

Plastic producers must clean up their own mess

Every year, Bangladesh produces around 800,000 tonnes of plastic waste, of which only about 40 percent is recycled. The remaining 60 percent can be found clogging drains, scattered on the streets, or stagnating in water bodies, thus poisoning the environment and even entering our food chain. Against this backdrop, the government’s Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Guidelines 2026 come as a much-needed intervention as they place responsibility for plastic waste management on the manufacturers, brand owners, and importers. This, however, can only work if there is a practical collection system in place.

increasing to 30 percent and 15 percent, respectively, in subsequent years. This is a good starting point, but it cannot be the end goal. The government must progressively raise the targets to ensure a meaningful impact on the environment. But how realistic is it to expect producers to retrieve individual sachets or wrappers from millions of households by themselves? The most practical solution would be to establish a shared collection system through which companies can jointly take on this task. This means involving the existing informal recycling sector. There are hundreds of recycling plants and a large informal network of waste collectors. The government, through municipal corporations, can formally register them and pay them for their services, with the companies financing collection and recycling through these networks. That said, while big companies can afford such measures, the cost may be too high for smaller companies. So, the government can help those firms through technical assistance or access to shared collection and recycling schemes. It can create a common fund by making all manufacturers pay a fee based on the amount and type of plastic they produce. The harder the plastic is to recycle, and the more it is used for single-use products, the higher the fees should be. The fund can then be used for collection, sorting, and recycling. It is also crucial to make it mandatory for companies to report how much plastic they produce. A digital reporting system can be set up through which companies notify the government of how much they produce, collect, and recycle. Monitoring and verifying these figures are equally important. The EPR rules will work only if the government penalises those who do not comply through fines, withdrawal of environmental clearance and, ultimately, suspension of operations. Of equal importance is having a proper system for waste segregation at the household level, such as separating organic waste from plastic waste, with designated collection points for plastic. The EPR framework can work if every stakeholder takes responsibility for managing plastic waste and minimising its devastating consequences.

President pays tribute

the brave of Great Liberation War and proclaimer of independence Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, Bir Uttam, and Deshnetri Begum Khaleda Zia. Their patriotism, leadership and struggle to establish democracy will remain eternal in our national history.”

“We will all work together to build a peaceful, just, democratic, welfare-oriented and prosperous Bangladesh by upholding the spirit of the great liberation war, the ideals of the constitution and the dignity of the sacrifice of the valiant martyrs - this is our pledge.”

“May Almighty Allah grant forgiveness to the souls of the brave martyrs. And shower continued peace, prosperity and welfare on our beloved motherland Bangladesh. Amen. Long live Bangladesh.”

Later, the president planted a Magnolia Grandiflora sapling, watered it and left the National Memorial premises. Earlier on his arrival at the National Memorial premises, the President was received by State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Ishraque Hossain. Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman , Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Khondkar Misbah Ul Azim, Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan, Military Secretary to the President Major General A S M Bahauddin, Public Division Secretary AJM Salahuddin Nagari, President’s Press Secretary Md Sarwar Alam and Savar Cantonment GOC were present on the occasion.

PM calls for pilot project

a presentation at the meeting outlining various aspects of the proposed ‘National e-Health Platform’. Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md. Sakhawat Husain, State Minister Dr. M A Muhit, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister Dr. S M Ziauddin Hyder and Dr. Md Shakirul Islam Khan, Health Services Division Secretary Md Quamruzzaman Chowdhury, ICT Secretary Md. Mamunur Rashid Bhuiyan and senior officials of the concerned ministries, departments and agencies attended the meeting.

Prime Minister dedicated himself

are now the premier’s main objectives. He said, “We have to remember that during crisis in 1971, when the people of the country were bewildered and when the country’s Liberation War had reached its appropriate moment, a party that claims to be a force in favour of the country’s independence, utterly failed to discharge its responsibility. At that time, Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman declared independence from the Kalurghat Betar Kendro. These histories should be told to the younger generation.”

“Young generation had seen Bangladesh’s democratic journey failed and the BNP had repeatedly undertaken new efforts to take the country towards democracy. The minister further said that following the tragic death of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman in 1981, Begum Khaleda Zia, the country’s leader, had emerged as the torchbearer of the nation. She struggled on the streets, established herself as an uncompromising leader and was elected the country’s first woman Prime Minister through the people’s votes in 1991, Moyeen Khan said.

As a continuation of this, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman took charge of the country in 2026, he said, adding that under his leadership, “we will rebuild this country anew.”

On Friday evening, BNP Standing Committee Member and Narsingdi-2 constituency lawmaker Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan took oath as the Minister for Local Government, Rural

Personal preferences should not become public restrictions

Md. Neyamul Hossain

Death could not seal the controversies for Jason Arday. One would have thought that, with the demise of the Cambridge professor accused of plagiarism and subjected to a media trial, the centre of uninvited attention would wither away. Now that the American postdoctoral fellow who brought charges against Arday has been removed from his post at the University of Ghent, we are in for a spin-off. Nathan Cofnas, who had been dismissed from Cambridge’ Emmanuel College in 2024 because of his racist comments, brought charges of academic dishonesty against Arday—charges that were not proven. Cofnas’s Belgian employer suspended him, saying, “We attach immense importance to academic freedom and to open academic debate, even when views are controversial. However, that freedom is not unlimited.”

Recently, many Venn diagrams of freedom have emerged, with alternative views circled or forced to exist in the shadowy arcs. There are two things that I aim to unpack to relate them to some of the events unfolding here. They tell us of some worrying signs of social dynamism.

In Kishoreganj, a concert featuring a popular band named Ashes, had to be suspended on Wednesday due to a stricture that came from the local religious leaders. The local administration yielded to the demands, citing a legal loophole in the organiser’s registration as an event manager.

In Brahmanbaria, a musical event inside the police lines came under attack from local madrasa students who felt the music was too loud. The students entered the police lines and vandalised the venue. Police retaliated with baton charges, resulting in injuries to nearly 30 individuals in the process. Again, the freedom to perform music clashed with the right to quietness in the sleeping hours. However, the overlapping circles create shadow lines that compel us to consider whether the attack on the police was related to the anti-drug campaign they were celebrating or to the religious sentiments of the students. We would have considered the issues isolated had there not been other instances of moral policing driven by religious supremacy. We have heard of students allegedly storming private residences and demanding marriage certificates. Then again, some of these issues might involve local agendas that use conservatism and coercive moral policing for self-serving interests. We need to examine who is pitting religious freedom

Concurrently, there was another movement inside Dhaka University where some female students were asking for relaxation of the hall curfews. They did not want the hall gates to be regulated, stating that the hall administrations are very rigid and don’t entertain special circumstances. The students expressed their dissatisfaction over the lengthy permission procedures before they were allowed to leave the hall at night. “Even if our father dies, we still have to write an application by hand and get permission before we can leave,” one student told Dhaka Tribune. “Even in cases of serious illness, it takes two to three hours. We want these inhumane rules changed.”

For the university administration, the security concerns are legitimate as they become the proxy guardians once students are enrolled. But the problem arises when the university creates one circle for its male students and another for its female students, with two different sets of expectations, even when they have come to chase the same aspirational goals of graduation. Male students are thus granted adulthood while female students are granted supervised safety. The university recognises the man as a citizen and the woman as someone’s daughter. The hidden assumption is that the night belongs naturally to men. For women to enter or engage with nightly events, permissions are required. The underlying patriarchy assumes that controlling women’s movement can manage danger. Institutional reputation may depend more on preventing women’s visibility than preventing male misconduct. That’s why the same university that sends women to dormitories.

against cultural freedom, and for what purpose. Religious individuals, like any other group, have the right to uphold their views. They can choose not to attend concerts, prefer modest clothing as per their religious beliefs, pursue religious education, object peacefully to public policy, or raise legitimate complaints about noise, licensing or safety. However, problems occur when individual preferences

sive decision. Concurrently, there was another movement inside Dhaka University where some female students were asking for relaxation of the hall curfews. They did not want the hall gates to be regulated, stating that the hall administrations are very rigid and don’t entertain special circumstances. The students expressed their dissatisfaction over the lengthy permission procedures before they were allowed to leave the hall at night. “Even if our father dies, we still have to write an application by hand and get permission before we can leave,” one student told Dhaka Tribune. “Even in cases of serious illness, it takes two to three hours. We want these inhumane rules changed.”

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Development and Cooperatives.

True democracy now

and inspected development activities at the Mokamtola Union Jame Mosque and Mokamtola playground.s

DAE asks to complete

cerned blocks of the upazila and the upazila agriculture officials also will regularly verify and approve these collected datas. In first phases, the farmers data collection of two blocks has already been completed and then the concerned upazila officials have asked to collect the data of another two blocks by August 23.

At the same time, the DAE also has asked the upazila agriculture officials to end the farmers data collection of all the blocks of a particular upazila by August 26.

Initially, the data of the dealers belongs to Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) and Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) will be collected.

Instructions have been given to include the name of all blocks under each union into the system as no blocks would be left out, the order said.

At the same time, the DAE order also has asked the information of all mouzas and villages of a particular block to include under the block and officials will have to ensure the accuracy and completeness in the every stage of the data collection, verification and approval. As part of the farmer card programme, the data collection, verification and updating will be continued.

The DAE is conducting a nationwide data collection campaign for the government’s Farmer Card (Krishok Card) program, which aims to distribute digital smart cards to 16.5 million farmers over the next four years. Following the program’s official launch by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Pahela Baishakh (April 14, 2026), a massive field-level data collection drive began across all upazilas.

Under the facility, the enlisted farmers will get direct access to financial incentives, cash aid of Tk 2,500 and transparent agricultural subsidies without middlemen.

Zero Tolerance Against Drugs

operations, officers recovered 16,816 Yaba tablets, 32.57 kg of marijuana, 101 liters of country-made liquor, 214 bottles of Escuf, 750 ml of foreign liquor, and 70 cans of beer.

Key Highlights of the Drive

Arrests and Cases: A total of 57 new cases were registered, and 172 drug traders were arrested and produced before the court.

Mobile Court Sentences: Summary trials conducted by mobile courts handed down prison sentences of various terms to 84 individuals, alongside fines totaling Tk 17,200.

Operation Scale: The synchronized drive covered 165 strategic locations across 11 districts under the range.

Chittagong Range Police stated that this special drive will continue in the public interest to uproot drug networks and protect the youth. Top police officials have issued a stern warning that no drug trafficker will be spared.

PM working to establish

second edition were underway.

“Through Notun Kuri Sports, we hope not only to build a healthy nation but also to keep our children away from devices and build a drug-free society as well,” he mentioned.

Aminul said the government was working to build a drug-free society and bring qualitative changes to family, society and the

state through sports.

He said the prime minister had instructed that facilities in BKSP (Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan) in divisional cities be made fully self-sufficient like those in Dhaka to accelerate the expansion of sports. “We have 4,599 unions, where we want to establish a playground in every union so that social change can be brought about through sports,” he added.

Subsequently, the state minister handed over crests and gifts to five outstanding Habiganj players who secured national recognition through ‘Notun Kuri Sports’.

Deputy Commissioner Dr GM Sarfaraz presided over the meeting. Habiganj-3 lawmaker and Jatiya Sangsad’s Chief Whip Alhaj GK Gouse, along with sports organisers, also spoke there. The state minister also watched the final match of the ‘Shaheed Zia Memorial Football Tournament’ at Habiganj Modern Stadium and handed over the trophy to the winning team. Thousands of football lovers attended the final match.

Two ministers visit

hundi business, where he suffered financial losses. Subsequently he formed an organised group and targeted prominent individuals, including doctors and engineers, for extortion, the minister said. “I am not only preparing a list of extortionists; I am also preparing a list of police personnel who may be involved with them,” Salahuddin said. Asked about the cancellation of a police concert in Brahmanbaria, the home minister said people in that area traditionally do not like such music and entertainment programmes.

BAJUS hikes

making charges and stone costs, will remain unchanged. BAJUS last adjusted gold prices on August 20, when the rate of 22-carat gold, including VAT, was raised by Tk 3,849 to Tk 2,40,628 per bhoiri.

At that time, 21-carat gold was priced at Tk 2,29,781 per bhoiri, 18-carat at Tk 1,97,355 per bhoiri, and traditional gold at Tk 1,61,196 per bhoiri, rates that had also come into effect from 10am that day.

With Saturday’s adjustment, BAJUS has revised gold prices 106 times so far in 2026, raising rates 54 times, lowering them 51 times, and adjusting VAT once.

Silver prices were also raised alongside gold. The price of 22-carat silver, including VAT, was increased by Tk 175 to Tk 5,482 per bhoiri. The new rate for 21-carat silver stands at Tk 5,249 per bhoiri, 18-carat at Tk 4,491 per bhoiri, and traditional silver at Tk 3,383 per bhoiri. BAJUS has adjusted silver prices 64 times in 2026, with 34 upward revisions and 30 downward revisions.

Land Minister restores

Commissioner Yusuf Ali, Administrator of Rajshahi City Corporation Mahfuzur Rahman Riton, Chairman of Rajshahi Development Authority Abul Kalam Azad Sweet, Deputy Commissioner Kazi Shahidul Islam, and Zila Parishad Administrator Advocate Ershad Ali Isha. Among others present at the event were local political leaders, officers of RMP and administration, dignitaries and journalists.

IT Training, incubation centres

freelancing and becoming entrepreneurs through training,” he said. At the same time, the minister said that the IT Training and Incubation Centres should be developed as effective centres for innovation, startups and investment as well as centres for creating employment. Faqir Mahbub Anam, also Science and Technology Minister, said this while joining a seminar vir-

tually as the chief guest at the Software Technology Park auditorium in Jashore, said a ministry press release. He said technology is changing rapidly in the present world. Therefore, instead of conventional training systems, emphasis should be given to demand-based, skill-based and employment-oriented training based on present and future needs. The minister said the number of hours a trainee received training or the number of certificates they obtained could not be the sole measure of success.

Instead importance should be given to whether they got a job after completing the training, became involved in freelancing, became entrepreneurs and could practically utilise the skills they acquired, he said, stressing the need for an after-care system. Giving special importance to startups and innovation, the minister said, “Alongside creating job seekers, we have to create entrepreneurs, who will create jobs and employment in the digital economy of tomorrow.”

He said opportunities would be created at IT Training and Incubation Centres for potential entrepreneurs for training, mentoring, technical assistance, business development, market linkage and connection with investors. He said importance had been given through incubation activities to validating business ideas, developing products and services, entering the market, enhancing business capabilities and preparing entrepreneurs for investment. Faqir Mahbub Anam further said there was an opportunity to build a strong industry-academia-innovation-investment ecosystem by involving universities and educational institutions, research and innovation institutions, startups, banks and financial institutions, venture capital, investors, and business and industry organisations. “It is our responsibility to ensure the maximum utilisation of unused government establishments and infrastructure. For this reason, the infrastructure, equipment, utilities, maintenance and service quality of IT centres will be brought under an organised management framework,” he said. The minister said, “There is no alternative to creating skilled manpower, innovation and technology-driven entrepreneurs to further advance Bangladesh and move the country towards an intelligent and knowledge-based economy.”

He added, “We want to develop the IT Training and Incubation Centres as important platforms for creating that national capacity.”

The minister expressed the hope that effective implementation of the guideline would enhance the service quality and efficiency of IT Training and Incubation Centres across the country, expand employment and freelancing opportunities for young people, create new entrepreneurs and startups, and create a more favourable environment for domestic and foreign investment in the technology sector.

This, he said, would further accelerate the development of Bangladesh’s digital economy, innovation and knowledge-based economy.

The “IT Training and Incubation Centre Operation, Maintenance and Management Guideline-2026” has been formulated with the aim of developing skilled manpower in the country’s information technology sector, expanding employment and freelancing opportunities, creating technology-driven entrepreneurs and startups, promoting innovation and attracting domestic and foreign investment.

The programme was chaired by Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority Member Anupam Barua. Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority Managing Director Md Fazlur Rahman attended the programme as a special guest. Representatives of the local administration, including representatives of the district administration and law enforcement agencies, and investors were also present at the programme.



Preventive oral Cholera vaccination campaign begins

Staff correspondent

The 'Preventive Oral Cholera Vaccination Campaign-2026' has begun in 14 high-risk upazilas and thanas across the country to prevent cholera. The campaign began today with the first dose and it will continue till September 21, while the second dose will be given from September 26 to October 25. Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md. Sakawat Hussain inaugurated the campaign at the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) auditorium on August 20. In a separate programme, Health State Minister Dr M A Muhiit formally inaugurated the oral cholera vaccination campaign in Tejgaon in the capital. Under the programme, vaccination has begun in 14 high-risk upazilas and thanas across the country. For complete protection, two doses must be taken at an interval of 14 days. All citizens aged one year and above, except pregnant women, are being administered the vaccine free of charge from 8 am to 5 pm. A total of 51.75 lakh people across the country have been targeted for vaccination under the pro

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Economy has turned around despite taking charge in difficult times: Khosru

Staff correspondent

Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury today said Bangladesh's economy has once again been turned around from a difficult situation, attributing the achievement to the country's private sector-led growth model. "Bangladesh has been unfortunate that whenever the BNP comes to power, it inherits the country at a time when the economy is in a devastated

condition. The good thing is that we have been able to turn around the economy like in the past, even after taking responsibility during difficult times," he said. The minister made the remarks while addressing a seminar titled "Biannual Economic State in FY2026: Fiscal & Monetary Perspective and Private Sector Expectations" as the chief guest organised by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) at its auditorium here today. DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed delivered the welcome

remarks and presented the keynote paper at the seminar. Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh (PRI) Chairman Dr Zaidi Sattar, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman, and Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) Executive Chairman and Chairman, BRAC Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman addressed the seminar as special guests. Managing Director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank PLC Syed Mahbubur

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12.1 Tonnes of Stolen Iron Rods Recovered, Three Arrested Under Police Superintendent's Direction



Jwel Nag, Mirsarai, Chattogram

Police in Chattogram have recovered 12 tonnes and 100 kilograms of iron rods stolen from a consignment of BSRM Company, while three individuals allegedly involved in the theft have been arrested. The recovery was made through a coordinated operation led by the Zorarganj Police Station, under the overall direction and supervision of the Superintendent of Police (SP), Chattogram District. According to police, on August 14, 2026, at around 3:00pm, a truck carrying 13 tonnes of iron rods of various sizes was transporting the consignment from BSRM Company in Zorarganj to Sunamganj when the rods were stolen. Following the

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Zorarganj Police Drive Massive Seizure of Drugs, Arms, and Stolen Goods Over 100 Arrested

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

The law and order situation in Zorarganj Police Station area of Mirsarai, Chattogram, has improved significantly following a series of successful operations led by Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mohammad Abdul Halim. Implementing a zero-tolerance policy against drugs, robbery, armed criminal networks, and smuggling, the police station has conducted multiple drives between May 1, 2026, and August 21, 2026. Major Successes and Seizures
Narcotics Seizure & Arrests: A total of 53 drug-related cases were filed, leading to the arrest of 71 professional drug traders. Seized items include: 123,297 Yaba tablets, 211 kg of cannabis, 85 liters of locally produced liquor and 4 bottles of foreign liquor One black Noah Square Hybrid microbus used for drug transportation Arms & Ammunition: Two notorious armed criminals were arrested.

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Chattogram Range PUNAK Advisor Sidratul Muntaha Leads Day-Long Community Initiatives in Feni

Staff Reporter

With the aim of accelerating the activities of the Police Nari Kalyan Samiti (PUNAK), protecting the environment, and encouraging students, Sidratul Muntaha, Advisor to Chattogram Range PUNAK and member of Central PUNAK, participated in a series of multi-faceted day-long programs in Feni on Wednesday (August 19). During her visit, she inspected various initiatives of Feni District PUNAK and inaugurated several development projects. At the beginning of her visit, she inspected the Feni District PUNAK office and sales center (stall). She then attended an exchange-of-views meeting with local PUNAK members, where she reviewed the overall progress of ongoing projects aimed at creating self-employment opportunities for women and promoting mother and child welfare. To support the vision of building a greener planet, she inaugurated a tree plantation drive at the Feni Police Lines School premises and distributed fruit-bearing and timber saplings among students. During her visit, she also unveiled the plaque and officially inaugurated the newly constructed "Women's Barrack Common Room" to enhance housing amenities for female police officers stationed at the Police Lines. In recognition of academic excellence, she handed over awards and gifts to meritorious students who achieved GPA-5 in the recently published SSC examinations and received scholarships in Class 5.

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Vitor Goul Government Primary School Submerged After Light Rain Education of Students Disrupted



Naeem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat, Sylhet

Even a light rainfall causes the playground and front area of Vitor Goul Government Primary School in Bichnakandi Union of Gowainghat Upazila, Sylhet, to become waterlogged. As a result, students, teachers and guardians are facing severe difficulties, while normal educational activities are being disrupted. Around 310 students from four nearby villages study at the school. During rainfall, the school grounds and access road become submerged, forcing students to walk through dirty water to reach their classrooms. Their clothes, books and notebooks often get wet, while outdoor activities are also disrupted. Locals allege that although the unpaved

road beside the school was filled with soil several months ago, no proper drainage system or culvert was installed. As a result, rainwater has no outlet and accumulates on the school premises. Headteacher Salahuddin Sarkar said, "The entire school ground goes underwater after even a small amount of rain. Filling the ground with soil and constructing a proper drainage system or culvert could provide a permanent solution." Upazila Education Officer Iftekhar Hossain Bhuiyan said the authorities are aware of the problem and have sought a detailed report from the headteacher. Necessary steps will be taken in coordination with the relevant authorities. Gowainghat Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Ratan Kumar Adhikari said steps would be taken to establish proper drainage or a culvert to remove water from the school premises. Teachers, students and guardians have urged the authorities to take immediate measures to resolve the waterlogging, considering the

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Banned Chhatra League torch procession in Faridpur

Bioplal Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

On the occasion of the grenade attack day on August 21, the leaders and activists of the banned organization Chhatra League held a torch procession late at night in Bhanga of Faridpur. A video of the procession went viral on social media. It is known that this torch procession was organized in the Bhanga Roundabout late at night on Friday (August 21). Faridpur District Chhatra League President Syed Tamjidul Rashid Chowdhury Rian posted a 1 minute 40 second video of the procession on his personal Facebook ID. In the video, it can be seen that several youths are chanting various political and party slogans with torches. When contacted, Chhatra League leader Syed Tamjidul Rashid Chowdhury Rian said that on the occasion

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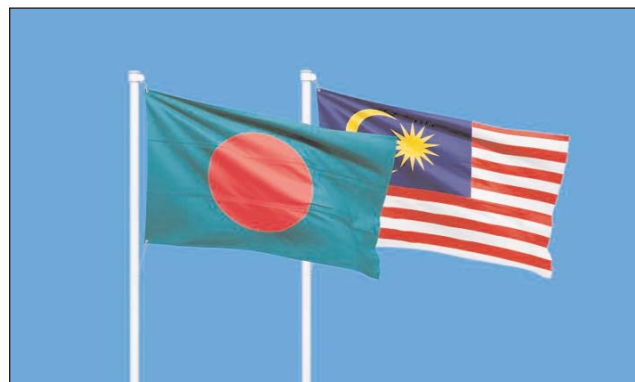
Bangladesh's initiative to increase cooperation with Malaysia in aviation and tourism sectors

Staff Correspondent

A high-level Bangladeshi delegation, comprising State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M. Rashiduzzaman Millat, MP, and Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) Executive Chairman Chowdhury Ashiq Mahmud Bin Harun, visited Malaysia from August 17-18. The visit discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation in various fields including aviation, tourism, investment and skill development. On the first day of the visit, the delegation visited AirAsia's head office and operations at Terminal 2 of Kuala Lumpur International Airport, as well as Ground Team Red (GTR). At that time, AirAsia gave the Bangladeshi delegation an idea about their successful Low-Cost Aviation model. In this regard,

emphasis was placed on policies suitable for Low-Cost Carriers, fast Aircraft Turnaround, Smart Technology and integrated aircraft maintenance system. The delegation inspected the use of automated check-in, self-service baggage drop, dual-door boarding, advanced apron management and digital baggage system. These measures can reduce passenger waiting time, manpower requirements and operating costs. As a result, an aircraft

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No rush for PM's visit to India: Humaiun

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir today said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman will visit India at an appropriate time following progress in bilateral discussions, with Bangladesh's national interests remaining the foremost priority. "We will engage with India. We want a positive relationship. But it has to be done by prioritising Bangladesh's national interests," he told journalists after paying homage to the Liberation War martyrs at the National Memorial in Savar. Kobir, who was appointed state minister for foreign affairs yesterday, said Dhaka wants to maintain a positive and effective relationship with New Delhi as a close

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300,000 cft of illegal sand seized in Sonagazi, administration flies red flags

Staff Reporter

The Sonagazi Upazila administration has seized a massive stockpile of illegally extracted sand during a drive near the Wind Power Plant in the Muhuri Project area, a popular tourist spot. On Friday afternoon, Sonagazi Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Executive Magistrate conducted a mobile court, taking control of the sand dump, hoisting red flags, and installing an official government notice board at the site. According to local sources, an influential group had long been illegally extracting and stockpiling sand by encroaching on government land and riverbanks near the Muhuri Project and Wind Power Plant. This illicit practice not only posed a serious threat to

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



A woman arrested with 750 grams of marijuana in Amtoli

Amtoli (Barguna) Correspondent

Police have arrested a woman named Mosa Salma Akhter (38) with 750 grams of marijuana in an anti-drug drive in Amtoli. Salma Akhter was arrested from her husband's residence in Ward No. 04 of Haldia Union under Amtoli Police Station at 3 pm on Thursday. Amtoli Police Station said that a team of Amtoli Police Station conducted a drive in the area on Thursday to recover narcotics. The drive was led by the plaintiff in the case and Amtoli Police Station Sub-Inspector (SI) Md. Al Mamun Howlader. Other police members were present with him at the time. During the drive, a search was conducted at a residence in West Chila area. At one stage of the search, 750 grams of marijuana was recovered from that house. Police arrested Salma Akhter from the scene on charges of possessing marijuana in this incident. Arrested Salma Akhter is a resident of West Chila area, Md. Faruk Khan's wife and Mohammad Ali's daughter. She lives in Ward 04, West Chila area of ??Haldia Union. Officer-in-charge of Amtali Police Station, Md. Yakub Hossain said that the recovered narcotics have been seized. A case has been filed against the arrested woman at Amtali Police Station under the Narcotics Control Act. After the case, arrangements have been made to hand her over to the court through legal process. Amtali Police Station said that their drive against narcotics will continue. Regular drives are being conducted to bring those involved in drug trade, transportation, storage and consumption under the law.



New Superintendent of Police's interaction with journalists working in Faridpur

Biplap Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

Faridpur Superintendent of Police Shahriar Mohammad Niazi wants to play a role in the development of law and order in Faridpur, including drugs and terrorism.He expressed this conviction in the exchange meeting organized with journalists working in Faridpur district police conference room on Thursday afternoon.At that time, the Superintendent of Police said that many people are still trying to carry out various criminal activities by taking hostage the lost confidence of the police after August 5, many of them are using them for harvesting sugarcane, which will not be allowed to happen again.He said that the DB Police of the district is being organized, very soon the police will be able to actively suppress all types of crimes. Expecting the cooperation of media workers working in the district, the Superintendent of Police also said that the police will soon be able to solve various social problems including drugs, terrorism, robbery, traffic congestion, theft and activities of juvenile gangs.Faridpur Press Club president Kabirul Islam Siddiqui, senior journalist Panna Bala, Nazim Bakaul and other speakers gave speeches highlighting various problems of the district. At this time, Additional Superintendent of Police Fatema Islam and Ajmir Hossain along with various levels of police officers were present.



Pedestrian and driver killed after motorcycle lost control on Bangaya Expressway

Biplap Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

A pedestrian and a driver were killed when a motorcycle lost control on the Bangaya highway expressway in Faridpur. The accident took place on the Dhaka-bound lane at Bhanga Interchange area on Wednesday around 8 pm.The deceased are Hriday Sheikh (20), son of Ilyas Sheikh of Lihadharchar village of Bhanga municipality and motorcycle driver Sakib Sheikh (22), son of Enayet Sheikh of Nagarkanda upazila. According to the police, Shakib from Nagarkanda was crossing the broken interchange area on a motorcycle in the Dhaka-bound lane of the highway expressway. At that time, the pedestrian fell in front of the motorcycle while crossing the Hridiya Sheikh road. When he collided with the motorcycle, both of them died on the spot.Sub-inspector of Bhanga Highway police station Sohel Mia said, after receiving the information, the police went to the spot and recovered the bodies and motorcycles of the two victims and took them to the police station. The body will be handed over to the family after legal proceedings.

300,000 cft of illegal sand seized

the environment and the power plant's infrastructure but also deprived the government of substantial revenue. Acting on specific allegations, the upazila administration carried out the drive on Friday afternoon. During the operation, approximately 300,000 cubic feet (cft) of illegally stockpiled sand was declared seized. To prevent anyone from selling or removing the sand, the entire area was demarcated with red flags, and an official ban banner was put up by the administration. ?The UNO and Executive Magistrate stated that drives against illegal sand extraction and encroachment on rivers or government land will continue. The seized sand will later be sold through an open public auction in line with government regulations, and the proceeds will be deposited into the treasury.

Chattogram Range PUNAK

As part of her observation of local industry and development, she visited a food processing plant in Feni and a large-scale solar power project in Sonagazi. To mark the day, a captivating cultural program organized by the district police and PUNAK leaders was presented in the evening. ?Senior leaders of Feni District PUNAK and high-ranking officers of the district police accompanied her throughout the visit.

No rush for PM's visit to

neighbour, but stressed that such engagement cannot come at the expense of Bangladesh's interests."We want a positive relationship with India. Why wouldn't we? They are our neighbours. We should have a working relationship," he said."Not only with India, but with no country can we do anything by compromising our national interests," he added.Asked about the timing of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's possible visit to India, Kobir said there was no reason to rush a visit at the head-of-government level."If we reach an agreement based on our national interests tomorrow, we can go [to India] next week, or the week after. There is no rush here," he said.He said a prime ministerial-level visit requires adequate preparations, substantive discussions and necessary groundwork between the two sides.The state minister said both sides need to create the necessary groundwork before a meeting between the heads of government, adding, "We are doing exactly that."On the extradition of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Kobir said Bangladesh has an extradition treaty with India and the matter remains part of ongoing engagement between the two countries.He said Hasina fled to India following the July 2024 mass uprising and judicial proceedings in several cases against her have already concluded, while a number of other cases remain pending."So, these are not new conditions or a new kind of engagement; these are ongoing issues," he said.Kobir said bringing back Hasina and other alleged offenders who fled to India remains an issue linked to the expectations and sentiments of the Bangladeshi people."There are more criminals who have fled to India. This is a natural demand of the people of Bangladesh and a matter of their sentiment. We want to engage with India by giving priority to this process," he said.

Bangladesh's initiative to increase

can operate about 6-8 flight sectors per day. The delegation also visited ADE's newly built 14-line MRO Facility. The company provides aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul services and plays a key role in maintaining the performance and reliability of AirAsia's fleet. On the evening of the first day of the visit, the State Minister met with Tony Fernandes, Group CEO of Capital A. The meeting discussed the possibility of utilizing AirAsia's experience in ground handling, airport management and related services at international airports in Bangladesh. In addition, discussions were held on increasing investment and cooperation in the civil aviation sector of Bangladesh. On August 18, the State Minister met with YB Tuan Chiew Choon Man, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Malaysia in Putrajaya. The meeting discussed strengthening tourism cooperation between Bangladesh and Malaysia, increasing the number and frequency of flights between the two countries, facilitating visa procedures and pre-verification, cultural exchanges, tourism promotion, exchange of experience and knowledge, and skill development. In addition, emphasis was placed on training and skill development in the tourism and hospitality sectors of Malaysia and increasing employment opportunities for qualified Bangladeshi workers. The visit has created new prospects for cooperation between Bangladesh and Malaysia in aviation, tourism, investment, skill development, and related services.

Excelerate's FSRU

added to grid by middle of tonight.Petrobangla Chairman Abdul Mannan said an LNG cargo was scheduled to arrive on Sunday (Aug 23), but it arrived a day ahead of the schedule, so the terminal started supplying of gas to the national grid today.He said at around 2:00 pm today, LNG-based gas supply stood at only 580 mmcf/d. Following the arrival of the new LNG cargo, supply began to increase and now it reached around 686 mmcf/d.Of the total LNG supply, Summit is currently providing around 580 mmcf/d of gas. Meanwhile, the country's overall gas supply has increased to around 2,300 mmcf.d."We are working to bring more cargoes to keep gas supply at a reliable stage," the Chairman said.According to Petrobangla, the Excelerate energy LNG terminal at Maheshkhali was shut down following a fire on July 21. Although the terminal later resumed LNG supply, but operation was suspended again from August 19 as there was no LNG cargo available.

Banned Chhatra League

of August 21 Voyal Grenade Attack Day, the procession was led by Bhanga Upazila Chhatra League worker Kayes on his orders.On the other hand, when attention was drawn to this march of banned organizations, Faridpur Additional Superintendent of Police (broken circle) Md. Rezwan Dipu said that they had no previous information about the incident. However, the issue of the video and the procession spread through social media is being looked into.

Zorarganj Police Drive Massive

Operations yielded: 1 semi-automatic 7.62 mm foreign pistol, 1 magazine, and 9 rounds of live ammunition 1 folding switchblade knife, multiple sharp domestic weapons, and 200 ml of banned Indian Escuf syrup Stolen Property Recovery: Six burglary cases were solved, resulting in the recovery of stolen goods, including: 1 drum truck valued at BDT 3.5 million 12.1 tons of iron rods (recovered through inter-district drives) 2 CNG auto-rickshaws, 1 Pulsar motorcycle, 7 kg of copper wire, 1 water pump motor, 3 UPS units, and 3 batteries Robbery Cases Solved: Following a robbery on August 9, police identified and arrested 7 robbers shortly after the case was filed, recovering 150 meters of stolen electrical wire. Anti-Smuggling Operations: 12 smugglers were arrested across four separate cases for evading customs duties. Seized contraband includes: BDT 415,210 worth of Indian cosmetics, chocolates, oil, and a HiAce microbus 180 Indian sarees valued at BDT 480,000 100 Tapentadol tablets and 19 Indian cattle valued at BDT 516,000

Homicide Investigations: Three major murder cases were solved, including the quick arrest of a son who killed his father, an arrest following an illegal hill cutting fatality, and three arrests in a murder case where two suspects provided confessional statements under Section 164. Besides law enforcement drives, OC Abdul Halim has been directly leading bit policing and community policing meetings across educational institutions and places of worship to build social awareness against crime and drug abuse. "Zorarganj Police remains active 24/7 to maintain law and order, eradicate drugs, and ensure public safety," stated OC Mohammad Abdul Halim. "Regardless of how influential a criminal is, they will be brought to justice. We seek full cooperation from the public to build a crime-free Zorarganj.

12.1 Tonnes of Stolen Iron

incident, Zorarganj police launched an immediate investigation with instructions to recover the stolen goods and bring those responsible to justice as quickly as possible.Under the guidance of the Superintendent of Police, Chattogram District, the investigation was led by Sub-Inspector (SI) Abdullah Al Masud, along with SI Md. Saddam Hossain, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Md. Ismail, and other members of the police force.Police used modern technology, data analysis and intelligence-based information to identify the suspects and conduct a series of coordinated raids.As part of the operation, police arrested Md. Riyad Hossain, the first accused named in the case, from the Baraiyarhat area on August 19.Based on information provided by Riyad, police conducted an operation the following day, August 20, in the Tarabo area under Rupganj Police Station in Narayanganj District, where they arrested Md. Hadis Molla, the truck helper and second accused in the case.Later, based on information obtained from the arrested suspects and further investigation, police conducted another operation in the Jangalia area under Mohammadpur Police Station in Magura District, where they arrested Abul Bashar alias Bashi.

Acting on information provided by Bashi, police recovered 12 tonnes and 100 kilograms of the stolen iron rods from a shop named "Ayan Enterprise" in Mohammadpur Bazar. Police also conducted an operation in the Madhukhali area of Faridpur District, where the truck used to transport the stolen rods was recovered in an empty condition. Police Reaffirm Commitment to Protecting Public Property and Lives Police said the successful recovery was made possible through continuous efforts, timely action, the use of information technology and close coordination with police units in different districts.Ensuring the safety of people, their property and business establishments, as well as identifying offenders and bringing them to justice as quickly as possible after a crime is committed, remains one of the primary responsibilities of the police. The Chattogram District Police said it remains committed to carrying out this responsibility with sincerity and professionalism. The operation conducted by Zorarganj Police under the direction of the Superintendent of Police, Chattogram District, has been described as a significant example of the police's active role in combating crime, protecting public property and strengthening public confidence in law enforcement.

Vitor Goul Government

education and safety of the 310 students.

Preventive oral Cholera

gramme.In the DSCC areas, around 11.7 lakh people in 17 wards under Lalbagh, Gandaria, Kadamtali and Kamrangirchar thanas will be vaccinated at 192 centres.The programme is also being conducted in specified areas of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Khilkhet and Tejgaon under Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), as well as in Munshiganj, Kishoreganj, Narayanganj and Brahmanbaria districts. The oral vaccine is used to prevent cholera caused by infection with the Vibrio cholerae bacterium. The vaccine helps reduce the severity of the disease and can provide protection for several years. Alongside vaccination, emphasis has also been placed on drinking safe water and maintaining proper hygiene.

Economy has turned around

Rahman, Group CEO of Transcom Limited Simeen Rahman, Director General of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) Dr A K Enamul Haque, and Distinguished Fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Professor Mustafizur Rahman took part in the panel discussion.The Finance Minister said the private sector growth is one of the founding principles of the BNP's economic philosophy, with the government's role being to facilitate private-sector-led economic activities."The Prime Minister's economic philosophy is that Bangladesh will have a private-sector-driven economy, where the private sector will drive growth and the public sector will facilitate that process. We are trying to do that together with all of you," he said.Emphasising on attracting more investment, Khosru said there is "no way out" of the current economic challenges without increasing investment."If there is no investment within the country, foreign investors won't come. The confidence and incentives needed to attract foreigners won't be created unless Bangladeshi businesses themselves invest," he said.The minister acknowledged that many obstacles to investment and ease of doing business are deeply rooted and cannot be removed overnight. He said the government is working to reduce regulatory barriers and has formed a committee and planned a dedicated website through which businesses can report obstacles they face in implementing deregulation decisions.He said the government is also introducing time-bound measures in customs and port operations to reduce the cost of doing business and expedite import clearance."We are not leaving anything open-ended. Every decision of this government is being given a timeframe," he said.Regarding the energy crisis, Khosru said the government inherited a difficult situation and cannot resolve the electricity and gas shortages within a day. Negotiations are underway for two or more floating storage and regasification units (FSRUs), while work is also progressing to increase gas reserves.He said the government had inherited energy reserves of barely 15-17 days, which have now been increased to around one month, with a target of building reserves equivalent to three months."The energy crisis will improve slowly. It will improve, but slowly. I know the industry is suffering because of this," he said.On banking sector reforms, the finance minister said the government has introduced a package for businesses affected by circumstances beyond their control, including rescheduling facilities, grace periods and exit options for those wishing to leave businesses.He also mentioned that a Tk 60,000-crore financing package for small and medium enterprises, saying political influence would not be allowed in the disbursement of loans."Those who fulfil the criteria will receive the loans. There will be no political influence in giving loans," he said.Khosru said the government is also working to bring artisans, cottage industries, sports, entertainment, theatre, music and other creative sectors into the mainstream economy under its concept of "democratisation of the economy."He said support would include credit, skills development, design, branding and marketing facilities, including opportunities to sell products globally through online platforms.The minister also stressed the need to raise the tax-GDP ratio to expand the government's fiscal space for welfare, infrastructure, business support and subsidies.He said the government is pursuing automation across taxation and port systems to reduce physical contact, increase transparency and curb corruption.On alternative financing, Khosru said the government is working to revive the capital market and attract global fund managers. He said Bangladesh is also preparing to issue dollar bonds and explore other financing instruments to reduce pres-



Tree Plantation, Cleanliness Drive Held in Mirsarai to Mark Swechchhasebak Dal Anniversary

Jwel Nag Mirsarai, Chattogram

A rally, cleanliness drive and tree plantation programme were held in Mirsarai of Chattogram on Thursday to mark the 46th founding anniversary of the Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Swechchhasebak Dal (BNP's volunteer wing). The Mirsarai Upazila unit of the Swechchhasebak Dal organised the programmes. A rally was brought out in the morning from Mirsarai Sadar on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway. The rally paraded through the highway before ending at the Upazila Central Shaheed Minar.Later, leaders and activists took part in a cleanliness drive on the Upazila Parishad premises.Fruit-bearing and medicinal saplings were distributed among the activists who came from different unions. The participants subsequently planted trees on the Upazila Parishad premises. Leaders and activists of the Mirsarai Upazila unit and various union-level units of the Swechchhasebak Dal took part in the programmes.

sure on bank financing.Regarding renewable energy, he said solar power is currently the fastest option for expanding Bangladesh's energy supply and the government has set ambitious targets for solar generation. The government is also exploring coal and nuclear power while seeking to reduce dependence on imported energy.Khosru said the government is reviewing the work of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to improve the credibility of economic data.The finance minister thanked DCCI for organising the seminar, saying such engagement provides the government with a "constant reminder" of issues that may otherwise remain outside the government's system."I can't do anything alone. The finance minister can't do anything alone, and the government can't do anything alone. I believe in partnership and teamwork. Without that, progress will not be possible," he said.He urged the private sector to remain engaged with the government in addressing economic challenges and implementing reforms.

UGC plans Higher Education Academy for faculty training: Chairman

Staff correspondent

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Professor Dr Mamun Ahmed today came up with a plan to establish a 'Higher Education Academy' to provide institutionalised training for university teachers and develop academic and institutional leadership as part of a broader national agenda for transforming higher education in Bangladesh.He came up with the plan while presenting 'Transforming Higher Education in Bangladesh: A National Agenda for Sustainable Excellence (2026-2030)' at the concluding session of the two-day 'Vice-Chancellors' Dialogue: Shaping the Future of Higher Education' at BRAC CDM in Savar on the outskirts of Dhaka.Education Minister Dr A N M Ehsanul Haque Milon attended the session as the chief guest, which was chaired by UGC Chairman Professor Dr Mamun Ahmed.UGC Member Professor Dr Abdullah-Al-Mamun moderated the session, while former Dhaka University Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Z N Tahmida Begum delivered remarks.Professor Mamun said university teachers are at the core of higher education transformation, stressing the need for an institutional framework for faculty development, research capacity building, improvement of teaching and learning, and academic leadership."Just as there are training academies for public servants, we need an institutional training structure for the higher education sector as well," he said.He said the proposed academy would provide training in education management, academic leadership, university administration, teaching and learning and higher education management. The UGC has already started working on the infrastructure and facilities required for the academy.

The UGC chairman also announced plans to expand PhD and postdoctoral opportunities for university teachers through collaboration with foreign universities, including joint programmes. The UGC is working to sign MoUs with foreign universities to facilitate tuition support for Bangladeshi teachers pursuing higher studies, while providing structured assistance for their living expenses.He said improving research infrastructure and increasing research funding would be another priority under the national agenda. The UGC plans to establish an online research repository containing information on research conducted in Bangladesh to help identify research gaps and determine priority areas for future research funding. Professor Mamun said a fellowship system would be introduced to facilitate faculty mobility between universities, allowing teachers from major-city universities to spend six months or a year teaching at universities outside major urban centres. Similar opportunities would be created for Bangladeshi academics working abroad to return and teach or conduct research at local universities.He said, "The UGC plans to establish a digital learning and innovation ecosystem across universities within the next two to three years, including high-speed internet, smart classrooms, smart libraries, digital student services, digital research infrastructure and digital administrative systems."He said digital connectivity would help reduce disparities between universities in Dhaka and those outside major cities by enabling students outside Dhaka to access classes delivered by high-quality teachers at leading universities.The UGC chairman said, "The commission plans to develop a National Graduate Employment Framework to define the knowledge, skills and attributes graduates need to enter local and international job markets."The framework would cover subject knowledge, soft skills, digital literacy, communication, critical thinking, ethical values, workplace experience and leadership qualities, alongside a graduate employment tracking mechanism.Professor Mamun said Industry-Academia Advisory Boards would be established at universities to strengthen links with employers and industry and align academic programmes with labour-market needs.He said curricula would be modernised in consultation with industry experts, professional bodies and employers, with emerging areas such as artificial intelligence, data science, cybersecurity and renewable energy incorporated where appropriate.The UGC also plans to introduce effective internships for students and gradually make them compulsory, while ensuring that internships provide meaningful workplace learning. The commission plans to establish language centres in around 30 public and private universities without such facilities to promote third-language learning, which would enhance graduates' employability and international opportunities. Professor Mamun said universities would also be encouraged to organise year-round sports, cultural and extracurricular activities to develop students' physical.s



An 18-year-old with a sword attacks a school in Sweden, leaving 1 dead and 2 injured

International Desk

An 18-year-old man armed with a sword attacked a school in central Sweden on Friday, killing one person and seriously injuring at least two others, police said. Police Chief Tommy Aliksson said the suspect was arrested after the attack at Brinell School in Fagersta, a town northwest of Stockholm. Police fired shots while apprehending the suspect. Authorities did not immediately say whether he was wounded, but confirmed that he remained in police custody and was not taken to a hospital. The attack occurred while classes were underway at the school, which had around 400 to 500 students at the time. Authorities have not disclosed a possible motive. "We have no reason at this time to believe that there are multiple perpetrators," Aliksson told reporters, adding that the investigation was continuing. National police said investigators had conducted two searches of properties linked to the suspect and planned to question a large number of witnesses. Aliksson said authorities were withholding some details to avoid affecting witness accounts as the investigation progresses.

According to Sweden's TT news agency, Vastmanland County officials said the two seriously injured victims were boys aged between 12 and 17. Authorities did not immediately release information about the person who died. Police spokesperson Pelle Vamstad told TT that officers received an emergency call shortly after noon Friday. A large area around the school was sealed off as police responded to the incident. Several nearby schools were also placed under lockdown, while roadblocks were established in the area, officials said. Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson expressed sorrow over the violence in Fagersta, which occurred shortly after students returned from their summer break. "We do not yet know what lies behind the act, but we know that the police are working very intensively," Kristersson said in a post on X. He added that his thoughts were with everyone affected. Fagersta's municipal authorities opened a crisis center at a nearby sports hall to provide support following the attack. Vastmanland County officials said many people had been affected by the incident, with police, firefighters and health care workers involved in the emergency response.



Here's data showing Congo's Ebola outbreak is on track to surpass history's largest

International Desk

The Ebola outbreak spreading rapidly in Congo has yet to reach its peak and could be several times larger than currently reported, according to data from Congolese health authorities and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). The World Health Organization says the outbreak is advancing at an unprecedented pace and could eventually surpass the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic in West Africa, which killed more than 11,000 people. The latest outbreak has so far resulted in 2,516 deaths among 5,290 confirmed cases in Congo's vast eastern region. The spread has been fueled by a highly mobile population, including people displaced by armed conflict, as well as widespread mistrust of health authorities. Only about 10% of current cases are linked to known contacts, far below the 90%-95% level considered necessary to bring an outbreak under control, according to Yap Boum, head of emergency preparedness and response at the Africa CDC. Boum told reporters Thursday that authorities may be detecting only 30%-40% of the actual cases. Rapid spread raises alarm By the 13th week after the outbreak was officially declared, Congo had recorded about 10 times as many cases and seven times as many deaths as the West African Ebola outbreak had recorded at a comparable stage, according to Africa CDC data. The 2014-2016 outbreak eventually caused more than 28,000 cases and over 11,000 deaths. Congo's previous deadliest Ebola outbreak, from 2018 to 2020, recorded about 3,400 cases and more than 2,200 deaths. The current outbreak is progressing much faster, with confirmed cases increasing at roughly 18 times the previous rate and deaths at about 13 times the rate. Experts are particularly concerned that the outbreak may have started in the mining town of Mongbwalu as early as February, months before authorities officially declared it on May 15. Contact tracing remains limited Africa CDC data from the past three weeks shows that

health workers have traced 82% of the 19,630 contacts already identified. However, the agency estimates that nearly 100,000 contacts should have been identified based on an average of 60 contacts per confirmed case. That means the actual contact-tracing rate is only about 16% of what was expected. The outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo virus, a strain for which there are no approved vaccines or treatments. Its symptoms can also be milder than those associated with the more common Ebola virus, potentially leading some patients to delay seeking medical help. Outbreak reaches new province The number of affected health zones has expanded from three at the beginning of the outbreak to 56 across six provinces. Bas-Uele province, which had previously reported no cases, has recorded two cases in separate locations during the past week and a half, according to government data. There are signs of improvement in some areas, however. South Kivu province, for example, has gone 79 days without reporting a new case. Most deaths occur outside treatment centers Community deaths, meaning those occurring outside Ebola treatment centers, have increased steadily. They accounted for 97% of reported deaths on Aug. 17, according to Africa CDC figures. Yet only about 20% of health alerts are coming from communities, highlighting the challenge of persuading people to report suspected cases. The overall case fatality rate stands at 46.7%, but it is considerably higher in some areas. In North Kivu, one of the country's most populous provinces, the fatality rate has reached 68.2%. Health officials say people are often delaying or avoiding treatment because of misinformation, reliance on traditional remedies, fears of isolation and concerns about being quarantined for symptoms that may turn out to be caused by other illnesses. The relatively mild early symptoms of the Bundibugyo strain may also discourage people from seeking care quickly.

Somali pirates hijack oil tanker off Yemen in latest attack

International Desk

Somali pirates have hijacked an oil products tanker off Yemen, a Somali maritime security official said, in the latest incident in a renewed wave of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and western Indian Ocean. Six armed pirates seized the Eritrean-flagged M.T. Sibul 1 on Thursday, about 136 nautical miles (252 kilometres) east of al-Mukalla, Yemen, and took it toward Somalia's Puntland coast, the official told The Associated Press on Friday. The official, who has knowledge of the incident, spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to discuss the matter publicly. The Sibul 1 is managed by UAE-based Qatrat Alnada Almasi Ship Management. The US Treasury Department sanctioned the vessel last year, alleging that it was part of an Iranian "shadow fleet" used to transport petroleum products while avoiding US sanctions. The tanker had 20 crew members aboard, including 16 Indians, one Syrian, one Sudanese and one Iraqi. The nationality of one crew member was not immediately known. The ship's previous port and intended destination were also unclear. The hijacking came just three days after pirates seized the Cameroon-flagged general cargo vessel Lutuf off Somalia's coast. The Lutuf had 10 crew members aboard, including six Indians, one Turkish national, one Georgian national and two Serbian security guards, according to maritime tracking reports. The Sibul 1 is the sixth commercial vessel seized by Somali pirates since April 21, when the Palau-flagged tanker Honor 25 was hijacked off Somalia. The pirates later seized the Sward on April 26, the



Eureka on May 2, the Asana on July 17 and the Lutuf on Aug 17. The recent attacks have taken place increasingly farther from Somalia's coast. The Eureka was hijacked while anchored off Yemen, while the Asana was seized about 65 nautical miles (120 kilometres) southwest of al-Mukalla. The International Maritime Bureau recorded 38 piracy and armed robbery incidents worldwide during the first half of 2026, including five hijackings. Somali pirates accounted for 94 percent of crew members taken hostage during the period, according to the bureau. Puntland's Security Ministry said Friday that its investigation suggested forces outside its control were behind the renewed piracy. However, it did not identify any group or country, and the claim could not be independently verified. Puntland said it had deployed security forces along its coastline and condemned airstrikes that it said hit fishing vessels and property near coastal communities where hijacked ships were being held. The ministry called on the countries involved to explain strikes reported near Garacad on Aug 18 and Aug 20. It did not identify who carried out the strikes, and the allegations could not be independently confirmed.

Russian drones kill 14 people in Ukrain

International Desk

A Russian "double-tap" drone strike on a shopping mall in President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's hometown of Kryvyi Rih on Friday killed 14 people and injured 121, including 22 children. Zelenskyy condemned the strike, which targeted responding rescuers, as a "terrorist act" and vowed a response. Local administrator Oleksandr Vilkul said rescues are ongoing in the city, where a previous peak attack in April 2025 killed 20. The incident occurred 24 hours after a nighttime strike on Kyiv killed 16, as Russia exploits Ukraine's Patriot interceptor shortages. Earlier Friday, drone strikes in Kharkiv killed two women, aged 73 and 66, while Ukraine intercepted 107 of 135 drones overnight. Meanwhile, Ukrainian drone strikes hit a Belgorod car, killing one and wounding four, struck a Volgograd military airfield, and set ablaze a Perm oil refinery 1,600 kilometers away. Russia claimed to intercept 536 Ukrainian drones overnight, including over annexed Crimea. Analysts state that long-range strikes are escalating as troop movements on the 1,250-kilometer front remain restricted by drones and ground robots.



US judge blocks Trump administration's immigrant visa suspension affecting 75 countries

International Desk

A federal judge in Manhattan has overturned a Trump administration policy that halted the issuance of immigrant visas to applicants from 75 countries, ruling that the measure went beyond the legal authority of Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Judge Jeannette Vargas of the Southern District of New York ruled Friday that the policy was unlawful and inconsistent with federal immigration law. She said the law does not give the secretary of state the authority to control how consular officers make decisions on immigrant visa applications. Vargas said the policy's blanket ban on immigrant visas based solely on an applicant's nationality directly conflicted with the statutory framework established by Congress. The judge, who was appointed by former Democratic President Joe Biden, issued the ruling in a case brought by immigrant advocacy groups, including the Catholic Legal Immigration Network and African Communities Together. The plaintiffs also included visa applicants and US citizens seeking to sponsor relatives from the affected countries. The suspension, introduced in January, applied to applicants from 75 nations. The list included Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay in Latin America; Bosnia and Albania in the Balkans; Pakistan and Bangladesh in South Asia; as well as numerous countries across Africa, the Middle East and the Caribbean. The State Department had justified the policy by arguing that applicants from the affected countries were more likely to become dependent on public assistance and use government resources at the local, state and federal levels. Trump has made tougher immigration enforcement a major focus of his presidency, saying the measures are necessary to strengthen national security. The Center for Constitutional Rights said the immigrant visa freeze was part of a series of immigration restrictions introduced by the administration in quick succession. These included a wider travel ban covering 39 countries that came into effect on Jan. 1 and a suspension of diversity visa processing in late December. Immigrant rights organizations have criticized the administration's broader immigration policies, arguing that some of the measures threaten constitutional protections, including due process and freedom of speech. They have also raised concerns that the policies could disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities. The State Department had not immediately issued a response to Friday's ruling.



China vows to share innovation gains to bolster Asia-Pacific food security

International Desk

China will promote inclusive sharing to ensure that the benefits of innovation in food security are shared more widely and fairly among Asia-Pacific economies and their people, according to the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration. Liu Huanxin, head of the administration, put forward proposals on food security, a shared concern among Asia-Pacific economies, at the APEC high-level public-private dialogue on food security on Thursday. Stressing the importance of digital empowerment, he said China will promote the large-scale application of innovation across the food supply chain and expand the use of artificial intelligence, digital technologies and smart processing across this sector. He also called for closer cooperation among government departments, businesses, research institutions and international organizations to promote open and mutually beneficial cooperation in food security. During the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025), China kept its domestic grain market broadly stable and deepened international cooperation in the food sector, contributing to food security across the Asia-Pacific and beyond, the official noted. Over the next five years, China will continue to enhance its overall food production capacity and strengthen its ability to safeguard national food security, he said. The dialogue, held in the coastal city of Dalian in northeast China's Liaoning Province on Thursday, drew nearly 150 representatives from government departments, business associations, research institutions and international organizations of APEC economies.



Old Fair & Lovely ad featuring Aishwarya, Mahima resurfaces online



Entertainment Desk

An old Fair & Lovely advertisement featuring Bollywood actresses Aishwarya Rai and Mahima Chaudhry has resurfaced online, sparking nostalgia among viewers and debate over Aishwarya's voice in the commercial. The advertisement, reportedly made in the 1990s before both actresses became major stars, shows the two meeting at an airport. In the commercial, Mahima compliments Aishwarya on her glowing skin and suggests that marriage could be the reason behind her appearance. Aishwarya then reveals that she has been using Fair & Lovely for two months.

The old commercial has once again gained attention on social media, with many viewers reminiscing about

advertisements from the 1990s. The ad was directed by filmmaker Kailash Surendranath. Internet reacts to Aishwarya's voice. The video has drawn mixed reactions, particularly over Aishwarya's voice, which appears to have been dubbed. A caption accompanying the resurfaced video said the advertisement "deserved Aishwarya Rai's real voice." Comments on the video posted on Surendranath's YouTube page praised both actresses for their looks.

"Wow, Mahima and Aishwarya — both of them are looking so pretty. Both of them are my favourite actresses," one user wrote. Another commented, "Fun fact: After all these years, everyone knows the reality." Some viewers questioned the voice used for Aishwarya, with one writing, "No way in hell that's their voice." Others focused on the actresses' beauty, with one viewer saying Aishwarya's looks had nothing to do with the fairness cream featured in the advertisement. Aishwarya Rai's recent work Aishwarya Rai's most recent film was Mani Ratnam's 'Ponniyin Selvan: Part II', released in April 2023. She played the dual roles of Nandini and Oomai Rani in the film.



Why Sharmin didn't tell her father about marriage

Entertainment Desk

Sharmin Akter, the champion of the music competition 'Channel i Banglar Gaan 2016', and musician Sabbir Qureshi have tied the knot. Their wedding ceremony was recently completed at the Gausul Azam Mosque in the capital. Expressing her feelings about her new life, Sharmin said, "Marriage is a very important decision in life. New responsibilities, new relationships-all of it feels different. I have started a new journey with the love and prayers of my family and close people." Meanwhile, Sharmin did not inform her father about the marriage, there have been allegations. A video of the singer's father went viral on social media. In which Sharmin's father claims that his daughter is getting married but he does not know. She did not inform him about the marriage.

Jailer 2 song Ala Bolelo wins fans despite Malayalam pronunciation row

Entertainment Desk

Excitement is building around Rajinikanth's upcoming film Jailer 2, with the full version of its song "Ala Bolelo" receiving a strong response from fans online. The sequel to the 2023 blockbuster Jailer is scheduled to hit cinemas on October 15, 2026. A 32-second promo of "Ala Bolelo" was released earlier and drew criticism from some social media users over the pronunciation of Malayalam words in the song. However, the full track, released on Friday, has received considerable attention from fans. One user reacted to the song on social media, saying, "Theatre gonna be blast," comparing its energy to "Kaavaalaa," "Tiger" and "Muthuvel Pandian Investigation." Song sparks Malayalam pronunciation debate. The promo featured Rajinikanth and Shamna Kasim, with Kasim dancing in a

traditional kasavu saree. The clip ended with a brief appearance by Rajinikanth. The song contains several Malayalam words, but some Malayalam-speaking users objected to their pronunciation. One social media user urged the filmmakers to avoid using Malayalam in songs or dialogues unless it is pronounced correctly, saying that incorrect pronunciation could feel disrespectful to the language. Another user suggested hiring a lyricist and singer familiar with Malayalam. Despite the criticism, the song's promo also received plenty of positive reactions from audiences. The music for Jailer 2 has been composed by Anirudh Ravichander. Arunraja Kamaraj wrote the lyrics along with Niranjana Raman, Aparna Harikumar and Deepthi Suresh. The film has been written and directed by Nelson Dilipkumar and produced by Kalanithi Maran under the banner of Sun Pictures. Jailer 2 is set to release in theatres on October 15, 2026.



Don't let any two-faced come near: Sunerah

Entertainment Desk

Sunerah Binte Kamal is a popular actress of this time. Although she made her debut with a movie, she is currently busy with dramas. Apart from acting, she is a travel enthusiast in her personal life. She travels to various places in the country and abroad, sharing her happy moments on Facebook. However, she posted a different post, where the actress expressed some of her heartfelt prayers to Allah along with a picture of the sky. Sunerah wrote in her post, "Oh Almighty Allah, I know that whatever you do is for the good. I have learned every time. But don't bring anyone in front of my eyes who destroy people, rots their hearts, and gives people mental death. Rather, you give them knowledge on how to be human. Not for show, but to truly live as human beings." Then Sunerah wrote, "You are the owner, you know best. Not a single leaf can move without your command. Do not let any human being or polytheist come near us. The account of all our minds, intentions and deeds is open to you. Do not let anyone destroy our inner self, O Allah." Shortly after posting the post, Sunerah closed the comment box. However, some people had already expressed their agreement with her words and prayed for her wishes to be fulfilled. Shortly after this post, Sunerah posted another one. This time, it was a picture of herself. A moment captured in the evening by the sea. The actress is smiling in a red top. The picture was taken by actor Khairul Basar. And in the caption, Sunerah wrote, "I like to give; I always give what is deserved to someone."



I am the most trolled person: Rhea

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty and her family faced extreme financial, legal and emotional turmoil after the sudden demise of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. After a legal battle, the CBI recently filed its final report in Sushant death case and cleared her of all charges. After a long time, she appeared on a popular YouTube blog and spoke openly about that extremely dark chapter of her life. During this, Rhea revealed the anger she had inside. Reminiscing, she said in an emotional voice that after Rhea and her brother Shouvik were arrested in a drug-related case in 2020, their lives were completely turned upside down. After they were released from jail on bail, people around them and entire society boycotted them in such a way that it became difficult to return to normal life. Recalling the time when she was devastated by social trolling, Rhea further said, "I am probably the most trolled person in the country."

Christian metal band Demon Hunter sues Netflix over KPop Demon Hunters

Entertainment Desk

Christian metal band Demon Hunter has sued Netflix over the name of the streaming giant's hit animated film KPop Demon Hunters, saying the title is causing confusion among fans and threatening the band's brand. The US-based band, which has been making music and touring for about 25 years, filed the trademark lawsuit through its company, Hyde Lane, on Tuesday. The complaint also names Netflix Studios and live entertainment promoter AEG Presents. The band says Netflix's film, music releases, merchandise and planned global concert tour closely overlap with its own activities. The lawsuit claims the companies have created "substantial confusion" among consumers. As an example, it cites an email from a person who reportedly spent \$500 on tickets to a Demon Hunter concert in New York, believing it was a child-friendly K-pop event for their young children. The complaint also mentions a television producer who allegedly contacted the band's management believing Demon Hunter was connected to KPop Demon Hunters. Social media users have also mistakenly tagged the metal band in posts about the Netflix film. Demon Hunter, a five-member band from Seattle, released its 12th album in September 2025. It has around 350,000 monthly listeners on Spotify, while the cast of KPop Demon Hunters has about 27 million. "The brand that Hyde Lane has carefully built over the course of the past quarter century now faces an existential crisis," the lawsuit said.



The band is asking the court to prevent Netflix from using the KPop Demon Hunters name for recorded music, live performances and merchandise. It is also seeking unspecified financial damages. Hyde Lane registered Demon Hunter as a trademark for recorded music and merchandise in 2022 and has applied for protection covering live music. Netflix has registered KPop Demon Hunters as a trademark for several types of merchandise, while other trademark applications remain pending. Released in 2025, KPop Demon Hunters follows a fictional K-pop girl group called Huntr/X. The animated film has since become a global hit, spawning popular music releases, merchandise and plans for a worldwide live tour expected to begin in 2027. The film is Netflix's most-watched original title. It also won awards for best animated film and best original song for "Golden" at the 2026 Golden Globes and Oscars. A sequel is already in development, while Netflix is reportedly considering other projects based on the franchise, including a television series and stage musical. The BBC has contacted Demon Hunter, Netflix and AEG Presents for comment.

Mouni Roy on 'Bigg Boss' for a huge sum of money

Entertainment Desk

The 20th season of showbiz's most talked about and controversial reality show 'Bigg Boss' is going to be held in the first week of September 2026. Even before the official announcement, there has been a lot of speculation about the contestant list. And the biggest surprise of this season is the name of popular actress of the small and big screen, Mouni Roy! The 'Naagin' fame actress can now be seen in the 'Bigg Boss' house. The makers have offered Mouni Roy for the upcoming 'Bigg Boss 20' hosted by megastar Salman Khan. The actress is currently in preliminary talks with the production team. However, there has been no official announcement yet on whether Mouni will finally agree to it or not.

Entertainment Desk

Apart from acting, many artistes are involved in business. Some have restaurants, some are associated with beauty parlors, some have fashion brands. This time, small screen actress Samira Khan Mahi has entered the business world. She has joined Speedtouch Autos, a car sales company, as a director. She is also a shareholder of the company. Confirming her association with car sales company Speedtouch, Samira Khan Mahi said, "I want to contribute to the journey of this company with my vision, energy and ideas. Through Speedtouch Autos, our goal is to create better quality, fair prices and competitive opportunities for customers in the field of brand new, reconditioned and pre-owned cars." Samira Khan Mahi also said, "I have been planning to do business alongside acting for a long time. I am basically moving forward with two different business plans. First, I officially told everyone about the car business. I hope to be able to share the news about

the other one soon." Mahi has been giving less time to acting for the past two years. She works only when she likes the story and character. And she has prepared herself to do something different along with acting. She said, "I have reduced the number of jobs for the past two years. At that time, I felt that I should do something along with acting. Acting is my source of income. I have to decide to work selectively there. Because, I will not do all the work, I will do it only if I like the story; so I have to think of something different for earning. There has to be a different way of earning. That is why I got involved in business." Recently, Samira Khan Mahi has signed a contract to act in two mini-series. Titled 'Mayar Songsar' and 'Kormofol'. Series 'Kormofol' is directed by Mohin Khan. The series, which is based on a family story, also stars Dilara Zaman, Irfan Sajjad, Mahmudul Islam Mithu, A Kh M Hasan, Deepa Khandakar, Monira Mithu, among others. The two series will soon be released on the Cinemawala YouTube channel.



Shakira supports victims of Colombia earthquake

Entertainment Desk

The South American country Colombia has been devastated by a powerful and devastating 7.4-magnitude earthquake that struck the country recently. However, pop queen and Grammy-winning star Shakira has come to the aid of her countrymen in this difficult time. She visited the affected areas and destroyed schools in the city of Quibdo in the Choco province, which was the hardest hit. Shakira shared photos and videos of herself standing in front of schools destroyed by the devastating earthquake of August 10 on her Instagram account, writing, "Colombia may be hurting today, but Colombia is not broken! In the last few days, I have seen how the people of the country are standing by each other, especially for our young children." The education sector was hit hardest by the earthquake. Shakira and her charity, Pais Descalzos, have announced a massive relief and reconstruction plan to get children back to class as quickly as possible.



The initiative is being jointly funded by the FIFA Global Citizen Education Fund and Live Nation, with a \$1 million grant to provide children with educational materials and rehabilitate damaged schools. In addition, 10 new school buildings will be built in the Choco region with financial support from the Howard G Buffett Foundation. The singer has pledged to donate from her personal funds to the reconstruction of the Technological University of Quibdo, one of the centers of higher education for students of her foundation.



Starc takes six as Bangladesh bowled out for 64



Sports Desk

Mitchell Starc took 6 for 12 as Bangladesh were bowled out for 64 in 34 overs on Saturday, giving Australia a commanding start to the second Test in Mackay. Bangladesh lost five wickets for 12 runs after Australia opted to field, with four of their top six batters dismissed without scoring. Shadman Islam was out to the first ball, edging Starc to Cameron Green at gully. Tanzid Hasan followed for a duck in Starc's second over, and two balls later Najmul Hossain Shanto was trapped lbw. Mominiul Haque made 9 before edging Starc to Green, while Litton Das was given out lbw after Australia successfully reviewed the decision. Mushfiqur Rahim, the other batter among the top six to score, made 5 before Pat Cummins bowled him. Bangladesh were 35 for 6 at lunch. Mehidy Hasan Miraz, who made 11, and Hasan Mahmud added some resistance before Australia's attack finished the innings in the afternoon. The only partnership of more than 20 came at the end. Taijul Islam and Shoriful Islam put on 25 for the 10th wicket, the best stand of Bangladesh's innings. Shoriful made 14 from 19 balls, with three fours, while Taijul was unbeaten on 11. Starc returned to dismiss Shoriful caught behind for his sixth wicket. Cummins took 3 for 25 and Josh Hazlewood 1 for 18. Starc bowled 10 overs, six of them maidens.



Arsenal sign Villa centre-back Konsa as champions bolster defence

Sports Desk

Premier League champions Arsenal have signed England defender Ezri Konsa from Aston Villa in a deal worth a reported £51 million (\$69 million). Konsa agreed a "long-term contract" with the Gunners just hours before they start their title defence against Coventry on Friday. The 28-year-old's arrival gives Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta a major boost as he aims to lead the club to successive Premier League titles. Konsa, who was a regular for England at the World Cup this year, will partner Gabriel Magalhães at the heart of Arsenal's defence in the absence of France international William Saliba, who is sidelined for several months with a back problem. Konsa could make his debut against his former employers when Arsenal travel to Villa on August 31. "It's a privilege to be here and I can't wait to get started," Konsa said. "I want to keep winning, I'm hungry to win and that's what I'm here for. I'll do everything in my power to continue bringing success to this club. "It's a proud moment for me and my family to play for one of the best teams in the world. A lot of emotions have gone through my head, but I think it will really kick in on the first match-day." Konsa is expected to be paraded before Arsenal fans ahead of Friday's clash with Coventry in the opening game of the top-flight season at the Emirates Stadium. "Ezri is a defender of high quality, whose athleticism, composure and tactical intelligence have established him as one of the Premier League's most consistent performers," Arsenal sporting director Andrea Berta said. "Being comfortable in both central defence and at right-back, Ezri will bring valuable versatility to our squad while maintaining the

high defensive standards which are fundamental to our challenge of winning major trophies." - 'Go for it all' - With Jurrien Timber's fitness also in question following a long-term groin problem, Arteta felt it was vital to land a defender before the transfer window closes on September 1. Konsa joins Brazil midfielder Bruno Guimarães and Greek winger Christos Tzolis as Arsenal's main recruits since the club won their first English title for 22 years. Piero Hincapié's loan deal was also turned into a permanent switch from Bayer Leverkusen, while goalkeeper Illan Meslier joined from Leeds as a free signing. Atletico Madrid striker Julian Alvarez is also reportedly on Arsenal's radar. Villa and Arsenal had been apart in their valuation of Konsa, with an initial bid of around £35 million before the Gunners returned with a substantially improved offer. Konsa completed his medical at Arsenal's London Colney training ground on Thursday before putting pen to paper on his contract. He revealed conversations with Arsenal's England stars Noni Madueke, Eberechi Eze, Declan Rice and Bukayo Saka at the World Cup had helped convince him to make the move. "They said it's very enjoyable, they said I'll enjoy it. I've got a good relationship and I'm looking forward to training with them and playing with them," Konsa said. "That's what I'm here for, to win. Hungry for more. I had a taste of it last season with the Europa League and I want to go for it all." Signed for Villa from Brentford in 2019, he played nearly 300 times, winning the Europa League last season and helping the club finish in the Premier League's top four twice in the last three seasons. Villa have been ravaged by close-season departures, with leading players Youri Tielemans, Morgan Rogers and Lucas Digne also leaving Unai Emery's team.

score any run in his first ever Australia tour. Cummins however rattled the stump of veteran Mushfiqur Rahim for 5 as Bangladesh slumped to 21-6, which raised a possibility to break the lowest score ever in Test cricket-the 26 by New Zealand against England in 1955. The stubbornness from Mehidy Hasan who scored 11 off 51 quelled the fear of being all out below 26 but Cummins and Josh Hazlewood kept Bangladesh pushing as the visitors looked to be on the verge of being all out by their lowest total in Test history. Bangladesh's lowest total is 43 which they made against West Indies in 2018. It looked all possible when Bangladesh were left to 39-9 but Shoriful and Taijul Islam shared an important 25 runs for the last wicket to help Bangladesh let the fear go. Shoriful made team-best 14 before being out by Starc while Taijul was not out on 11. Shoriful then made immediate impact with the bowl to make Australian life hell. He removed Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne before Taskin took the wicket of Matt Renshaw. Steven Smith and Cameron Green shared all important 69 runs from the fourth wicket, a partnership that proved to be decisive in giving Australia the edge on Day 1. Shoriful broke through with the wicket of Smith who made 42 before sparking a sensational collapse that saw Australia lost four wickets for three runs. Shoriful was the wrecker-in-chief and completed his five-for with the wicket of Cummins, bowling 8.4 overs, which was the second fastest five-for by a Bangladesh bowler behind Taijul who completed five-for in 6.5 overs against west Indies in Chattogram in 2018. Shoriful then took the wicket of Starc to finish the day with 6-35 in 12 overs, making it the best figure by a Bangladesh bowler on Australian soil for the time being, eclipsing Hasan Mahmud's historical 6-55 in the first Test. However Green and Nathan Lyon saw off the day with luck and pluck to keep Australia's nose ahead on tricky wicket.

Trump to star as motor race takes to streets of US capital

Sports Desk

Donald Trump will take a lap of honor at an IndyCar race through the streets of Washington this weekend, capping a summer of 250th anniversary festivities that the US president has centered on himself. Racing cars will roar past historic landmarks including the US Capitol and Smithsonian Museums as 25 drivers make 147 laps of the course at speeds of up to 185 mph (298 kmh). Workers have had to weld down more than 200 man-hole covers on the 250-mile (400-kilometer) circuit so that the sheer force created by the speeding cars doesn't tear them off. Practice and qualifying sessions are on Saturday and the "Freedom 250 Grand Prix" itself will take place on Sunday. Trump, 80, is expected to take a ceremonial lap of honor in his armored limousine dubbed "The Beast" and then wave the green flag to start the race. The event is being managed by the organizers of the IndyCar championship, the US motorsport whose cars resemble Formula One vehicles but often compete on oval tracks, including at the flagship Indianapolis 500 race. It marks a final attempt by Trump to stamp his mark on Washington's celebrations of the 250th anniversary, which began with an Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) bout in a huge cage on the White House lawn in June. As with the UFC fight, the IndyCar organizers are footing the bill for a huge logistical challenge which has shut down some of Washington's busiest roads for days. Thousands of spectators will line the route for the unprecedented race, which echoes Formula One contests staged on city streets in Las Vegas, Monaco and Singapore.

England v Pakistan first Test Three talking points

Sports Desk

England began Joe Root's second spell as full-time Test captain with a totally dominant innings and 103-run win over Pakistan at his Yorkshire home ground of Headingley on Friday. Below AFP Sport looks at three talking points that emerged from what was just England's third win in their last 11 Tests. Cox looks the part Any assessment of England's form at Headingley has to take account of arguably one of the weakest Pakistan teams in decades. But the manner in which Jordan Cox made a maiden Test fifty while batting in what has often been a problem position of number three for England was an encouraging sign for Root's men. It seemed as if Jacob Bethell was making the role his own only for the talented 22-year-old left-hander to be ruled out of the entire three-match series against Pakistan with a knee injury. Cox, however, made 73 in just 100 balls, including 14 fours, at Headingley, but without the kind of extravagant, and indeed reckless, shot-making that characterised England's ultra-aggressive Bazball approach under now retired captain Ben Stokes and sacked Test coach Brendon McCullum. Former England captain Michael Vaughan -- himself an elegant top-order batsman -- was among those impressed by the 25-year-old Cox. "He just looked a player" Vaughan told the BBC. "He looks like he's got all the time and he played two or three shots that reminded me of (South Africa great) AB de Villiers." Pakistan's comical fielding no joke One of cricket's oldest truisms is if you want to know the state of a team, look at their fielding for this is the one aspect of the game, unlike batting or bowling, which can be improved as much by sheer hard work as raw talent. Pakistan's fielding at Headingley, however, was woeful, with one particularly farcical incident summing up their performance. Ali Usman lured Dan Lawrence down the pitch only for the ball to deflect off the England batsman's pad. Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha, fielding at slip, seemed more concerned by appealing for lbw than running out Lawrence. By the time Agha realised the chance was on, he let fly with a panicked throw straight into the rear of wicket-keeper



Mohammad Rizwan, who was blocking the stumps. Pakistan then failed with an ensuing review of the lbw decision as Lawrence had been struck outside off stump. Several Pakistan fielders, meanwhile, tried to stop eventual boundaries by sticking out a boot rather than bending down, including left-arm spinner Usman whose five-wicket haul was a rare highlight for his side. "There's no excuse for it," Usman admitted. "We should put in more effort. There were lapses in the field today and it cost us runs." England's love affair with Leeds goes on England have now won seven Tests in a row at Headingley -- their longest current winning streak at any ground in the world. That sequence includes two wins over Australia yet, remarkably, Yorkshire's headquarters will not stage a Test when England's oldest rivals arrive for next year's Ashes series. The Leeds ground has effectively lost out to Hampshire's Rose Bowl, which will be making its Ashes debut. This is despite Headingley, one of world cricket's most storied venues, providing a pitch that is often favourable to England's seamers, with the crowd -- particularly on the old Western Terrace -- giving raucous support to the home side. "I would love to play as many games as possible here," said local hero Root. "It's a great Test match venue and a surface that provides brilliant Test cricket. It is hard to imagine Australia doing without a home Ashes Test at their Gabba fortress in Brisbane. "As a player, you want to play at the grounds you have most success at as a team," said Root. "I love playing here -- as a Yorkshireman I have to say that from birth, so I'm glad it's the case."

MLS fines Messi for striking an opponent

Sports Desk

Major League Soccer fined Inter Miami's Argentine superstar Lionel Messi an undisclosed amount on Friday for slapping Philadelphia's Quinn Sullivan on the back of the neck in the clubs' 2-2 draw on Wednesday. The league's disciplinary committee said it had levied the fine "for violating the league's policy regarding hands to the face/head/neck of an opponent." Miami's Ian Fray was fined an undisclosed amount for the same infraction. It was late in stoppage time of a testy contest when Messi approached the center circle to confront Sullivan while the ball was in play in another area of the field. After a brief exchange, Messi took a swipe at Sullivan, who then squared up to the Argentine star in a fight-style stare-down. Referee Filip Djuric, who had his back turned during the incident, arrived to separate the players but did not show either of them a card. Djuric did send off Cavan Sullivan, younger brother and teammate of Quinn, and Miami's Italian midfielder Yannick Bright after their stoppage time scuffle in Miami's penalty area.



Betis down Real Sociedad in La Liga opener

Sports Desk

Real Betis kicked off their Spanish La Liga campaign with a 1-0 victory over last season's Copa del Rey winners Real Sociedad on Friday. Rodrigo Riquelme's tidy volley from Cucho Hernandez's cross to the back post after 63 minutes secured all three points for Manuel Pellegrini's side from a tight and even game. On Saturday, Jose Mourinho starts his second reign as Real Madrid coach at Espanyol, after Los Blancos went back to back seasons without winning a major trophy. Hansi Flick's Spanish champions Barcelona visit Elche on Sunday in their first game of the season.

Nakashima knocks out Fritz to reach Cincinnati semi-finals

Sports Desk

Brandon Nakashima continued his red-hot pace on Friday, knocking out sixth-seeded Taylor Fritz 7-6 (11/9), 4-6, 6-3 to reach the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters semi-finals. The American began his post-Wimbledon hardcourt run with a Washington semi-final, which he lost to Fritz, a run to the final in the Montreal Masters and now his best showing at Cincinnati -- all with the US Open start barely more than a week away. Nakashima withstood 22 aces from Fritz -- who also bashed 31 unforced errors. Nakashima trailed a break in the third set but broke back to knot it at 3-3 and broke again for a 5-3 lead. He out-hit the powerful Fritz and converted on his first match point with a forehand winner. "I've gotten a lot of confidence over the summer," Nakashima said. "In the final set I trusted my game, I'm proud with how I ended the match. "Today I was trying to hit bigger against him than in Washington, that's what got me through. "I've had a pretty good last few weeks, I've spent hour and hours on the court - I'm proud of myself," he added. "I now have the opportunity to win more matches." Nakashima will face either Lorenzo Musetti or Arthur Fils for a place in the final.



Bejlek broke first in the third set only for Keys to battle back and force the tiebreaker, in which Bejlek rallied from 4-2 down on the way to a victory capped by a stinging winner down the line on match point. "I just kept believing in the match no matter what," said Bejlek, who won the WTA title in Abu Dhabi in February as a wild card. "I believed much more than ever, it was always in my head." After a solid first set the 24th-ranked Keys opened the second on sweltering Stadium Court with a break in the third game, but Bejlek, ranked 35th, broke back in the sixth and held for a 4-3 lead. Keys answered with a love game, but Bejlek turned the tables two games later, taking the contest into the third set as Keys hit the net with a backhand on the Czech's second set point. "I was trying to cool down in the second set, I was pretty nervous so I didn't want to think about what was going on," Bejlek said.

In the women's quarter-finals, Sara Bejlek backed up her stunning victory over top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka, rallying for a 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/5) victory over Madison Keys. The 20-year-old Czech got off to a slow start against the big-hitting American, a former Australian open champion and the 2019 winner in Cincinnati. Bejlek trailed 0-3 on the way to dropping the first set, but rode a wave of momentum shifts into the final four where she'll face either fourth-seeded Coco Gauff or Marta Kostyuk.



BNP All Initiatives for State Rebuilding Will Be Implemented, All Conspiracies Will Be Resisted : Aslam Chowdhury

Md. Omar Faruk , Special Correspondent

A mass gathering was held in Sitakunda, Chattogram, marking the second anniversary of the release from prison of former BNP Joint Secretary General and former Member of Parliament for Chattogram-4, Md. Aslam Chowdhury. The rally turned into a large public gathering on Thursday (August 20) afternoon at L.K. Siddiqui Square in Sitakunda Municipality. The rally was organized by Sitakunda Upazila BNP and presided over by its Convener, Dr. Kamal Kadar. The event was moderated by Member Secretary Md. Morsalin. From around 3:00 pm, BNP leaders and activists from different unions and areas of the municipality began gathering at the venue. Addressing the rally as the chief guest, Aslam Chowdhury said, “I am also a member of the Zia family, just like you. At the call of Begum Khaleida Zia, the movement for the restoration of democracy that was built on the streets of Sitakunda from 2010 to 2014 was not the achievement of one individual. The real credit belongs to the people of Sitakunda.” He said, “Despite extreme adversity, repression and persecution, the spontaneous participation and courage shown by the people of Sitakunda on the streets will remain a milestone in the history of the country’s democratic movement. The unity and sacrifice of the people were the main strength of our movement.” Aslam Chowdhury further said, “Our movement has not yet ended. Conspiracies are still being carried out through different strategies. As long as conspiracies continue against the Zia family and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, we will stand with the people of Sitakunda and resist all such conspiracies through continued movements and struggles, Insha’ Allah.” He said, “All initiatives undertaken by the BNP government

for state rebuilding will be implemented, and all conspiracies against the interests of the country and its people will be collectively resisted.” It may be mentioned that Aslam Chowdhury was released from prison on August 20, 2024, after spending eight years, three months and five days in detention. To commemorate his release, Sitakunda BNP leaders, activists and supporters have been observing the day every year with various programmes. Among others, Sitakunda Municipal BNP Convener Zakir Hossain, Member Secretary Saleh Ahmed Solu, former President Yusuf Nizami, former General Secretary of Upazila BNP Didarul Islam Mahmud, Joint Conveners Zahurul Alam Zahur, Md. Salamat Ullah and Fazlul Karim Chowdhury, Akbar Shah Thana BNP Member Secretary Mainuddin Chowdhury Moinu, North Kattali Ward BNP Convener Rafiquddin Chowdhury, Member Secretary Md. Selim Uddin, North Pahartali Ward BNP Convener Rehan Uddin Pradhan and Member Secretary Mahbulul Alam addressed the rally. Among those present were freedom fighter Abul Mansur, Moharram Ali, Mojaher Uddin Ashraf, Badiul Alam Badrul, Advocate Rowshan Ara, Nazmun Nahar Neli, Nurul Anwar, Nuruddin Md. Jahangir, Maulana Ismail Hossain, Anwarul Azim Mukul, Nurul Azim Sabuj, Enamul Bari, Ainul Kamal, K.M. Nazim Uddin, Abul Kalam Azad, Mostafizur Rahman, Alauddin Masum, Shahabuddin, Nazimuddoula, Zahidul Hasan, Aurangzeb Mustafa, Selim Commissioner, Ferdous Alam, Lokman Hossain, Ibrahim, Jewel, Amlendu Kanak and Zia Uddin, along with many other leaders and activists of BNP and its affiliated organizations. Following the discussion meeting, a colorful procession began from L.K. Siddiqui Square and ended in the North Bazar area of Sitakunda. A large number of leaders and activists of BNP and its affiliated organizations participated in the procession.

3 Feni University students to represent Bangladesh at Intl Moot Court in India



Staff Reporter

Three law students from Feni University have been selected to participate in the prestigious 8th GD Goenka-CIARB International Commercial Arbitration Moot Court Competition 2026 in India, representing both their institution and Bangladesh on the international stage. Under the overall supervision and training of the Feni University Law Mooting Society (FULMS), the selected team members are Kazi Mohibul Haque and Bibi Zulekha from the 30th batch, and Sanjida Jannat Sayima from the 31st batch of the Department of Law.

The competition will take place from September 25 to 27 at GD Goenka University in Gurgaon, Haryana, India. Teams from universities across the globe, including the United Kingdom, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, will compete in the event. Centered around international commercial arbitration, the competition provides a platform for students to demonstrate their skills in legal research, critical analysis, and advocacy. Kazi Tasnim Jahan Tanzi, Chairman of the Department of Law at Feni University, is serving as the coach of the team. Under her direct guidance, the students are currently preparing for the main rounds of the contest. It is worth noting that commercial arbitration is an alternative dispute resolution mechanism designed to settle business disputes—such as breach of contract, supply issues, and contractual liabilities—outside court through an independent tribunal. Participating teams will present their arguments based on this international legal framework.



A Unique Example of Humanity in Sitakunda

Food distribution at old age homes and orphanages, tree plantation, and honoring blood donors A unique initiative on the 6th founding anniversary of Adarsha Chhatra O Jubo Samaj.

Mother Abandons 2-Year-Old Child on Roadside in Bagerhat

Masum Hawladar, Bagerhat

In Morelganj, Bagerhat, locals rescued a 2-year-old child from the side of the road. There are allegations that the child’s mother abandoned her on the road. On Friday evening, after the incident, locals first took the child to her grandmother, but the grandmother refused to take responsibility. Finding no other option, the locals rescued the child and took her to the residence of the Morelganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer at night. There, UNO Md. Habibullah arranged immediate safety and necessary care for the child. The incident occurred on Friday evening in front of a brick kiln in Je leppara, Baroikhal Union of the upazila. Locals said that in the evening they saw the child crying alone by the roadside and several people went forward. Later they rescued the child and took her to her grandmother. But the grandmother refused to take responsibility for the child. When the matter came to light, anger and concern arose among locals. Later, the locals took the child to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer’s residence. It is learned that the child’s father is Md. Palash from the Baroikhal area, and the mother is Mos. Mitu Akter. They got divorced 3 months ago. According to locals, on Friday Mitu Akter left the child on the road in front of the brick kiln and left for Dhaka.

After the incident, UNO Md. Habibullah contacted the child’s father, Md. Palash. Palash said he is currently outside Morelganj. Later, following legal procedures, the child’s father Palash said he would meet the UNO within three days and take responsibility for the



child. Meanwhile, considering the child’s immediate safety, UNO Md. Habibullah himself took responsibility for her. He picked the child up and arranged for her necessary care. Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md. Habibullah said that to ensure the child’s temporary safety and care, the child was temporarily handed over to her aunt Resma Khatun in the presence of everyone, along with financial assistance for three days maintenance. On the other hand, the child’s father Md. Palash has been summoned to urgently appear at the Upazila Nirbahi Officer’s office next Monday. The officer also said that further action will be taken considering the child’s future guardianship, safety, and legal matters.



Madrasa student killed in road accident in Amtoli

Amtoli (Barguna) Correspondent

A sixth-grade student named Ahmadullah (12), a madrasa student, died tragically in a road accident in Amtoli. The accident occurred at around 7 pm on Thursday in the Amragachia Bazar area of the Patuakhali-Kuakata regional highway. The deceased Abdullah is the son of Khabir Talukdar of Amragachia village in Kukia union of Amtoli upazila. According to local sources, an Italy Paribahan bus leaving from Kuakata for Dhaka hit Ahmadullah from behind, who was standing on the road, and he fell on the side of the road. Locals rescued him in a serious condition and brought him to Amtoli Upazila Health Complex. He was sent to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital for advanced treatment. He died around 12 midnight while undergoing treatment. The deadly bus has been seized by Patuakhali police.

Senior officials inspect various canals-rivers in Fakirhat, Bagerhat.

S A Kalam, Fakirhat, Bagerhat.

In the Fakirhat upazila of Bagerhat, a delegation from the safe water supply project across the country, including the Deputy Project Director of the Department of Public Health Engineering, Mostafizur Rahman, visited various locations and held discussions with locals to address the issues of safe drinking water scarcity, modernisation of drainage systems, sanitation, and waste management. On Saturday (22 August) at 11 am, the delegation held discussions with locals at the Fakirhat Dakbangla to identify various problems, including the scarcity of safe drinking water. At this time, the Executive Engineer of the Department of Public Health Engineering, Bagerhat, Jayanta Mallik, Assistant Engineer of the upazila, Md. Aminul Islam, and various other officials were present. Later, the senior officials inspected various locations, including the Morang, Katakhal canal, and the Bhairab river flowing through Fakirhat Sadar in the Piljong union of Fakirhat upazila. Also present during this time were Kafil Krishna Mondal, the nominated candidate for Member of Parliament in the 2026 national elections from the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in the Bagerhat-1 parliamentary constituency, Sheikh Kamrul Islam Gora, President of the Fakirhat upazila BNP, General Secretary Sheikh Shariful Kamal Karim, and others. After the inspection, Deputy Project Director of the Department of Public Health Engineering, Mostafizur Rahman, listened to the locals about water and various problems and assured them of necessary initiatives for their resolution. He said the government is focusing on purifying river-canal water for easy supply by reducing pressure on groundwater.



Tk 7.66 Crore Dream Housing Will Dagonbhuiyan’s Sanitation Workers Finally Get a Home

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

Those who keep the town clean and livable are often forced to live in dilapidated slums or low-lying shanties. Frequently facing housing discrimination due to their occupation, the sanitation workers of Dagonbhuiyan Municipality are finally seeing a ray of hope with an under-construction modern high-rise building. However, despite the project deadline having passed, the construction remains incomplete. According to Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) sources, the seven-story building is being constructed at Aziz Fazilpur village at a cost of Tk 7.66 crore under the project titled “Construction of Residential Buildings for Sanitation Workers in Municipalities” to ensure the health, safety, and housing of these essential workers. Chittagong-based contracting firm ‘Consonel Engineers & Builders’ is implementing the project. Project Overview at a Glance: Total Cost: Tk 7.66 crore Location: Aziz Fazilpur Village (adjacent to the nursery), Dagonbhuiyan Start Date: November 21, 2024 Scheduled Completion: April 7 (Expired) Current Progress: 60% Beneficiaries: 24 families Key Amenities Upazila Engineer Md. Mamunim Billah stated that the 7-story building, constructed



on 36 decimals of land, will feature 24 flats. Each 700-square-foot unit will consist of two bedrooms, two balconies, a living room, a dining room, and a kitchen. The building will also include a community hall for the sanitation community, prayer space, and elevator facilities. He expressed optimism that the remaining work would be completed within the next 7 to 8 months for handing over to the municipality. **Delays and Expectations** A spot visit revealed that roof casting for six floors has been completed, with brickwork, plastering, and fitting work currently underway. Although the project missed its April deadline, causing some disappointment among beneficiaries, the marginalized community remains hopeful about securing a permanent home. Locals have welcomed this initiative, which mirrors similar projects across 66 municipalities in 59 districts nationwide. They emphasized that the main challenge now is to complete the remaining construction promptly and hand over the keys to genuine beneficiaries without further delay.



Four Drug Dealers Arrested with Marijuana and Yaba in Vijayanagar

M Badal Khandaker, (District Correspondent), Brahmanbaria

On 20/08/2026 at 16:05, a team of Vijayanagar Police Station conducted an operation based on secret information. At that time, police arrested 01 drug dealer from Rampur area under 02 No. Chandura Union of the said police station and recovered 05 (five) kg of marijuana from his possession. In another operation at 17:30, 01 drug dealer was arrested from Mukundapur area under Paharpur Union with 39 (thirty-nine) pieces of yaba tablets. In yet another operation at 17:55, 01 drug dealer was arrested from Hajipur area under 05 No. Harsapur Union with 100 (one hundred) pieces of yaba tablets recovered from inside the arrested person’s residence. In a separate operation at 20:15 at night, 01 drug dealer was arrested from Kamalmura area under 10 No. Paharpur Union with 06 (six) kg of marijuana recovered from inside the arrested person’s residence. The recovered narcotics were seized according to proper procedure through a seizure list. During preliminary interrogation, it was learned that arrested Kashem already has 02 drug cases against him, and Monir has 01 drug case against him. Name and address of the arrested accused, Muradul Haque Bhuiyan Father: Md. Mokbul Haque Bhuiyan alias Manju, Village: Paon, Police Station: Astagram, District: Kishoreganj. Md. Kashem, Father: Late Mona Mia, Village: Kamalmura, Police Station: Vijayanagar, District: Brahmanbaria. Md. Monir Hossain, Father: Late Murtuj Ali, Village: Hajipur, Police Station: Vijayanagar, District: Brahmanbaria. Jaheda Begum, Husband Kala Mia Fakir, Village, Kamalmura, Police Station, Vijayanagar, District, Brahmanbaria. In connection with this, four separate drug cases have been filed at Vijayanagar Police Station.