning resources.The programme also provides free vocational training to 240 women and young people in the community each year, helping them develop practical skills for sustainable livelihoods."Education is a priority for HOPE worldwide Bangladesh. This partnership will help us deliver quality education to the children for their holistic development," said Martin Animesh Byapari, country manager of HOPE worldwide Bangladesh."Additionally, families of the students as well as the communities in which they live would also benefit from this relationship," he added.

With continued support from VFS Global, HOPE worldwide Bangladesh plans to establish an additional IT lab and expand extracurricular activities, including Cub Scouts, karate, art, dance and music.The initiatives are expected to strengthen the schools' capacity while providing students with a more enriched learning environment.

Yummi Talwar, chief operating officer, South Asia, VFS Global, said education is one of the most powerful catalysts for long-term social change."This programme reflects our global commitment to empowering children and youth through education, skill development and entrepreneurial training," she said."We are proud to partner with HOPE worldwide Bangladesh to expand access to quality education and equip individuals with the skills and confidence to build brighter futures," she added. GeographicReferenceTalwar also highlighted the contribution of VFS Global employees in Dhaka, saying they have actively supported the initiative and will continue to contribute as the programme expands to a second school.The inauguration was attended by Mohammad Alamgir Hossain, primary education officer of Savar Upazila, programme beneficiaries, and representatives of VFS Global and HOPE worldwide Bangladesh.Praising the initiative, Hossain said, "This is an extraordinary piece of work that few organizations are doing. Your approach to supporting primary education is unique and impactful. I truly appreciate your dedication and tireless efforts."

HOPE worldwide Bangladesh and VFS Global said they remain committed to creating lasting opportunities for disadvantaged children and empowering communities through education and skills development.

Rehan stresses data connectivity for Bangladesh's future

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister's Adviser on Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Rehan Asif Asad today said data and connectivity are critical to Bangladesh's future, stressing the need for quality networks and affordable data-enabled devices to ensure people can fully benefit from the telecommunications sector."Without data, without connectivity, this industry means nothing. And without proper data connectivity, we will not get the best out of this industry," he said.He made the remarks at the "Powering the Future: Robi Completes Dhaka Modernisation" event at Robi Corporate Office.

Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam and Chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) Major General Md Emdad Ul Bari (Retd.) were also present.Rehan said getting the best out of the telecommunications industry requires work on two sides: network and devices. He appreciated the efforts being made to develop networks, saying data evolution and network upgrades are a continuous journey.

"I'm sincerely thankful for the effort that you guys (Robi) have taken on the network side, and you both say this is just the beginning of the journey: data evolution and network upgrade, it never ends," he said.Referring to Dhaka's importance, the adviser said the capital accounts for only 4 percent from a geographic point of view, but its importance is significant from population and economic perspectives.He said there are countries where the total number of sites (BTS) is less than 5,000, while Dhaka alone has almost 5,000 sites, adding that the complexity and dynamics of sites involve spectrum management, noise management, backhaul and antenna tilting.He also referred to call-drop problems experienced while travelling through the expressway, saying he had received complaints when the Prime Minister experienced call drops while exiting the expressway. Rehan then stressed the need for suitable devices alongside network development, saying around 50 percent of mobile phone users in Bangladesh still use feature phones."Regardless, around 50 percent in today's world use feature phones," he said, adding that if the total number of mobile subscribers is 14 crore, around seven crore, or 70 million, people are still using feature phones."That is not right in today's world. That is something we have to change, and we have to change as fast as we can," he said.

He said the government had taken initiatives to reduce the prices of mobile devices by reducing import taxes on raw materials. He said duties that previously ranged from 26 to 33 percent had either been zeroed out or reduced to between 2 and 5 percent.He said the initiative was taken with the objective of providing people with better devices at cheaper prices.The adviser said local mobile manufacturers had subsequently shown him a bill of materials for an Android-based, data-driven smartphone that they believe could be produced for \$50 to \$60.He said manufacturers had also requested support to include mobile phones in the EMI programme and encourage private banks to offer installment plans.Rehan urged the mobile industry to use the opportunity to help convert feature-phone users into data users, assuring that the government would provide necessary support.He also highlighted the potential of bundling AI platform tokens with mobile data packages, saying such initiatives could help the next generation gain access to tools needed to compete globally.He said mobile companies in countries including South Korea, Japan and China have started bundling tokens for AI platforms, describing it as a major opportunity. e suggested that AI platform access could be offered as part of data packages rather than focusing only on conventional 5GB or 15GB packages, saying this could significantly help students and the next generation.Rehan said the modernisation of networks, availability of affordable data-enabled devices and access to appropriate digital tools should be viewed as a continuation of the same journey.He said the government had faced and addressed various challenges over the past six months and remained committed to tackling further challenges through teamwork and moving forward together.

BSEC warns against fake news, statements attributed to chairman

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) today warned all concerned against publishing or circulating false and misleading news and statements in the name of its chairman, saying such activities could create confusion among investors and disrupt the normal environment.



Israeli strikes hit Syrian air base after Turkish delegation visit

International Desk

A Turkish delegation visited a Syrian air base in the northwestern province of Idlib just a day before the facility was hit by Israeli airstrikes, Syrian officials said. The Israeli strikes targeted the Abu Duhur air base early Tuesday, causing damage but no casualties. The attack came only hours after the Turkish delegation left the site. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel carried out the strikes because Syria was "on the verge of breaching" an agreed security arrangement by allowing Turkish troops to deploy at the base. Two Syrian officials, speaking anonymously because they were not authorised to comment publicly, said the Turkish delegation visited Abu Duhur on Monday to inspect rehabilitation work at the facility. The visit was the first confirmed indication of a Turkish presence at the air base. Neither Turkish nor Syrian officials have publicly explained Turkey's role at the facility. However, both countries condemned the Israeli strikes. US Ambassador to Turkey and special envoy to Syria Tom Barrack, along with several Arab countries, also criticised the attack. Turkish officials did not comment on the reported military visit on Wednesday. However, Turkey's communications directorate accused Netanyahu of making claims aimed at justifying what it called Israel's unlawful attacks on Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It also accused Netanyahu of pursuing policies that could destabilise and expand Israel's influence in the region ahead of elections in Israel. Turkey said it would continue working with the Syrian government to promote peace, stability and development in the country and would not allow Syria to be destabilised. Strategic location The Abu Duhur air base is located in a strategically important area near the borders of Idlib, Aleppo and Hama provinces. Under former Syrian President Bashar Assad, who was ousted by a rebel offensive in December 2024, the base

was used by MiG-23 and MiG-21 fighter jets and L-39 aircraft. Turkey has been helping Syria rebuild its military by training Syrian personnel at Turkish military schools and bases and providing equipment and logistical support. The two countries signed an agreement last year to formalise their military cooperation, although officials have not disclosed details of the equipment supplied. Syrian troops also participated in military exercises in Turkey earlier this year. Turkish officials have repeatedly said that Syria's security is closely linked to Turkey's own security. Tensions between Turkey and Israel Israel has remained wary of Syria's new authorities, who are led by former Islamist insurgents. Syria's interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa has repeatedly said he does not want a conflict with Israel. Israel carried out hundreds of airstrikes in Syria after Assad's fall, mainly targeting military equipment and facilities belonging to the former Syrian army. The Israeli military also took control of a UN-patrolled buffer zone in southern Syria, where its forces remain stationed. Turkey, a NATO member that recently signed a defence agreement with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, has not indicated that it plans to respond militarily to the Israeli strikes. However, the incident has added to already tense relations between Turkey and Israel. The two countries were once close allies, but relations have deteriorated during Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's more than two decades in power, despite brief periods of improved ties. Erdogan has strongly criticised Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, while Israel has objected to his support for Hamas. The fall of Assad's government has further increased tensions as Turkey and Israel have sought to limit each other's influence in Syria. Some analysts have warned that the rivalry could eventually develop into a proxy conflict.

Iran-UAE ties sour amid rising tensions in Middle East

International Desk

Iran has rejected the United Arab Emirates' accusation that it fired two ballistic missiles that fell into the Persian Gulf, as Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf and the country's top negotiator arrived in neighboring Iraq for a three-day visit. Meanwhile, France said it would expel two Iranian diplomats in response to Iran's expulsion of two French diplomats earlier this week. The worsening ties between Iran and the UAE come amid growing fears of renewed conflict in the region, with no clear sign of fresh talks between Iran and the United States. Here are the latest developments in the Iran war and the wider Middle East: Iran rejects UAE missile accusation Iran on Wednesday rejected the UAE's claim that it fired two ballistic missiles toward maritime traffic, saying the missiles later fell into the Persian Gulf. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei criticized the UAE's statement, saying it went against good relations between neighboring countries and efforts to reduce tensions. The UAE had frequently come under Iranian missile and drone attacks after the United States and Israel launched military action against Iran on Feb 28. Tuesday's reported missile incident was the first such attack in several weeks. Following the incident, the UAE Foreign Ministry said it had suspended trade with Iran because of regional tensions that it said were threatening peace and security. The latest dispute came less than a week after Abu Dhabi accused Iran of attacking two tankers operated by a state-owned oil company with drones while they were sailing through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's parliament speaker visits Iraq



Qalibaf arrived in Iraq on Wednesday for a three-day visit during which he is scheduled to meet Iraqi officials and leaders of an Iran-backed political coalition. Iran-backed Iraqi militias have claimed responsibility for drone attacks on US military bases and diplomatic facilities in Iraq and elsewhere. The attacks have increased pressure on Baghdad as it tries to maintain close relations with both Washington and Tehran. Qalibaf praised the Iran-backed Iraqi militias, referring to them as the "resistance in Iraq" and describing them as an important part of the country's national strength. He said the groups had developed into an influential force beyond Iraq and Iran and now had an impact at both regional and global levels. Iran has long relied on allied groups, including Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen, during conflicts across the Middle East. France, Iran expel diplomats France said Wednesday it would expel two Iranian Embassy staff members in response to what Paris described as an attack by Iranian security forces on two French diplomatic staff in Iran last month. Iran accused the French diplomats of attending a secret meeting with people suspected of involvement in a major case of foreign infiltration and interference, according to Iran's state-run Islamic Republic News Agency. The two French diplomats were expelled on Monday. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot criticized Iran for failing to investigate what he described as a deliberate attack. He said the two Iranian diplomats would leave France in the coming days. Barrot said Iranian authorities had made false allegations against French personnel and created a case of foreign interference to justify their actions.

UAE suspends trade with Iran after renewed missile fire

International Desk

The UAE issued nationwide warnings on Tuesday night asking residents to take shelter after two ballistic missiles were fired toward the country. It was the first such warning in several weeks. The UAE had faced frequent Iranian missile attacks earlier in the conflict, causing trade between the two countries to largely stop. Some maritime trade resumed in late June as fighting eased, according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency, though the current level of trade was unclear. UAE accuses Iran of missile attacks The UAE Foreign Ministry said two ballistic missiles were fired toward the country on Tuesday and later fell into the Persian Gulf. The ministry said it remained committed to dialogue and regional cooperation but had decided to suspend economic ties with Iran. "All trade, commercial exchanges and financial transactions with Iran have been halted until further notice," it said, citing growing regional tensions. The UAE Defense Ministry said its assessment showed that the missiles were aimed at maritime traffic. It was not immediately clear whether Emirati vessels or UAE territorial waters were directly targeted. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei denied that Tehran had launched missiles toward the UAE. Attacks on ships increase tensions Iran has repeatedly targeted vessels using the Strait of Hormuz as part of its efforts to control the key waterway. Four tankers owned by Abu Dhabi's state oil company ADNOC have been attacked over the past two weeks. The attacks caused no injuries but drew strong condemnation from the UAE and other Gulf countries, including Kuwait and Bahrain. Nearly 20 ADNOC vessels have been attacked by Iranian missiles and drones in the Strait of Hormuz since the conflict began, killing one person and injuring about 20 others. The strait is a major strategic point for Iran because about one-fifth of the world's traded oil and natural gas passed through it before the war. The United States and Israel launched the conflict on Feb 28, with their stated objectives including weakening



Tehran's government and ending its nuclear programme. However, the fighting has increasingly focused on control of the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has fired hundreds of ballistic missiles and thousands of drones during the conflict. Tehran says many of the attacks targeted US assets, but some struck buildings and key infrastructure in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, including Dubai's airport, ports and energy facilities. DownloadingInteractive Geographic Maps Iran has accused the UAE and other US allies in the Gulf of helping American military operations against Iran. Iranian Chief of Staff Gen Ali Abdollahi issued a fresh warning Wednesday to countries along the southern coast of the Persian Gulf. He said any assistance given to the US military would amount to taking part in American military operations, according to Iran's semi-official Fars news agency. Trade suspension could increase pressure on Iran The UAE was one of Iran's largest trading partners before the war. According to the World Trade Organization's latest 2024 figures, the UAE accounted for more than 30% of Iran's imports, worth about \$21 billion, and received nearly 13% of Iran's exports, valued at around \$7 billion. The UAE's decision comes as the United States prepares to impose further economic pressure on Iran. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said last week that the measures would combine economic isolation with the ongoing American blockade of Iranian ports. The latest economic pressure follows heavy US and Israeli airstrikes on Iranian military, industrial and civilian infrastructure. Iran's economy is already under severe strain. The International Monetary Fund expects inflation to reach nearly 70% this year and the economy to shrink by 5.4%. Iran's rial has also fallen to record lows.

South Korean, US militaries shorten drills by about half after Trump ordered reduction

International Desk

South Korean and U.S. militaries have agreed to shorten their ongoing joint exercises at Washington's request, South Korean officials said Wednesday, a move that likely reflects President Donald Trump's efforts to reengage with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un but could raise concerns about the allies' defense readiness. Trump had directed his Pentagon chief to "substantially reduce" the allies' annual Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises shortly before they began Monday for an 11-day schedule. Trump cited what he described as a good relationship with Kim and South Korea's decision not to join the U.S. war against Iran. South Korea's military said in a statement that the current drills with the United States will end Friday instead of Aug. 27, as originally scheduled. The allies also agreed to scale back some of their joint field training exercises. The military said South Korea and the United States would discuss and implement various measures to meet the objectives of the exercises and maintain combined defense capabilities. Many experts have warned that Trump's decision could weaken the combined U.S.-South Korean defense posture and eventually undermine their decades-old alliance. Ulchi Freedom Shield is primarily a computer-simulated command post exercise designed to improve the allies' ability to respond to a potential North Korean attack. The two countries normally conduct a series of field training exercises alongside the command post drills. The exercises, along with a similar drill held in the spring, are a key component of the U.S.-South Korea alliance, which dates back to the 1950-53 Korean War. However, North Korea has long viewed the drills as preparations for an invasion and has responded with provocative missile tests. Just days before this month's exercises began, North Korea launched two ballistic missiles into the sea. The current drills were reportedly planned in two phases. The first phase, running through Friday, focuses on defensive operations simulating North Korean attacks, while the second phase, originally scheduled through Aug. 27, was intended to practice counteroffensive operations. North Korea is particularly sensitive to exercises involving counteroffensive scenarios. North Korea has not responded directly to Trump's overture. However, its state-run Korean Central News

Agency, or KCNA, published a commentary early Wednesday condemning the U.S.-South Korean exercises as "frantic" and "extremely dangerous" and vowing to thwart what it called hostile actions by its rivals. SubscribingTo Digital Newspaper Outlets "The dangerous escalation of the war drills staged by the U.S. and its vassal forces is posing a more serious threat to the security rights" of North Korea, the commentary said. It added that North Korea would continue exercising its right to self-defense to "completely neutralize the enemies' military threat." Many experts said Kim, emboldened by advances in North Korea's nuclear program and expanding military cooperation with Russia, is unlikely to respond positively to Trump's outreach anytime soon unless Washington



offers greater concessions. In response to Trump's previous efforts to reach out, Kim suggested last year that he could return to negotiations only if the United States abandons denuclearization of North Korea as a precondition for diplomacy. Trump and Kim met three times between 2018 and 2019, but their high-level diplomacy eventually collapsed over disagreements surrounding Pyongyang's demand for extensive sanctions relief in exchange for limited steps toward denuclearization. On Monday, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung's office expressed hope that the "friendly relationship" between Trump and Kim could lead to "meaningful dialogue" between the two countries and help promote peace on the Korean Peninsula. The statement drew strong criticism from South Korean conservatives, who accused Lee's government of placing the possible resumption of Trump-Kim diplomacy ahead of security concerns arising from Trump's decision to scale back the exercises.



Nabila demands budget increase for maternal, newborn treatment

Entertainment Desk

Masuma Rahman Nabila is a popular actress of this generation. Outside the world of glamour, she is also regularly vocal about her social responsibilities. This time, in that vein, the actress has played a vocal role in protecting the health rights of underprivileged mothers and children in the Rangpur region. Nabila participated in a press briefing organised at a convention hall on Central Road in Rangpur city on August 17 afternoon. There, she urged to ensure quality maternal and newborn services in government medical centres. At the same time, she called on everyone to come forward unitedly to prevent diseases like child marriage and teenage pregnancy. Before the briefing, Nabila visited the ongoing healthcare activities under the 'Jononi' project of Rangpur division.



As part of the inspection, she visited various medical centers and witnessed the quality of overall services for mothers and newborns. During this time, the popular star exchanged views with women who came to seek prenatal and postnatal services, their relatives, teenage girls working to prevent

child marriage, local public representatives and health officials. Nabila, speaking to media, said, "We must ensure that the common people receive quality services at government medical centers. There is no alternative to having timely healthcare and effective referral systems in remote and inaccessible areas. If health workers are properly trained, assigned to the right places, and provided with a good working environment, people's trust in medical services will increase to a great extent." Demanding an increase in government allocation for the health sector, the actress also said, "With a little extra attention and investment, every mother and newborn in the Rangpur region will have the opportunity to receive safe medical care. Along with the government, initiatives like the 'Jononi' project are doing excellent work towards this end."



'The Difficult Bride' to premiere at London fest

Entertainment Desk

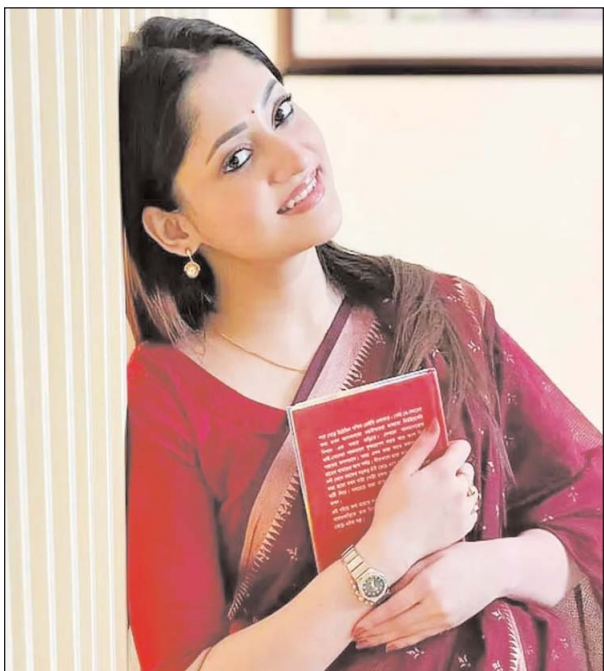
Rubaiyat Hossain's 'The Difficult Bride' has been in the news after making it to two prestigious international film festivals like Venice and Toronto. This time, the movie has made it to another festival. The lineup for the 70th edition of the BFI London Film Festival was announced on Monday. 'The Difficult Bride' is on the list. Variety reported that the 70th BFI London Film Festival will be held from October 7 to 18. This year, 10 films will compete for the 'Best Film Award' trophy. Apart from Rubaiyat Hossain's 'The Difficult Bride' from Bangladesh, the list includes Japan's Hirokazu Kore-Eda's 'Look Back', Ukraine's Sergey Loznitsa's 'Imperium', UK's Carol Morley's '7 Miles Out', Hungary's Lili Horvat's 'My Notes on Mars', Argentina's Benjamin Naishtat's 'Glaxo', Irish production duo Christine Molloy and Joe Lawler's 'Act 3', Italy's Giovanni Tartorici's 'Kettise', Poland's Malgorzata Szumowska and Michael Englert's 'The Idiots' and Denmark's May El-Tukhi's 'Women Unknown'. "We are proud to welcome both old and new filmmakers to the same stage for the 70th edition of the festival," said Christy Matheson, director of the BFI London Film Festival. "This year's competition features a wonderful mix of diverse production styles and stories." The producer of 'The Difficult Bride' says that it is a psychological horror film. The story is centered around the traditional Mayfair Beauty Parlor in Dhaka. Zainin Karim plays the lead role in the film. This is her first film. Also starring are Azmeri Haque Badhon, Rikita Nandini Shimu, Sunerah Binte Kamal, Shatabdi Wadud, Saberi Alam and Mohammad Bari. The film is jointly produced by France's François d'Artemare, Germany's Anna Cachco, Portugal's Pedro Borges and Norway's Ingard Lil Hutton, along with Rubaiyat Hossain.



I am not Yet married: Puja

Entertainment Desk

Dhallywood actress Puja Cherry Roy has denied recent reports about her marriage, calling them misleading and saying she has not yet married. In a statement posted on social media on Monday night, she said she would inform the public herself when she does marry. The actress said several media outlets have recently published reports linking her to marriage with people from different professions, without providing reliable information. She described the reports as distressing and embarrassing. "I am still unmarried. When I do get married, you will be the first to know," she said. Puja had previously said in an interview that she was engaged and that her marriage had been arranged by her family. She has now clarified that the marriage itself has not yet taken place. In her statement, the actress also referred to her legal rights concerning privacy and the protection of her reputation. She urged journalists and media organisations to exercise greater caution when reporting on the personal lives of public figures, particularly when the information has not been independently verified.



Hit Turkish series on Deepto TV in Bengali

Entertainment Desk

The Turkish series 'Kara Sevda' ('Endless Love') began airing in 2015. It aired until 2017. The series gained immense popularity not only in Türkiye, but also internationally. In 2017, it won the Best Telenovela award at the International Emmy Awards. The popular series has now come to Bengali. Its Bengali dubbed 'Ananta Bhalobasha' has started airing on Deepto TV from August 15. Its episodes are being aired from Saturday to Thursday at 8:30pm. Various aspects of love, breakups and family tensions are highlighted in the story of the series. Kemal Saidere (Shafiqul Islam), Nihan Sejin (Rubaiyya Matin Geeti), Emir Kozulu (Morshed Siddique Moru), Zeynep Saidere (Nadia Iqbal), Asu Alajahan (Jayashree Majumder Lata), Ozan Sejin (Khairul Alam Himu), Leila (Marina Akhter), Tariq Saidere (Shahriyar Rana Jewel), Fehime (Sharmin Mrttika) and others have voiced their characters in Bengali. The overall supervision of the voice acting is by Jayashree Majumder Lata. The translated dialogues of the series have been written and edited by Deepto TV's own team under the supervision of Mahmudul Hasan Murad.

Emraan Hashmi's Awarapan 2 enters Rs 100 crore club in India

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood actor Emraan Hashmi has entered the coveted Rs 100 crore club with his latest film Awarapan 2, which has emerged as a major box-office success within just five days of its release. The sequel to the 2007 film Awarapan has maintained a strong run since its release, earning Rs 100.75 crore net in India by Tuesday, according to Sacnilk. The film's performance has further strengthened Hashmi's position at the box office following the success of Dhurandhar. On its fifth day, Awarapan 2 collected Rs 9.75 crore net in India from 11,060 shows. Its India gross collection has reached Rs 120.33 crore. The film also earned Rs 2 crore in overseas markets on Day 5, taking its total overseas gross to Rs 23.80 crore. Its worldwide gross collection now stands at Rs 144.13 crore. Awarapan 2 opened with Rs 22 crore on its first day from 9,033 shows. It recorded a significant jump on Saturday, collecting Rs 33.75 crore from 10,496 shows, followed by Rs 26 crore on Sunday from



9,403 shows. The film remained steady on Monday, earning Rs 9.25 crore, before adding another Rs 9.75 crore on its fifth day. The film was also the biggest performer in the Independence Day box-office race, collecting Rs 40.50 crore. Tamil Vishwanath & Sons earned Rs 26 crore, Batwara 1947 collected Rs 16.20 crore, Spider-Man: Brand New Day made Rs 12 crore, while the DC film earned Rs 6.30 crore. Awarapan 2 surpassed the lifetime India collection of the original Awarapan on its opening day. The 2007 film had earned Rs 7.75 crore net during its entire theatrical run. By Saturday, the sequel had also overtaken the lifetime collections of several of Hashmi's successful films, including Haq (Rs 20 crore), Raaz 2 (Rs 25.50 crore), Ek Thi Daayan (Rs 26 crore) and Jannat (Rs 30 crore). The strong performance of Awarapan 2 has marked a significant box-office comeback for Hashmi, with the film benefiting from nostalgia surrounding the original and strong audience interest in its sequel.

Ram Gopal Varma on remembering Sridevi on her birth anniversary

Entertainment Desk

Ram Gopal Varma had sparked a massive uproar in 2015 when, in his memoir Guns and Thighs: The Story of My Life, he professed a lifelong obsession with late actor Sridevi. However, in a recent interaction, RGV said he doesn't 'think of dead people at all' and is instead focusing on his next film, Police Company, starring Harshvardhan Rane. RGV has contributed a chapter on Sridevi to her biography, The Empress, by Dhiraj U Kumar. While speaking to Variety India about the same, the director even declared his chapter 'the best'. The book was announced by Priyanka Chopra on Sridevi's birth anniversary on August 13. During the interaction, when RGV was asked how he marked his favourite star's birth anniversary and whether he remembered her by watching her films, he said, "No! I don't think of dead people at all. Once they are gone, they are out of my life. I would rather focus on my own life than think of the dead. I am fully into shooting my film 'Police Company' with Harshvardhan Rane." While RGV said that he doesn't think of dead people, he went on to share his memory of meeting Sridevi for the first time at her Chennai home. He said, "I had gone to meet her at her residence in Chennai to sign her. I was sitting in the living room with her mother, while Sridevi just flitted in and out of the room as she was packing to catch a flight. Every time she came into the room, it was like a sudden rush of fresh, invigorating breeze. I want her to come back to earth again. Just once. So that humanity would know she really existed." For the unversed, RGV directed Sridevi in films like Great Robbery, Govindhaa Govindhaa and Hairaan. RGV dedicated a chapter to Sridevi in his book Guns and Thighs, which led to considerable controversy. In the chapter, he spoke about his obsession with Sridevi, adding that he "hated" Boney Kapoor for "bringing that angel down from heaven to such an ordinary, humdrum existence."

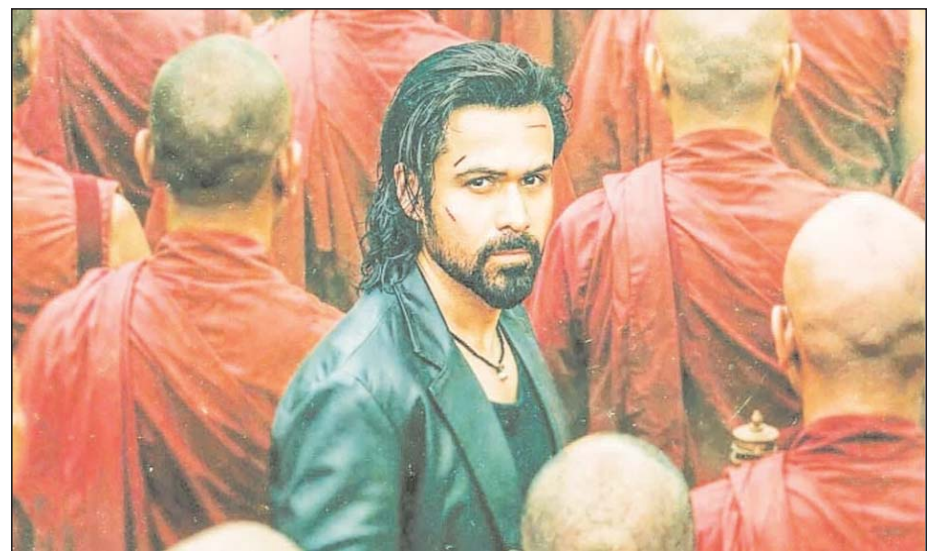
Kanchan's memory remains intact, condition stable

Entertainment Desk

Noted Dhallywood actor and Nirapad Sarak Chai (Nischa) Chairman Ilias Kanchan, who has been undergoing treatment for a brain tumour, returned to Bangladesh in first week of August after spending around a year and a half receiving treatment in London. After spending 10 days in Dhaka with family members, colleagues and well-wishers, he returned to London on August 12 to resume treatment. During his brief stay, reports circulated on social media and elsewhere suggesting that Kanchan was having difficulty remembering things. His family physician, Dr Rubaiyat Rahman, however, has dismissed those concerns, saying Kanchan's memory remains intact. According to the palliative care specialist, his illness has instead affected the coordination of his speech.



Rahman was in London during Kanchan's treatment and returned to Dhaka after the actor arrived in the country on August 3. Speaking to media about Kanchan's current condition, Rahman said, "Ilias Kanchan is maintaining his usual lifestyle and daily routine, and even offering his five daily prayers regularly. I have prayed with him myself, with him leading the prayer."



Emraan Hashmi's incredible comeback at box office

Entertainment Desk

After a long period of failure and slump, Bollywood actor Emraan Hashmi has made a royal comeback at the box office. His new film 'Awarapan 2' was released on August 14. This action-romantic film has earned Rs 114 crore worldwide in just three days. This is the highest grossing record in

Emraan Hashmi's career so far in the first three days. Nitin Kakkar's 'Awarapan 2' has collected Rs 97.5 crore in India till Sunday. Another Rs 16.5 crore has come from the international market. Overall, Hashmi has broken all his previous records in terms of opening weekend. Earlier, his film 'Baadshaho', released in 2017, had collected Rs 43.3 crore in the first three days.

I felt like I was going to die: Manisha Koirala

Entertainment Desk

Manisha Koirala, one of the most popular actresses in Bollywood in the 90s, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2012. The Nepali beauty was diagnosed in 2012. Even though she has overcome the deadly disease cancer after a long battle and gained a new lease of life, the mental anguish and loneliness of that difficult time are still fresh in her memory. In a recent interview, she shared her memories of that 'scary and dark' night of her cancer diagnosis. Participating in Sushant Pradhan's podcast, Manisha says, "During the day, doctors told me about cancer. But at night, a huge emptiness and loneliness surrounded me."





No.1 Sabalenka slams Wang to advance at Cincinnati

Sports Desk

Aryna Sabalenka unleashed her big game with devastating effect on Tuesday, hammering China's Wang Xinyu 6-1, 6-3 to reach the fourth round of the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters. The world number one took only 20 minutes to blow through the first set against her 36th-ranked opponent and began the second set with a break of serve. Sabalenka kept up the pressure in the second set with Wang double-faulting on the top seed's first match point after 54 minutes. The victory marked the 45th in a row for Sabalenka at the Masters 1000 level. "I cannot complain. She's a tough opponent," Sabalenka said. "To win in straight sets like this in under an hour is insane. "I'm super happy to be through. I really trusted myself and went for my shots. I wasn't over-thinking. I was able to stay focused and be in every point." Sabalenka next plays Czech Sara Bejlek, a 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 winner over Ekaterina Alexandrova. Fourth seed Coco Gauff needed to battle following a sizzling first set in a 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) victory over fellow American Ann Li. The 2023 champion had it all her own way in the opening set against her 29th-ranked foe, winning in 30 minutes. The pair exchanged early breaks in the second on the way to a tie-breaker, in which Gauff seized a 4-1 lead and won on her third match point. "She played better in the second set and I missed a couple of break opportuni-



ties," Gauff said. "I tried to forget about those. "It was hard to control the ball for both of us and it was my first time playing a day match on this center court so I had to adjust to that." Mirra Andreeva's French Open reigning champion status counted for little as the fifth seed struggled to close out a 6-1, 7-6 (7/5) victory over Janice Tjen. The Indonesian challenger ranked 37 was bowled over in the first set but made Andreeva work to finally advance. "In the first I was in command and she had unforced errors here and there, but in the second after a couple of games I started getting nervous, she made fewer mistakes -- it turned into a match of mentality and physicality," Andreeva said. Eighth seed Elina Svitolina was forced to withdraw before her match against Wang Xiyu with an ankle injury. "I've been advised by the doctors to take a little bit of time to rest and recover completely," the Ukrainian said in a statement. Canada's second-seeded Felix Auger-

Aliassime eliminated Argentina's Juan Manuel Cerundolo 7-5, 6-1 in 90 minutes. "It was a tricky start, finding my rhythm," the Canadian said. "Lefties are tricky, you don't play them so often. You can prepare all you want but until you step onto the court you can't find your right adjustments. Then you feel comfortable." Washington winner and fifth seed Taylor Fritz fired eight aces in defeating Daniel Merida 6-3 6-4 in 83 minutes. The Spaniard made 25 unforced errors as Fritz booked a fourth-round match against Australian Chris O'Connell, who is 0-3 against the American. - 'I played amazing' - Last week's Montreal finalist Brandon Nakashima came from the brink to upset fourth seed Daniil Medvedev 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (7/4), 6-1. Nakashima led 5-2 in the first set before falling in the tie-breaker, then saved three match points in the 10th game of the second set on the way to forcing a third, which he dominated. Italian 10th seed Lorenzo Musetti defeated American Michael Zheng 6-1, 6-3 in 71 minutes. Portugal's Nuno Borges defeated 2021 runner-up Andrey Rublev 6-3, 6-4 in 72 minutes. The 47th-ranked Borges ended a five-match loss streak in the rivalry while Rublev will drop from the ranking top 20 for the first time since January 2020. "I played amazing," Borges said. "It means a lot to be in the fourth round. It's a big moment for me."

Saifuddin urges more Australia exposure for Bangladesh's next generation

Sports Desk

Bangladesh's pace-bowling allrounder Mohammad Saifuddin believes the historic nine-wicket victory over Australia in Darwin could open the door to more opportunities for the country's cricketers to play in challenging overseas conditions. Bangladesh took a 1-0 lead in the two-match Test series, securing the victory inside four days, their first Test win in Australia in 23 years. The result has drawn widespread praise internationally and instilled confidence among players beyond the national team. Saifuddin said the significance of the victory is huge. "It's a truly extraordinary moment," he told reporters in Mirpur today. "We have won many matches before, but this Test win is special for us." The allrounder said regular exposure to conditions in countries like Australia and England would be particularly valuable for Bangladesh's emerging players. "Every player dreams of playing in the conditions of England and Australia. InshaAllah we hope to play more in these venues and in these countries," he remarked. Saifuddin also hoped that Australia's defeat could encourage the team to invite Bangladesh for more matches across formats in future. "Since we have defeated Australia in ODIs at home and in Tests on their soil, InshaAllah they may invite us better in the future," he said. "If we can play more matches on their soil, it will be good for our country's cricket." He thanked those responsible for creating opportunities for the national team and said greater exposure would benefit future generations. "Thanks to those who are creating this platform, so that the next generation gets more opportunities to play on Australian soil," he opined.



Bangladesh's Darwin victory was built on a strong allround performance. Hasan Mahmud claimed nine wickets across the two innings, while Tanzid Hasan Tamim scored a century in the first innings and Mehidy Hasan Miraz made important contributions with both bat and ball. Saifuddin, however, stressed that the victory was the result of a collective effort. "Everyone in every department gave their best," he said. "I don't want to name anyone in particular, everyone played amazingly. When they got the opportunity, everyone gave what the team needed." He singled out Hasan Mahmud for special praise, saying the fast bowler's recent form and experience playing

county cricket in England had helped prepare him for demanding conditions. "Hasan Mahmud has been in good shape for the last few years. Since he recently played county in English conditions, it is expected to play well," Saifuddin said, adding Hasan is bowling exceptionally well at this moment and is in his best form." Competition for places in Bangladesh's pace attack is also intensifying, but Saifuddin said that should encourage players to work harder rather than create anxiety. "The one who plays well will get the opportunity. There is nothing to worry about, but we have to increase our work mentality," he said. Bangladesh now have an opportunity to secure a historic series victory, with the second and final Test scheduled to begin in Mackay on August 22. Saifuddin believes that Australia would be determined to respond after the heavy defeat but remained optimistic about Bangladesh's chances. "It is a great opportunity to win the series against Australia on their soil. Although it will not be easy, because Australia will try to make a comeback with their best," he said. "Still, since we are all in good shape, I hope something good will happen."

Fenerbahce held by Lyon in Champions League play-offs

Sports Desk

Mason Greenwood struck a fine second-half equaliser as Fenerbahce fought back to draw 1-1 at home to Lyon in Tuesday's Champions League play-off first leg. Lois Openda headed Lyon in front with his first goal for the French club in Istanbul, but Greenwood levelled shortly after the break to leave the tie evenly poised. Norwegian side Viking Stavanger, competing in the Champions League for the first time in 34 years, boosted their hopes of reaching the league phase for the first time by rallying from two goals down to draw 2-2 at Dinamo Zagreb. Dion Bello and Mateo Lisica struck inside the opening 10 minutes for Zagreb, but Viking, who edged Bodo/Glimt to the Norwegian title



last season, pulled level by half-time through goals from Peter Christiansen and Zlatko Tripic. Levski Sofia and AEK Athens drew 0-0 in Bulgaria. Scottish champions Celtic enter the competition on Wednesday when they host Austrian club LASK in the first leg. The second legs are scheduled for August 25-26.

IM10 FC post emphatic win as Moin slams hat-trick

Sports Desk

Moin Ahmed slammed a magnificent hat-trick as IM10 FC earned an overwhelming 6-1 goal victory over Xenon FC in the Men's Futsal League Bangladesh held last night at Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium in the city's Mirpur. Apart from Moin's hat-trick with four goals in the 2nd, 21st, 23rd and 33rd minutes Ibrahim supported him with a lone goal in the 6th minute for IM10 FC. Saif Mannan Ratul scored a lone goal for Xenon FC in the 13rd minute of the match. Moin and Mridul of the winning team both were named the player of the match for their impressive performance in the match.



India four wickets away from victory in Sri Lanka Test

Sports Desk

India closed on victory in the opening Test after striking twice to reduce Sri Lanka to 175-6 at lunch on the final day in Galle on Wednesday. Set a target of 372 runs, Sri Lanka were 197 runs adrift with four wickets in hand. A rock-solid Sonal Dinusha was batting on 65 at lunch along with Keshara Nuwantha on eight. Resuming on an overnight score of 84-4, Sri Lanka captain Dhananjaya de Silva dug deep alongside first-innings centurion Dinusha, adding 95 runs for the fifth wicket. Their stand, lasting for over two hours, ended when De Silva attempted a sweep shot off Ravindra Jadeja but ended up getting a top edge which was caught at short fine-leg by Manav Suthar. His 59 came off 151 balls and contained seven fours. India's perseverance paid off when Prasidh Krishna had wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella caught behind for 10. But the 25-year-old Dinusha, who struck his maiden Test hundred in the first innings, held firm and used his feet expertly against spin. Dinusha brought up his half-century with a six off Kuldeep Yadav.



Sports Field Logistics earn big win

Sports Desk

Shimla Khatun slammed a brilliant double hat-tricks as Sports Field Logistics registered an emphatic 8-3 goals victory over Dhaka Athletics Club in the Women's Futsal League held today (Wednesday) at Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium in the city's Mirpur. Shimla Khatun scored all the eight goals in the 4th, 5th, 25th, 28th, 28th, 30th 32nd and 32nd minutes for the winners'. Purnima Rani Mondal netted twice in the 12nd and 14th minutes while Jannatul Islam Rumi scored the other one goal in the third minute for the losers'. Shimla Khatun was named the player of the match for her outstanding performance in the match.

Bangladesh stars rise in ICC rankings after historic Test win over Australia

Sports Desk

Bangladesh cricketers made significant gains in the latest ICC Test rankings following their landmark nine-wicket victory over Australia in Darwin. Coming to tour for a Test series Down Under for the first time in 24 years, Bangladesh players collectively produced a memorable performance, which reflected in the ICC rankings. Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto was among the biggest gainers, climbing nine places to 20th in the Test batting rankings after scoring a crucial 84 in the first innings. Veteran batter Mominul Haque also moved up five places to 31st. Bangladesh's bowlers also made notable progress. Mehidy Hasan Miraz rose three places to 24th after taking five wickets in the second innings. Fast bowler Hasan Mahmud, who became the first Bangladeshi bowler to claim a five-for on Australian soil registered the biggest jump of the week. After snapping up nine wickets in the match and earning the Player of the Match award, he surged 26 places to 38th in the Test bowling rankings. Australia's Travis Head, meanwhile, slipped three places to fourth after scores of 22 and 17 in the two innings. England's Harry Brook reclaimed the top spot among Test batters, with teammate Joe Root second and Australia's Steve Smith third. The gap between the top four is just 33 rating points. India's Jasprit Bumrah retained the No. 1 position in the Test bowling rankings.

ery that moved sharply back into the left-hander and struck his pads. Awais reviewed the decision but the call was upheld. Robinson struck again in his fifth over, trapping Masood lbw for five with another well-directed delivery. Pakistan were 6-2 before Abdullah Shafique and Imam-ul-Haq began to steady the innings. Shafique was unbeaten on 12 from 19 balls, while Imam had made five from 18 when rain stopped play after 9.4 overs. Robinson finished his opening spell with impressive figures of 5-1-12-2, while England's other bowlers also kept the Pakistan batters under pressure.

Sports Desk

Late Argentine football legend Diego Maradona's failing kidneys should have been a red flag for his doctors, a specialist told the trial over the player's death on Tuesday. Maradona, who died aged 60 while convalescing after surgery for a brain clot, suffered from "chronic kidney disease," nephrologist Hernan Trimarchi told a court near Buenos Aires that is trying Maradona's medical team for criminal negligence. The 1986 World Cup star died of heart failure and acute pulmonary edema -- a condition where fluid accumulates in the lungs -- at a rented home in the Buenos Aires suburb of Tigre on November 25, 2020. Seven healthcare professionals, including Maradona's personal physician, psychiatrist and nursing staff, are accused of providing woefully inadequate care. The trial is also examining whether their decision to allow him to convalesce in a private home instead of a medical facility endangered his life.



He said the player's kidneys were heavy and contained lesions linked to a history of obesity, cocaine use, and hypertension. "At a minimum," he said, the patient should have undergone "daily medical checkups, daily nursing care, blood tests and monitoring of his vital signs." He added that there was no record of any blood test being performed during his two-week convalescence. He added that Maradona's ballooning size and blood pressure should also have been cause for concern. In April, the court was shown images of the star on his death bed, his stomach grotesquely distended by edema.

An autopsy showed he was in agony for several hours before his death. Trimarchi is the third specialist to tell the court that Maradona's doctors missed crucial warning signs. The accused, who risk up to 25 years imprisonment if convicted, deny responsibility for the icon's death. The trial is expected to last until at least September.

Rain stops play as Pakistan struggle at 23-2 against England

Sports Desk

Rain interrupted the opening day of the first Test between England and Pakistan at Headingley on Wednesday, with the visitors reduced to 23-2 after England's bowlers made the most of the overcast conditions. England won the toss and elected to bowl first. Ollie Robinson made an immediate impact, taking a wicket with the first ball of the match and later dismissing Pakistan captain Shan Masood to leave the visitors in early trouble. Robinson removed opener Azan Awais for a duck with a deliv-



Kalurghat-Chaktai Marine Drive to open to all vehicles by December

Staff correspondent

All types of vehicles are expected to start running on the much-awaited Kalurghat-Chaktai four-lane Marine Drive by December this year, according to the Chattogram Development Authority (CDA).About 92 percent of the construction work of the 9.5-kilometre-long project has already been completed, CDA sources said.Project Director Engineer Rajib Das told BSS that the remaining work is expected to be completed by December, allowing all types of vehicles to use the road. The embankment-cum-marine drive along the western bank of the Karnaphuli River is being constructed at a cost of Tk 2,275 crore. Rajib Das said around 10 kilometres of the stretch has been completed, while two kilometres of land from the Kalurghat Industrial Area to the Railway Bridge was recently acquired for the project. He said the acquisition of 100 metres of land adjacent to the

Kalurghat Bridge area is expected to be completed within the stipulated time. The CDA has already compensated the landowners to facilitate smooth construction, he added.A four-kilometre walkway from Kalpolok at Chaktai to Bolirhat has already been completed. The CDA also plans to develop a five-kilometre tourist zone along the riverbank in Bakalia, including a walkway from Shah Amanat Bridge to Bolirhat and a restaurant with entertainment facilities for children. The embankment road will be four lanes wide, 80 feet in width and 24.5 feet above sea level. The project is being implemented in line with JBIC guidelines and the 1995 Chattogram Metropolitan Master Plan.Twelve high-tide protection regulators and pump houses have already been installed at canal mouths to facilitate efficient drainage of rainwater.Construction of the project began in June 2019 with the inauguration of a sluice gate at the Chaktai Canal estuary. The government later granted a one-year extension, setting June 2026 as the revised completion deadline

Expectation of Change in Sarail Sadar Union, Abdul Jabbar Back in Discussion for Chairman Post



Taslima Khandaker Nusharat, Sarail, B.Baria

Many people of Sarail Sadar Union are demanding the leadership of current Chairman Abdul Jabbar with the expectation of development, modern union services and ensuring transparent administration. In this context, Chairman aspirant Mr. Abdul Jabbar is being discussed in various circles.Supporters claim that Sarail Sadar Union can be transformed into a modern and model union through honest, competent and youth-friendly leadership. They believe he

can play an effective role in planned development, building a clean union, improving the quality of public services and creating opportunities. Currently, Abdul Jabbar is seen moving around day and night for the people in their joys and sorrows in every ward of the area.A section of locals said that infrastructural development of the union, waterlogging mitigation, road renovation, and ensuring digital citizen services are the major challenges for the coming days. They believe skilled and visionary leadership is needed on these issues.Meanwhile, supporters of Mr. Abdul Jabbar have expressed hope that with the love and cooperation of the people, he will work for the development and welfare of Sarail Sadar UP. In their words, "The demand of the times is change, and leadership can play an important role in fulfilling public expectations — current Chairman Abdul Jabbar."It may be noted that the final process and candidacy for the Chairman post will be completed in accordance with the relevant laws and the rules of the Election Commission. The future leadership of Sarail Sadar UP will be elected through the votes of the people.

Climate resilience strategy for Khulna City focuses on WASH

Staff correspondent

A day-long consultation workshop on "Climate Resilience Strategy for Khulna City: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)" was held at the CSS Aava Centre in the city on Wednesday.Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Administrator Nazrul Islam Manju chaired the workshop, while Khulna WASA Chairman Mohammad Moniruzzaman addressed it as the chief guest.The workshop was organized by Accompany Major Consultant (AMC), a consulting firm, under the Climate Change Adapted Urban Development (CCAUD) project being implemented under KCC supervision. Representatives of KCC, Khulna WASA, Khulna Development Authority (KDA), Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET), Khulna University and non-government organizations attended the workshop.The project is being jointly implemented by the Government of Bangladesh, the German Development Bank and the KCC.Addressing the inaugural session, KCC Administrator Nazrul Islam Manju urged the authorities concerned to complete the activities undertaken under the project within the stipulated time."Waste management and waterlogging have become major challenges for us. Although various initiatives have provided temporary relief from waterlogging during the current monsoon, such measures are not sustainable. Long-term solutions are now needed," he said. He urged Khulna WASA to ensure proper water management in low-income settlements and emphasized installing water ATM booths.He also called upon the WASA authorities to inform city residents in advance about seasonal changes in water supply, particularly when the supplied water may become saline.The main objective of the project is to improve the quality of life of urban residents by strengthening the capacity of local government institutions. The project was adopted in November 2022.

BGB hands over seven ancient artifacts to Dept of Archaeology

Staff correspondent

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has handed over seven ancient statues and other archaeological artifacts recovered during separate operations in Dinajpur to the Department of Archaeology for preservation.Dinajpur Battalion (42 BGB) handed over the artifacts to Md Shihab Hossain, Assistant Custodian of Kantanagar Archaeological Museum in Kaharole, Dinajpur, on Tuesday, said a press release issued by the paramilitary force this afternoon.According to BGB, the force regularly conducts operations along the border to prevent smuggling, drug trafficking, human trafficking, arms trafficking and illegal trafficking of archaeological artifacts, alongside its border security duties.On July 5, 42 BGB recovered three ancient stone statues during separate .



Students Receive School Bags and Educational Materials in Sitakunda

Md. Omar Faruk, Special correspondent.

A total of 250 students of Sheikh-er Hat Government Primary School in Sitakunda, Chattogram, have received school bags and various educational materials under an initiative of the Community Development Centre (CODEC).The distribution programme was held at the school premises at 11:00 am yesterday. Assistant Education Officer of Sitakunda Md. Main Uddin attended the programme as the chief guest, while Md. Saiyedul Islam, Senior Zonal Manager of CODEC, was present as the special guest.The programme was presided over by Uttam

Kumar Nath, Head Teacher of the school. CODEC's Bakkhali Branch Manager, teachers, guardians and other concerned individuals were also present.During the programme, school bags and various educational materials were handed over to all 250 students.The organisers said the initiative was taken to encourage students in their studies and help create a more supportive educational environment. They expressed hope that such initiatives would play a positive role in improving students' interest in education and supporting their continued studies.Sitakunda, Chattogram. Education & Humanitarian Initiative.

A Japan expatriate groom called off his wedding in Akhaura after goat meat was not served



M. Badal Khandaker (District Correspondent)

BrahmanbariaA shocking incident of a wedding being called off occurred in Akhaura, Brahmanbaria, over the absence of goat meat in the wedding meal. During the serving of the traditional 'Khodor', a Japan expatriate groom became angry that there was no goat meat and left the bride's house without completing the wedding formalities.The incident took place in Tolatala village under Dharkhar Union of Akhaura Upazila. The groom, Junayed Mia, is the son of Abdul Jalil from Niamatpur village in neighboring Kasba Upazila.According to local sources, as per the prior arrangement, Junayed Mia arrived at the bride's house with the groom's party and was welcomed with flowers. After the gate ceremony and other formalities, he was seated at the dining table. Following hospitality to relatives, the traditional 'Khodor' was served to the groom's side as per wedding custom.At

that time, groom Junayed Mia objected to the absence of goat meat in the meal. He stated that he would not eat without goat meat, and that he would not agree to the marriage either if goat meat was not arranged.The bride's family was stunned by the sudden situation. The bride's father, Shafiq Mia, along with relatives and local dignitaries, tried to reason with the groom. Shafiq Mia said that if he had been informed about the goat meat beforehand, he would have arranged it himself. But no such demand was made to him before the wedding.Locals also tried to calm the situation. However, despite being persuaded for a long time, the groom remained firm in his decision. Finally, without completing any formalities, he left the bride's house.Regarding this, local UP member Ashik Mia said, "The incident is extremely painful. No parents want to face such a situation. The groom's behavior and remarks seemed somewhat abnormal. Even after repeated attempts to persuade him, he refused to get married without goat meat."The incident has sparked widespread discussion and criticism in the area. Many locals expressed surprise that such an important relationship as marriage was broken over a single food item. Especially since the decision came right before the completion of the wedding formalities, locals said the bride's family has been left in a socially and mentally distressing situation.

School teacher's hanging body recovered in Manikganj

Staff correspondent

Police recovered the hanging body of a schoolteacher from the Singair Poura Sava area of the district.The deceased was identified as Selina Akter, 25, daughter of late Ansar Ali of Angaria village under Singair Poura Sava. She was an assistant teacher at Rupsa Wahed Ali High School in Shibabalaya upazila. According to family members and police, Selina's relatives found her hanging inside her room last night and informed the police.Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Singair Police Station Md Mazharul Islam said police recovered the body and sent it to the morgue of Manikganj 250-bed General Hospital for autopsy.The OC said they primarily suspected that Selina might have died by suicide, but the exact cause of death would be confirmed after receiving the post-mortem report.

RMP Commissioner urges police to stand by children

Staff correspondent

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) Commissioner Mohammad Faizul Kabir today called on police officers to stand by children with empathy, trust and sensitivity, particularly those who have experienced trauma. "If we can create a sense of security in a child's mind, the child will be able to speak freely, making it possible to learn what actually happened," he said.Therefore, he said, there is no alternative to ensuring that police officers who work with children are humane, patient and sensitive.RMP Commissioner Faizul Kabir made the remarks while inaugurating a daylong training programme on psychosocial care for police officers here today as the chief guest.The RMP and World Vision Bangladesh's Rajshahi City Area Development Programme jointly organised the training at the POM Conference Room of the Police Lines. Additional Police Commissioner Faruk Hossain and Deputy Commissioner Khorshed Alam attended the event as special guests.During the daylong training, Professor Murshida Ferdous Binte Habib of the Department of Psychology at Rajshahi University, serving as a trainer, highlighted children's mental development, the effects of trauma, behavioural changes among child victims, safe communication and strategies for providing psychosocial support.Lotus Chisim, Senior Manager of the Rajshahi City Area Development Coordination Office of World Vision, presided over the session, while Programme Officer Ripon Halder moderated.

3 accused held within 24 hours of Nilphamari murder case

Staff correspondent

Within 24 hours of filing the murder case for killing a man over a family dispute in Nilphamari, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) arrested three accused from the Delta Mour area under Kashimpur Police Station in Gazipur on Tuesday afternoon. The arrested are Shyamol Roy, 45, his wife Babita Rani Roy, 42, and his son Akash Roy, 22, of Dakshin Bahagili Sanyasipara (Ghatpar) village under Kishoreganj Upazila Health Complex on the same day when the doctor on duty referred him to Rangpur Medical College and Hospital (RpMCH)for better treatment. He died at 3.39 pm on August 16, 2026 at RpMCH while undergoing treatment.Later, the victim's son Kajal Gir, 26, filed a murder case murder case against eight people.



The foundation anniversary of the volunteer team was celebrated in Faridpur

Biplal Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

The 46th foundation anniversary of the Nationalist Volunteers was celebrated in Faridpur with a colorful procession and programme.A joyous procession was taken out in front of the Brahmo Samaj Civil Surgeon office in the city on Wednesday afternoon. After circling various important and main main roads of the city, the procession ended with a short rally at the Janata Bank junction.The party's leaders and workers from all levels participated in this procession of the founding anniversary. It was attended by—Zilla Parishad Administrator Afzal Hossain Khan Palash, Member Secretary of District BNP AKM Kibria Swapan, District Volunteers General Secretary Shahriar Hossain Laksh, Metropolitan BNP General Secretary Golam Mostafa Miraj, Metropolitan Volunteers Dal President Saikat Hasan. A large number of leaders, workers and supporters of the Nationalist Party (BNP) and its various organs and affiliates participated spontaneously in the programme.



Two awarded 14-years in jail over gold smuggling

Staff correspondent

A Chattogram court today sentenced two individuals to 14 years in prison for their involvement in the illegal smuggling of gold bars, as per the case from Akbarshah Police Station.Judge Afroza Jasmine Koli of the Chattogram Metropolitan Special Tribunal-8 delivered the ruling. The convicted individuals are Md. Arif from Faridganj upazila in Chandpur district and Md. Rubel from Hajiganj district.According to court bench assistant Naeem Hossain, the sentences were handed down after the charges of gold smuggling were substantiated by the testimonies of five witnesses.Additionally, each convict was fined Tk 10,000, with a provision that failure to pay would result in an additional three months of imprisonment. Both accused were present in court when the verdict was pronounced and were subsequently taken to jail under a warrant of arrest.

The case documents reveal that on March 27, 2018, police executed a raid on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway at the head of CDA Road No. 1, acting on confidential information received at Akbarshah Police Station.During this operation, Arif and Rubel were apprehended. A subsequent search led to recovery of a total of four gold bars, with each individual possessing two bars. Each bar weighed 116.66 grams, bringing the total weight of the recovered gold to 466.64 grams. The then-officer of Akbarshah Police Station, Md. Zaker Hossain, initiated the case under the Special Powers Act of 1974, charging them with the illegal possession of gold bars brought from abroad. Following an investigation, the police submitted a charge sheet to the court. The trial commenced on September 21, 2021, with the framing of charges against the accused at the Chattogram Metropolitan Special Tribunal-8.