

Don’t let the citizen service centres sit idle

It is most unfortunate that the “Nagorik Sheba Kendra,” an initiative launched by the interim government in Dhaka last year with the goal to provide 450 essential services to the citizens, have effectively become non-functional. According to a Prothom Alo report, of the six centres opened in the capital’s Gulshan, Uttara, Nilkhet, Gulistan, Mohammadpur and

The centres were initially designed to handle applications for government services, with the longer-term goal of becoming a single gateway through which citizens could receive complete services. For instance, someone applying for a passport would eventually be able.

their photograph and biometric information recorded, and have the application forwarded to the relevant government office, avoiding going there in person. The centres were also supposed to provide services such as NID and birth registrations, land services and online GDs, with trained and certified personnel assisting citizens for government-set fees. However, the personnel were reportedly not provided with the essential equipment or reliable internet connectivity. They found it difficult to run the centres and eventually left. We must ask: why was such a major public service initiative launched without first ensuring the necessary budget, infrastructure, institutional coordination and capacity? In 2010, the Awami League government launched Union Digital Centres (UDCs) to bring government and other services closer to the citizens. It was largely similar to the interim government’s citizen service centres, with trained local entrepreneurs providing various services for a fee. However, the interim government’s initial plan was not to replace the UDCs but to bring them under the new system. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Reportedly, the ICT Division is now considering launching a similar initiative named Rural Digital Centres. Before doing so, it must first assess why the existing initiatives have failed.

We urge the government to properly examine the Nagorik Sheba Kendra initiative before deciding whether to close or revive the centres. If it chooses to revive them, it must ensure reliable connectivity and adequate resources, establish clear institutional responsibilities, train and support the service providers, and raise public awareness about the services available. Most importantly, the centres must be properly integrated into the relevant government agencies and digital platforms. Citizens deserve a service system that works, not another initiative that is abandoned soon after its launch.

New pay scale takes

standards of government employees and the need for a balanced and rational salary structure.The new pay scale, being implemented after 12 years, will be introduced in three phases, according to a decision taken at the highest level of the government. According to the implementation plan, 30 percent of the basic pay under the new scale may be made effective from July 1 this year, another 35 percent at the beginning of the next year and the remaining portion in July of the subsequent fiscal year.Various allowances may be implemented from January of that fiscal year, as recommended.The interim government formed the 23-member 9th National Pay Commission on July 27, 2025, nearly a decade after the formation of the 8th Pay Commission.The commission, headed by former finance secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan, submitted its report to then Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on January 21 this year.The Cabinet Secretary said the ratio between the salaries of the lowest and highest grades had been reduced to 1:1.78 from the existing 1:1.945 in consideration of fairness.As a result, the basic salary of the lowest grade will increase by 142 percent, while that of the highest grade will increase by 100 percent.According to the government’s election manifesto, the government is committed to introducing a “one grade, one pension” system for military and civilian personnel.

As implementation of the system at this stage involves a huge financial burden and data on civilian employees who retired before 2019 are unavailable, the government has decided to implement it gradually by 2030.As an interim measure, the government has decided to significantly increase net pensions on a slab basis, considering the living standards and financial security of retired pensioners.

Under the decision, net pensions will increase by 100 percent for those receiving Tk 9,000 or less per month, 75 percent for those receiving Tk 9,001 to Tk 20,000, 65 percent for Tk 20,001 to Tk 30,000, 60 percent for Tk 30,001 to Tk 40,000 and 55 percent for Tk 40,001 or above.As a result, pensioners who retired long ago and currently receive relatively low net pensions will receive proportionately higher increases.The Cabinet Division’s press release said the government had also decided, for the first time, to introduce a disability allowance for government employees having children with special needs. Under the decision, an employee will receive Tk 3,000 per month for each child with special needs.The government has also decided to expand the coverage of mobile allowances considering internet and digital communication costs. Previously, the allowance was applicable only to Grade 5 employees. Under the National Pay Scale-2026, employees of all grades will be entitled to the mobile allowance.Around 24 lakh military and civilian employees and 9.25 lakh retired employees and other eligible beneficiaries will benefit from implementation of the new pay scale.The government will incur an estimated additional annual expenditure of Tk 1,05,580 crore, which has been provided for in the budgets of the respective fiscal years under the Medium-Term Budget Framework.The government believes the new pay scale will play an important role in enhancing the financial security and motivation of public servants and building a skilled, dynamic and people-friendly public administration.The Finance Division will issue the necessary gazettes, orders and instructions for smooth implementation of the National Pay Scale 2026. These will specify the detailed provisions on pay fixation, allowances, pensions and other post-retirement benefits.The concerned ministries, divisions, directorates, offices and agencies will receive instructions to take necessary measures for proper implementation of the approved pay scale.

Chinese ambassador invites

response, Ambassador Yao said around 30 Chinese companies

Bangladesh and Malaysia must break the recruitment syndicate’s grip

Md. Neyamul Hossain

in 2009, Malaysia again stopped recruiting Bangladeshi workers. Three years later, in November 2012, Bangladesh and Malaysia signed a government-to-government (G2G) agreement, bypassing private recruiting agencies. But the system did not generate sufficient recruitment. Meanwhile, the maritime trafficking crisis between 2012 and 2015 exposed a devastating side of irregular migration, with thousands of people attempting dangerous journeys by boat and trafficking camps and mass graves discovered along the Thailand-Malaysia border. Private recruiting agencies returned under the G2G Plus arrangement in 2016. But instead of opening the market to all eligible agencies, Malaysia selected a syndicate of just 10 agencies, leading to allegations of monopoly, excessive costs and irregularities in the recruitment network and its associated digital system. FWCMS remained at the centre of the recruitment process. In September 2018, after Mahathir Mohamad returned to power, Malaysia suspended the system, describing the recruitment process as a form of human trafficking and a money-making scheme. Yet in 2022, the same recruitment model resurfaced despite protests from civil society and recruiting agencies. And this time, 25 Bangladeshi recruiting agencies were initially selected, and later expanded. But once again, FWCMS sits at the centre of the recruitment process.

FWCMS is developed and operated by Bestinet, a Malaysian private company associated with Aminul Islam Bin Abdul Nor. A Malaysian citizen of Bangladeshi origin, Aminul has been identified in media reports as a central figure in Malaysia’s migrant recruitment system for the past decade, alongside influential actors within powerful circles in both countries.

According to media reports, under the syndicate system in 2023 and 2024, the registration fee per worker was set at 100 Malaysian ringgit, equivalent to around Tk 2,700 at the time. Instead, workers were charged Tk 1,07,000, of which Tk 1,00,000 allegedly had to be sent to Bestinet in Malaysia. Recruiting agencies allege that around Tk 5,000 crore was siphoned off of the country through a “syndicate fee” of Tk 1,00,000 per worker. Another Tk 3,750 crore was allegedly siphoned off in the name of the “visa trade”. Altogether, the amount allegedly siphoned off of the country could be at least Tk 8,750 crore. The actual scale of corruption and irregularities, however, may have been even higher.

Between July 2024 and 2026, several cases were filed, several people were arrested, and investigations are still ongoing. Yet the fundamental recruitment architecture has not changed. Instead, concerns about the same model have resurfaced around FWCMS and the proposed list of recruiting agencies. This raises a fundamental question: how can a private recruitment architecture become so influential in a system involving two sovereign governments? Are the actors behind it more powerful than the governments of Bangladesh and Malaysia? And if they are not, why has the system repeatedly been allowed to operate despite such serious allegations and irregularities Nepal has raised serious concerns about the limited-agency model. After FWCMS published a list of 25 recruiting

prevention, riverbank erosion, electricity, health, food and fertilizer supply in the three districts.The meeting also informed that in addition to regular drives to control drugs, community policing and social awareness activities are being conducted involving representatives from mosques, temples and educational institutions, and local leaders. Legal action is being taken by filing regular cases under the new Gambling Prevention Act, 2026 and operating mobile courts if necessary, and the police department is actively working in this regard. Kurigram Deputy Commissioner Annapurna Debnath, Gaibandha Deputy Commissioner Dr Md Moniruzzaman and Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Israt Jahan virtually participated in the meeting, along with representatives from the offices of the Superintendent of Police of the three districts and the Rangpur Division Deputy Inspector General of Police.

BB introduces electronic

part of its market intervention operations.Under the system, Bangladesh Bank will publish auction notices specifying the auction amount, date and time, transaction type, eligible participants and other applicable requirements. Authorized Dealer (AD) banks will then submit their bids electronically within the prescribed cut-off time.The system will also operate as a centralized electronic dealing platform for interbank FX transactions among AD banks.

Spot, Forward and Swap transactions will be conducted through the platform, with trade confirmation, transaction monitoring, reporting, audit trails and record management incorporated into the system.

For Spot transactions, the settlement cycle may be up to T+2, while Forward transactions will be settled according to the specified tenor. Swap transactions will consist of two legs-a spot transaction and a forward transaction, or vice versa-with separate settlement procedures for the near and far legs.The guidelines provide separate responsibilities for Front Office, Mid Office and Back Office users of AD banks. Front Office users will create and accept FX deals and submit or authorize auction bids, while Mid Office users will administer user IDs and dealer limits. Back Office users will handle foreign currency and taka settlement as well as reporting.The new system will also support preparation and publication of the official FX Reference Rate (RR). AD banks will submit standardized client-level data on export, import and remittance transactions, which will be used to calculate the reference rate for the foreign exchange market.

Under the guidelines, AD banks will have to submit client-level FX transaction data three times on each business day.Data covering transactions up to 11:00am must be submitted by 11:30am, while data up to 4:00pm must be submitted by 4:30pm. Transactions conducted after 4:00pm may be reported by 11:00am on the following working day.Even if there is no reportable FX transaction during a reporting period, banks will have to submit a "Null Report". Transactions equivalent to US\$100,000 or above are required for construction of the reference rate, while wage-earner remittance transactions must be reported regardless of their size. The guidelines say AD banks will be able to submit client-level data either through a prescribed Excel file or by entering individual transactions directly into the system.Submitted data will be subject to approval by designated Checker users, creating a maker-checker mechanism for the reporting process. The electronic platform is expected to reduce manual intervention and processing time while strengthening transparency and standardization in Bangladesh’s foreign exchange market.

Four members of a family mur

(August 30) afternoon, a team of DB police went to Rangpur Central Jail to collect samples of the two accused. At that

agencies, Nepal’s Ministry of Youth, Labour and Employment expressed concern and held an emergency meeting with Malaysia’s ambassador to Nepal to seek clarification. Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies also strongly objected, arguing that restricting recruitment to just 25 agencies would create a de facto monopoly, undermine healthy competition and ultimately open the door to the economic exploitation of migrant workers.

The concern has since become regional. On August 27, representatives of foreign recruitment agencies from Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Pakistan issued a joint statement calling for equal access, transparency and fair competition. They warned that no digital platform should become a vehicle for syndication, monopoly or exclusive control over migrant recruitment.

For a recruiting agency, a government office or a digital system, a migrant worker may be a number, but for a family, that worker is often its only hope. Migrants often sell land, borrow from relatives, mortgage property or take high-interest loans to finance the journey for a foreign job. If the job materialises, the family gradually recovers its investment. However, if the worker pays Tk 5 to 6 lakh and cannot travel, the debt does not disappear. Migrants and their families have to bear the burden of that sunk cost.

That is why the goal should not simply be how to reopen the market. It should be: how can it be reopened safely, transparently and affordably with the migrant worker at the centre? Before recruitment begins this time, both governments should disclose the entire mechanism—a step that has been missing in previous recruitment cycles. Workers, recruiting agencies and the public deserve to know exactly how the process will work, who will control each stage, what each party in the process will be paid and what safeguards are in place. If a worker pays but cannot travel, who will refund the money? If the promised job does not exist, who will be held responsible? If a digital platform controls access to recruitment, who will oversee it and ensure that it cannot be used to create a monopoly?

These questions must be answered before recruitment begins. If there are limitations in the current Memorandum of Understanding, both governments should work to amend those as the agreement expires later this year. But transparency cannot wait. It must come before the first worker pays a single taka, accompanied by a clear commitment that anyone who violates the rules—however powerful—will face consequences. Bangladesh-Malaysia labour migration has repeatedly been plagued by problems. For almost a decade, different versions of limited-agency recruitment have been accompanied by allegations of irregularities, controversy and migrant suffering. Yet those allegedly responsible for previous irregularities have not been held accountable, while the same network appears to have resurfaced in the next recruitment process under a different name. This cycle must be stopped. Both governments have a responsibility to ensure that migrant workers are protected from exploitation and that recruitment is transparent, fair and accountable.Otherwise, the question “Is the syndicate more powerful than the state?” will remain unanswered. This time, Bangladesh and Malaysia must prove that the state is more powerful than the syndicate.

time, a technologist and an assistant from the Rangpur Medical College lab were with them. For the safety of the accused, the DB requested the Rangpur Medical College principal to arrange for the collection of samples in the prison. After getting permission, the police team went to the prison with the medical college technologist.

Meanwhile, regarding the absence of drug presence in the dope test, Rangpur Medical College Hospital’s Biochemistry Department Professor Dr. Rashedul Haque said, amphetamine does not stay in the blood or urine for a long time, it usually stays in the urine for five to seven days, after which it is no longer found. Since they have been in detention for more than seven days, they could not have taken the drug. If it is more than seven days, the presence of amphetamine is naturally not found in the urine.

Earlier, on August 22, the police recovered the bodies of Ganapati Chakraborty, a retired teacher of Rangpur Zilla School, his wife and two children from their house in the Machuapara area of ??Rangpur city. Neighbors Siddharth Das and Mughdah Das were arrested in this incident. Later, they gave confessional statements in court under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

In this incident, Ganapati Chakraborty’s elder brother Gopinath Chakraborty filed a murder case against unknown accused at the Kotwali Police Station in Rangpur city.

HC upholds death for Hitu

tenced the prime accused, Hitu Sheikh, father-in-law of the elder sister of Asiya, to death in the case. It, however, acquitted Hitu’s wife, Jaheda Begum, and sons Ratul Sheikh and Sajib Sheikh of the charges.The death reference in the case reached the High Court for its approval on May 21, 2025. As per the case details, on March 6, 2025, the child was visiting her elder sister’s in-laws’ house, where she was raped. She was initially taken to Magura Sadar Hospital in critical condition and was later transferred to the capital’s Combined Military Hospital (CMH), where she died on March 13.Following the incident, the victim’s mother had filed the case with Magura Sadar Police Station on March 8 under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. Chief Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury on June 10, 2026, constituted the dedicated High Court bench for hearing, on a priority basis, death references for confirmation of death sentences awarded under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, as well as appeals arising from the same judgments. Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus Kazol too formed a special prosecutors’ team to take part in the hearing of such cases.

Malaysian envoy

friendship between the two countries would be further strengthened through enhanced defence and strategic cooperation.

US envoy hails Trump as

President is Making America, and our partners, Great Again!," said the US Special Envoy.In April, Bangladesh signed a deal with US aircraft manufacturer Boeing to buy 14 planes for its national carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines, the two sides announced - the airline’s biggest-ever order, in a deal valued at \$3.7 billion.Gor visited Bangladesh from July 30-August 1 visit to Bangladesh and met with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman and Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman and discussed the political and economic dynamics shaping the Bangladesh-US relations.He also visited Rohingya refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar. The visit highlighted the breadth and depth of the U.S.-Bangladesh relationship, said the US Embassy in Dhaka.



President urges BGB to take effective measures to curb smuggling, border killings

Staff correspondent

President Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir today urged Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to take more effective measures to stop smuggling, drug trafficking, push-ins and border killings. The President made the call when BGB Director General Major General Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui

paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban this afternoon. Talking to BSS, President's Press Secretary Md. Sarwar Alam briefed the meeting. During the meeting, the BGB Director General conveyed his sincere congratulations to the President on assuming the office of the President. He also briefed the President on the overall activities of the force and the initiative to incorporate

state-of-the-art drones and modern technology into the force to enhance surveillance along the border. The President praised the role of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) in performing the important responsibility of protecting the country's borders. He said the role of the vigilant BGB is extremely important in stopping smuggling, drug trafficking and

◆ see page 7

Gold prices drop by Tk 11,489 in two rounds this week

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh Jewellers Association (Bajus) has once again cut the price of gold ornaments in the domestic market, reducing the price of the best quality 22-carat gold by Tk 4,374 per bhoiri. According to the new pricing, effective from 10am on Monday, the price of 22-carat gold ornaments including VAT now stands at Tk 2,36,254 per bhoiri. Bajus said the decision to lower the price came in response to a fall in the price of tejabi (pure) gold in the local market. Alongside 22-carat gold, the price of 21-carat gold ornaments has also been reduced by Tk 4,141 to Tk 2,25,640 per bhoiri. Similarly, the price of 18-carat gold ornaments has been cut by Tk 3,616 to Tk 1,93,739 per bhoiri, while traditional gold ornaments now cost Tk 1,58,280 per bhoiri, down Tk 2,916. This marks the second price cut in just two days. On August 29, Bajus slashed the price of 22-carat gold by Tk 7,115 per bhoiri. With Monday's cut, the price of the finest quality gold has come down by a total of Tk 11,489 in just

◆ see page 7

Govt targets over 100 green-certified ship recycling yards: Mukhtadir



Staff correspondent

The government has set a target to increase the number of green-certified ship recycling yards in the country to more than 100 from the existing around 31, Industries, Commerce and Textiles and Jute Minister Khandakar Abdul Mukhtadir said today. "Several more yards are currently undergoing the process of obtaining green certification," he said while

addressing a workshop as the chief guest at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the capital. The Ministry of Industries and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) jointly organised the workshop to discuss the feasibility study report for establishing a Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facility (TSDF) under the "Bangladesh Safe and Environmentally Sound Ship Recycling Project." The minister said Bangladesh is one of the leading countries in the global ship recycling industry and at one point surpassed India in terms of the tonnage of ships recycled. "Although Bangladesh has fallen behind somewhat in recent times, its position in the global ship recycling industry remains significant,"

◆ see page 7



National Cultural Competition Opens in Mirsarai

Jwel Nag, Mirsarai, Chattogram.

A national cultural competition for students from educational institutions was inaugurated in Mirsarai, Chattogram, as part of the observance of 'Nazrul Year'. The event, organized by the Mirsarai Upazila Administration, began with a rally, discussion session and other programmes on Monday (August 31). The inaugural ceremony was held at 10:00am at the Mirsarai Upazila Auditorium. Mirsarai Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Somaiya Akter chaired the programme, while Upazila Secondary Education Officer Ferdous Hossain moderated the event. Among those who addressed the programme were Upazila Assistant Commissioner (Land) Tanvirul Kader, Upazila Agriculture Officer Pratap Chandra Roy, Upazila Primary Education Officer Rozina Rahman, Investigation Officer of Mirsarai Police Station Awlad Hossain, Upazila Fisheries Officer Arifur Rahman, Social Services Officer Sabrina Rahman Lina, Women Affairs Officer Meher Afroz, Statistics Officer Sakila Jannat, and Anwarul Haque Nizami, Mirsarai correspondent of Daily Manabzamin. The speakers highlighted the importance of promoting cultural activities among students and encouraged young

◆ see page 7

BNP's 48th founding anniversary Today

Staff correspondent

The 48th founding anniversary of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), founder by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman, is tomorrow. Ziaur Rahman was the founding chairman of the party which began its journey on September 1, 1978. He was at the forefront of organizing BNP and led the party until he was killed by a group of disgruntled military personnel in 1981.

To mark the anniversary, BNP announced a five-day programme. As part of the programme, Prime Minister and BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman will pay tributes to Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman and former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia by placing wreaths at their graves in the capital's Zia Uddin at 9am Today. A discussion meeting will be held on September 5. The party will also organise a fish fry releasing programme on a suitable date under the leadership of Joint Secretary General Habibun Nabi Khan Sohel. A tree plantation campaign will be led by Joint Secretary General and Water Resources Minister Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anne. After Ziaur Rahman's assassination, his wife Begum Khaleda Zia took over the leadership of the party and she served as the chairperson of the party until her death. However, since her imprisonment in false cases in 2018, her son Tarique Rahman, now prime minister, served as the acting chairman of the party. After the demise of Begum Khaleda Zia last year (2025), her son Tarique Rahman took the helm of the party taking charge of the party chief.

Under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia, the BNP won the nine-year-long struggle against dictator Ershad by waging a mass uprising. Begum Khaleda Zia gained the reputation of an 'uncompromising national leader' through her uncompromising fight against the dictatorship. Under the leadership of Begum Khaleda

◆ see page 7



88 containers of expired, unusable goods destroyed at Ctg port in a week

Staff correspondent

Chattogram Custom House has so far destroyed 88 containers of expired, low-quality and unusable goods as part of a drive to dispose of 126 containers of un-auctionable goods stored at the port. The destruction began on August 24 at a designated site behind the Republic Club of Chattogram Port, where a large pit was excavated for the disposal of the goods in an environmentally safe manner. Russell Ahmed, assistant commissioner of Chattogram Custom House, confirmed the

matter to journalists, saying the goods were being destroyed in accordance with relevant regulations and with approval from the competent authorities. "Ten containers were destroyed on the first day and 23 on the second day, while a total of 88 containers have been destroyed over the past week," he said. The 126 containers contain around 3,268 tonnes of un-auctionable, expired and unusable goods, including 935 tonnes of dates in 34 containers and 1,020 tonnes of expired soda ash in 40 containers. The goods also include 18 containers

◆ see page 7



PM International Ltd, gifts book racks and chairs to 741 registered children

Amtali, (Barguna) Correspondent.

Book racks and chairs have been distributed as annual gifts to 741 children registered with corporate donor organization PM International in Amtali, Barguna. The gift distribution ceremony was organized at Sonali Community Center in Amtali at 10 am by a joint initiative of World Vision Bangladesh's Amtali ADP and the non-governmental development organization Nazrul Smriti Sangsad (NSS). The program

◆ see page 7

Measles: Combined death toll hits 973 as 6 more die

Staff correspondent

Six children died with measles-like symptoms in the 24 hours until 8:00am on Monday, bringing the country's combined tally of confirmed and suspected measles-related deaths to 973 this year. The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has classified all six latest fatalities as suspected measles deaths. With these, the total number of suspected measles deaths has reached 874, while confirmed deaths from measles have remained the same at 99. A total of 1,162 new suspected measles cases were reported during the 24-hour

◆ see page 7

Bangladesh Travel Mart begins Thursday in Dhaka



Staff correspondent

The three-day Bangladesh Travel Mart (BTM) 2026 will begin here on Thursday, aiming at connecting the country's tourism industry with global markets and generate direct business opportunities through an international travel trade platform. Bangladesh Outbound Tour Operators Association (BOTOA), the organiser of the maiden edition of the mart, announced the details at a press conference at InterContinental Dhaka today. Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M. Rashiduzzaman Millat, MP, is scheduled to inaugurate the event as the chief

guest. Around 100 exhibitors, 60 trade buyers and 15,000 visitors are expected to participate in the mart, to be held at InterContinental Dhaka from September 3 to 5. Tour operators, destination management companies (DMCs), airlines, travel agencies, tourism organisations and other travel service providers from Bangladesh and abroad will take part in the event. BOTOA President Syed Golam Mohammad said the travel mart had been conceived not merely as an exhibition but as a business-focused platform to establish direct links between Bangladesh's tourism industry and the international travel market. "Our goal is to bring domestic and international buyers, sellers and tourism service providers under one roof to create real business opportunities," he told the press conference.

Mohammad said Bangladesh has significant untapped tourism potential and stronger engagement

◆ see page 7

Bangladesh targets 100-plus green-certified ship recycling yards

Staff correspondent

The government has set a target to raise the number of green-certified ship recycling yards in the country to at least three digits (100+), Industries and Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Mukhtadir said on Monday, noting that around 31 such yards currently exist while several more are undergoing green certification. Mukhtadir made the remarks as chief guest at a workshop jointly organised by the Ministry of Industries and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) at a hotel in the capital's Karwan Bazar. The workshop was held to discuss a feasibility study report on setting up a Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facility (TSDF)

◆ see page 7

Bangladesh PMI climbs to 57.8 in July on manufacturing rebound

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh's Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to 57.8 in July, pointing to a broad-based strengthening of the economy led by a rebound in manufacturing that coincided with the strongest monthly export earnings in nearly a year, according to a study unveiled on Monday. The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), in association with Policy Exchange Bangladesh, presented the findings at a seminar at the MCCI office in Gulshan. The presentation showed agriculture and services continued to expand in July, while construction activity remained only marginally below the neutral 50-point threshold that separates expansion from contraction. Manufacturing led the recovery with a reading of 65.4, followed by services at 56.0, agriculture at 55.2, and construction at 49.3. The presentation described the PMI as a monthly, survey-based economic indicator that tracks the health of an economy through the responses of senior private-sector executives across agriculture, manufacturing, construction and services. A reading above 50 indicates expansion, below 50 signals contraction, and exactly 50 means no change from the previous month. Citing central bank and academic research, including from the European Central Bank, the US Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, the study noted that PMI readings are released ahead of official GDP data, are not revised after publication, and have

◆ see page 7

মেডিসিন, ডায়াবেটিস, বাত-ব্যথা
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DOCTOR'S CHAMBER

চেম্বারে আসার পূর্বে অবশ্যই মোবাইলে যোগাযোগ করে আসবেন।

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

President urges BGB to human trafficking along the border. He also praised the BGB's initiative to incorporate state-of-the-art technology into the force for border security and assured all-out cooperation in this regard.The President's secretaries and senior officials were present at the meeting.

Gold prices drop by

two rounds. Silver prices also fall Bajus has also revised down the price of silver ornaments. The VAT-inclusive price of 22-carat silver ornaments has been reduced by Tk 175 to Tk 5,132 per bhoiri, while 21-carat silver now costs Tk 4,957 per bhoiri, down Tk 117. The price of 18-carat silver ornaments has been cut by Tk 117 to Tk 4,257 per bhoiri, and traditional silver ornaments now cost Tk 3,208 per bhoiri, down Tk 116. All prices set by Bajus are inclusive of VAT. One bhoiri of gold is equivalent to 11.664 grams.

88 containers of expired, unusable

of expired feed-grade limestone, eight containers of expired bentonite powder, rotten oranges, spoiled onions, spoiled cashew nuts and other food products.According to customs sources, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has undertaken the initiative to dispose of the goods, which had remained at the port for an extended period.A joint team comprising members of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Ansar and port police is assisting the customs authorities in ensuring the safety of the operation, sources said.Earlier on August 6, five containers containing 'Royal Tiger Energy Drink' and personal care products, including shampoo, were destroyed by crushing them with rollers at the customs auction shed of the port.The NBR expects the disposal of the expired and hazardous goods to help ease container congestion at Chattogram Port.Customs authorities said the destruction of un-auctionable and perishable goods would continue on an urgent basis with the cooperation of relevant agencies, ensuring safety and environmental protection.Under the existing procedure, imported goods are required to be cleared within 30 days of their arrival at the port yard. If an importer fails to collect the goods, a notice is issued, and the goods may be auctioned if they remain unclaimed for 15 days after the notice.If the goods remain unsold at auction or become expired, the authorities take steps to destroy them in the public interest and for health and safety reasons.Russell Ahmed said a committee comprising representatives of different government agencies determines which goods are eligible for destruction.He said prolonged storage of refrigerated containers also requires continuous electricity supply, resulting in unnecessary power consumption and keeping shipping agents' containers occupied."Once the goods are destroyed, the shipping agents can reclaim the empty containers," he added.

Govt targets over 100 green-certified

he said.Highlighting the economic importance of ship recycling, Muktadir said the sector provides employment to a large number of people and serves as an important source of scrap-the key raw material for the country's steel industry. However, he stressed that the sector must grow in a responsible and environmentally sound manner."Our goal is to make the industry more modern, safe and sustainable by complying with international conventions and environmental standards," he said.The minister emphasised the need for technical and financial assistance to increase the number of green-certified yards to over 100, alongside effective enforcement of environmental standards.Referring to hazardous waste management as one of the major challenges in ship recycling, he said dismantling large vessels generates various hazardous materials and waste that can pose risks to the environment and public health if not properly managed.He underscored the importance of a Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facility (TSDF) for the safe and scientific collection, storage, treatment and disposal of such waste.The proposed TSDF will play a significant role in managing a large portion of hazardous waste generated by the ship recycling industry, he said. It will also create opportunities to manage hazardous waste from other sources, including industrial and electronic waste.

Such infrastructure would help bring the industry further in line with international environmental standards and enhance Bangladesh's competitiveness in the global market, he added. The minister said the ship recycling sector could be transformed into a safer, modern and sustainable industry through coordinated efforts by the government, industry owners, relevant institutions and international partners.Industries Secretary Abdun Naser Khan chaired the workshop.State Minister for the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shaikh Faridul Islam and Norwegian Ambassador to Bangladesh Hakon Arald Gulbrandsen also spoke at the workshop. Sumiyuki Otsuki, an international expert from Japan Marine Science Company, presented the keynote paper.

National Cultural Competition

participants to develop their creative talents through such competitions. Students from various educational institutions in the upazila are taking part in the competition.

PM International ltd, gifts

was moderated by NSS Program Manager Mridul Sarkar and chaired by World Vision Bangladesh's Amtali Area Program Manager Bibhudan Biswas. Amtali Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md. Yakub Hossain was present as the chief guest at the event.

Special guests included NSS Executive Director Shahabuddin Panna, journalist Nasrin Sipu and Amtali Press Club Joint Secretary Abdur Rahman Saleh.

Speaking as the chief guest, Amtali Police Station OC Md. Yakub Hossain said, "Children are the future of the future. We all have to play a positive role in developing their talent and mind." He also urged parents to make their children aware of 'good touch' and 'bad touch' and requested them to refrain from things that children are not comfortable with.

Speaking as the special guest, NSS Executive Director Shahabuddin Panna said, "We want to bring smiles to the faces of children. The genuine smiling faces of children inspire us. Our goal is for children to study happily. It is our collective responsibility to build a beautiful and joyful world for them in the coming days."

Among others present at the event were Churchill Das, Child Protection and AP Sponsorship Officer of World Vision Bangladesh Amtoli AP, Junior Program Officers Aui Das and Pratibha Mondal, and Community Development Officers Jacqueline Tumpa Mondal, Khokon Das, Radha Rani and Tania Akhter along with other officers and employees of both organizations.

After the discussion meeting, a delightful cultural program was organized with the participation of registered children, where the children recited poems and performed dances. At the end of the program, racks and chairs for storing gift books and notebooks were officially handed over to 741 children.

Measles: Combined

period, bringing the cumulative number of suspected cases nationwide to 157,991. Meanwhile, 94 new confirmed measles cases were recorded, bringing the total number of laboratory-confirmed infections to 19,312. Since March 15 this year, a

total of 138,445 patients with suspected measles have been hospitalised across the country, of whom 133,404 have recovered, according to DGHS data.

BNP's 48th founding

Zia, the BNP won a majority in the 1991 national elections and formed the government. After overcoming various conspiracies, the BNP came to power again in 2001 by gaining a majority under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia. Since one-eleven changeover in 2007, the BNP faced various obstacles, dangers, torture and oppression till 2024.

In order to confront the fascist Awami League regime, numerous leaders and activists of the party, including the party chief Begum Khaleda Zia, were subjected to indescribable torture and oppression. Many were subjected to enforced disappearances and murders. The role and sacrifice of BNP along with the students and the public in the mass uprising of 2024 was immense.

The 16-year-long fascist regime collapsed on August 5, 2024 in the mass uprising and fascist Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country.During Sheikh Hasina's long rule, BNP could not hold any meetings without any hindrance. BNP was obstructed in various ways by the state apparatus and the then ruling party cadres. In the 13th national election held on February 12 this year, BNP again achieved a landslide victory and two-third majority in parliament. The BNP formed government under the leadership of Tarique Rahman.

Bangladesh Travel Mart

with international tourism businesses could help create new markets, attract investment and expand cooperation in the tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors.A key feature of BTM 2026 will be its Pre-Scheduled B2B Buyer-Seller Meetings, designed to translate networking opportunities into tangible commercial engagement, the organisers said. An online Pre-Scheduled Appointment (PSA) System will enable registered buyers and sellers to identify prospective business partners and arrange meetings ahead of the event. The system is expected to facilitate targeted business negotiations, development of new tourism products and destinations, exchange of packages and exploration of commercial agreements and long-term partnerships.BTM Chief Coordinator Mohsin Iqbal said the mechanism would enable participants to use their time at the mart more productively by connecting with potential partners based on their business interests.“Our goal is for participants at BTM 2026 to leave not only with networking contacts, but also with tangible business prospects, new partners and opportunities for future market expansion,” he said.The mart will have separate Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) components, catering to both tourism professionals and travellers. Under the B2B segment, travel trade professionals will be able to meet domestic and international buyers and sellers, develop business networks and explore new partnerships. The B2C segment will allow visitors to directly interact with participating companies and explore domestic and international tour packages, airline tickets, hotel and resort bookings, visa services, destination information and special travel offers.BOTOA General Secretary Md Shariful Islam Sharif said the association wanted to establish an international-standard travel trade platform where exhibitions would be accompanied by meaningful commercial engagement.“We want to create an international-standard travel trade platform where, alongside the exhibition, there will be genuine business engagement and productive B2B meetings,” he said. Sharif said the event would also provide travellers with an opportunity to directly explore and compare offers from participating companies and destinations. The organisers said they envision Bangladesh Travel Mart eventually developing beyond a three-day annual event into a regular international trade platform that could strengthen Bangladesh's presence in the global tourism marketplace.They expect direct interaction among international buyers, sellers and local tourism businesses to generate new commercial opportunities, expand markets and deepen international cooperation in the country's tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors.

Bangladesh targets 100-plus

centre under the "Bangladesh Safe and Environment-Friendly Ship Recycling Project."Muktadir said Bangladesh remains one of the world's leading countries in ship recycling, having once surpassed even India in tonnage terms. "Although the country has slipped somewhat in recent times, it still holds a significant position in the global ship recycling industry."Calling the sector vital to the national economy, the minister said it provides employment for a large number of people, while scrap from ships serves as a key raw material source for the country's steel industry.He stressed that the sector's growth must be ensured in a responsible and environment-friendly manner, adding that the government's goal is to make the industry more modern, safe and sustainable through compliance with international conventions and environmental standards.To take the number of green-certified yards to a hundred-plus, the minister emphasised technical and financial support alongside effective enforcement of environmental compliance requirements.Describing hazardous waste management as one of the biggest challenges in ship recycling, Muktadir said large ships generate various hazardous materials and waste during dismantling, which, if not properly managed, pose risks to the environment and public health.He said the proposed TSDF would play a key role in safely and scientifically collecting, storing, treating and disposing of such waste.The proposed TSDF is expected to handle a major share of hazardous waste from the ship recycling industry, while also creating scope for managing hazardous waste from other industrial sources, including e-waste.The minister expressed hope that the facility would help align the sector with international environmental standards and enhance Bangladesh's competitiveness in the global market. He said a coordinated effort involving the government, yard owners, relevant institutions and international partners could transform the ship recycling sector into a safer, more modern and sustainable industry.

Bangladesh PMI climbs to 57.8

historically shown a strong correlation with actual GDP growth in major economies.The Bank for International Settlements has found PMIs to be reliable concurrent indicators of real economic activity, according to the presentation.The Bangladesh PMI programme was conceptualised in 2022 in the backdrop of COVID-19 recovery, with concept development in early 2023 and formal initiation in November 2023 with support from the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), in association with the Singapore Institute of Purchasing and Materials Management (SIPMM).The first survey round was conducted in December 2023, followed by three additional rounds by March 2024 to finalise the methodology and build the survey panel.The index currently draws on a panel of 400 companies across four sectors, 212 in services (53 percent), 92 in manufacturing (23 percent), 50 in construction (12.5 percent) and 46 in agriculture (11.5 percent), collectively representing about 100 percent of GDP-weighted coverage across major economic sub-sectors, including wholesale and retail trade, real estate, transportation, manufacturing (large, small and cottage industries), and crops and horticulture.The presentation traced the PMI's trajectory from December 2023 to July 2026, highlight-

ing sharp swings tied to specific shocks: a 27-point plunge between June and July 2024 during the July Uprising, when a nationwide curfew and a 10-day internet blackout shut factories, banks and the Dhaka-Chittagong highway; an 8.8-point drop between March and April 2025 linked to long public holidays, early US tariffs on apparel, and energy-supply constraints; a 7.8-point slide between October and November 2025 amid weak global demand and investment caution ahead of national elections; and a 9.9-point fall between May and June 2026 as manufacturing and construction slipped into contraction due to long Eid holidays, the monsoon onset, fading pre-Eid demand, and the introduction of a new 15 percent VAT.The seminar also flagged persistent shortages in Bangladesh's economic data infrastructure, noting that surveys such as the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) and Labour Force Survey (LFS) are conducted only once every five and three years, respectively, leaving governments and businesses to plan on outdated data.Speakers at the seminar said the improvement across sectors reflected firmer business confidence, a better external outlook, and expectations of a more supportive environment following the national budget.They said this creates blind spots between survey rounds, prevents local-level policy targeting, and constrains private investment due to weak online data-sharing and limited transparency.Frequent, rapid surveys and modern economic indices such as the PMI, they said, are essential to generate real-time insights and strengthen evidence-based decision-making across the economy. The seminar drew participation from representatives of major Bangladeshi companies across the four surveyed sectors, including BRAC Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Robi Axiata, Pran-RFL Group, Square Pharmaceuticals, Berger Paints, and ACI, among others.

Coordinated efforts needed

and good governance in line with pursuing 'Bangladesh First' philosophy of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman.Emphasizing on the environment protection, Sultan Salahuddin said equal importance must be given on protecting environment along with the development.

Everyone must play a responsible role for building a livable Bangladesh for the future generation along with undertaking an effective initiative to curb river pollution, industrial wastage disposal and balancing of urban environment. Chaired by Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Ms Farida Khanam, the programme also was attended, among others, by additional deputy commissioners, representatives of different law enforcement agencies, local government division officials, lawmakers and district law and order committee members.

25 dev projects underway

Action Battalion (RAB), Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Bangladesh Coast Guard, the Department of Immigration and Passports, Department of Narcotics Control, Department of Prisons, and Fire Service and Civil Defence represent a significant investment in both physical infrastructure and technology-driven security services. According to project information compiled by Planning Wing-1 of the Home Ministry, the portfolio includes major initiatives covering police infrastructure, counter-terrorism, cybercrime investigation, e-passports, automated border control, border security, maritime operations, drug rehabilitation, prison facilities and fire services.Among the largest schemes is the Construction of Administrative-cum-Barrack Buildings for Police Stations in Different Parts of the Country, with an estimated cost Another major police infrastructure project, involving the construction of police stations, outposts, investigation centres, camps, river-police centres, railway-police facilities, tourist-police centres and highway-police stations, carries an estimated cost of Tk 7,075.49 crore and is scheduled to continue until September 2028.The government is also investing heavily in specialised policing and security capabilities. The Counter-Terrorism and International Crime Prevention Centre of Bangladesh Police project has an estimated cost of Tk 3,537.43 crore.While a separate initiative to enhance Dhaka Metropolitan Police capacity through equipment procurement carries an estimated cost of Tk 1,149.70 crore. Digital security has emerged as another priority. The Safer Cyberspace for Digital Bangladesh: Enhancing National & Regional Digital Investigation Capacity of Bangladesh Police project has an estimated cost of Tk 590.87 crore, including government funding and project assistance, and is intended to strengthen police capacity to investigate cyber and technology-enabled crimes.

RAB, BGB and Coast Guard The development programme also includes major investments in specialised security forces. The RAB Forces Headquarters Construction Project has an estimated cost of Tk 5,456.54 crore and is scheduled to continue until December 2028. Separate projects are aimed at increasing RAB's operational, technical and technological capabilities. For border security, the construction of 73 composite and modern Border Outposts (BOPs) has an estimated cost of Tk 2,365.50 crore. Another project, with an estimated cost of Tk 2,230.24 crore, is aimed at developing infrastructure for the newly established 63 BGB Battalion in Gazipur. The Bangladesh Coast Guard is also receiving substantial investment. Projects to establish logistics and fleet-maintenance facilities and procure replacement vessels have estimated costs of Tk 7,576.22 crore and Tk 23,148.29 crore, respectively.

E-passport project among biggest schemes One of the ministry's most strategically important initiatives is the Bangladesh e-Passport and Automated Border Control Management Project (1st Revised).

The project has an estimated cost of Tk 9,038.36 crore and is scheduled to continue until June 2028. It seeks to further digitise passport services and introduce more modern and efficient border-control mechanisms.

Drug rehabilitation and prison modernisation The ministry's development programme also includes a major focus on tackling drug abuse and improving rehabilitation services.

Projects under the Department of Narcotics Control include expansion and modernisation of the Dhaka Central Drug Addiction Treatment Centre, construction of drug treatment and rehabilitation centres in seven divisional cities, and construction of district offices.The seven-divisional-city treatment and rehabilitation project has an estimated cost of Tk 1,413.15 crore and is scheduled to run until June 2028.

Meanwhile, the Department of Prisons is implementing projects for the expansion, modernisation and reconstruction of several correctional facilities.These include the Mymensingh Central Jail expansion and modernisation project, reconstruction of Jamalpur and Cumilla central jails, construction of Narsingdi District Jail, and conservation and surrounding-area development of the historic Old Dhaka Central Jail complex. Fire service capacity also in focus The Fire Service and Civil Defence Directorate is implementing projects to expand ambulance services, build new fire stations, reconstruct existing facilities and provide residential accommodation for personnel.

A major project covering 20 fire stations—12 new and eight reconstructed facilities—has an estimated cost of Tk 650.96 crore.A separate project for two multi-storey residential buildings has an estimated cost of Tk 65.12 crore.

Broad-based security modernisation The 25 ongoing schemes collectively signal a broad shift in the Home Ministry's development priorities—from conventional infrastructure expansion to a more integrated approach combining physical security infrastructure with digital investigation, automated immi-

gration, modern border management, maritime capability and emergency response. With several projects scheduled for completion during FY2026-27 and others extending into 2028 and beyond, the government expects the initiatives to strengthen the operational capacity of security agencies and improve the delivery of critical public-safety services across the country.

Toddler rescued in Patuakhali after alleged sale for Tk 1 lakh

Staff correspondent

A one-and-a-half-year-old child, allegedly sold to another person for Tk 1 lakh in Dashmina upazila, was rescued on Sunday night.Musa was rescued from a house in Romanathsen village of Alipur Union through a joint initiative of the upazila administration and police, said Md Atiqul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Dashmina Police Station.In the presence of Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md Mahmud Hasan Mridha, the child was handed over to his grandparents, Mofiz Munshi and Mahfusa Begum.The allegation was confirmed after authorities recovered a written agreement made on a Tk 100 non-judicial stamp.Regarding the agreement, accused Md Maruf of Boro Gopaldi village under Betagi-Sankipur Union admitted that he had taken money after handing over his son to another person.However, he claimed that the child had been given for adoption, not sold.Maruf admitted his mistake and apologised. Earlier on Saturday morning, Maruf asked her mother to dress Musa around 8am and then left home, saying he was taking the child to the market.When Maruf and Musa did not return for a long time, family members started searching for them in different places.At one stage, the family contacted Maruf's maternal uncle Bahadur Mia. The family said that, during questioning, Maruf initially did not disclose anything about the child. Later, according to the family, Maruf confessed that he had sold Musa to Imran Hossain of Romanathsen village under Alipur Union of Dashmina upazila.

National interest, scientific evidence key to resolving water issues: Speakers

Staff correspondent

Speakers at a national seminar on transboundary water issues have stressed the need for Bangladesh to pursue water diplomacy and management based on national interest, scientific evidence, fairness and long-term planning. They said Bangladesh must address both flood-season water abundance and dry-season scarcity through stronger river-basin management, scientific planning, political commitment and coordinated diplomacy.

“The issues are technical, but the solutions must ultimately be political and guided by our national interest,” said Prime Minister Finance and Planning Adviser Dr. Rashed Al Mahmud Titumi while speaking as the chief guest.

The seminar titled “Transboundary Water Sharing Issues and Padma Barrage” was held at North South University on Sunday that called for national preparedness, evidence-based water diplomacy, regional dialogue, technically sound river management, and coordinated policy action to protect Bangladesh's water security, ecological balance, and sustainable development.

Dr Titumir said Bangladesh must address both flood-season abundance and dry-season scarcity through long-term planning, political commitment, and scientific management.Referring to the ecological value of rivers, he observed, “A river should not be understood merely by its number, but by its ecosystem and the wider impacts it creates.”The economist said the proposed Padma Barrage is not only an engineering project, but also a national development concern linked to agriculture, livelihoods, and the future of western and southwestern Bangladesh.Economic ImplicationsSpecial Assistant to the Prime Minister, Environment, Forests and Climate Change Affairs Dr. Md. Saimum Parvez highlighted the government's environmental priorities, including tree plantation, canal digging, waste-to-wealth initiatives, renewable energy, and a greener Bangladesh. “Efficient water use and regional power trade can create pathways for mitigating transboundary water disputes,” he said.

Water-sharing challenges need to be understood through both river-basin dynamics and their economic implications, Parvez said.The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Mohammad Abul Hossen, former Member of the Joint Rivers Commission. He discussed river-basin management, hydro-economic modelling, benefit sharing, efficient water use, and regional power trade as possible pathways for reducing transboundary water disputes.A policy and diplomacy presentation was delivered by Mohammad Sufiur Rahman, Senior Research Fellow at South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG), NSU.He stressed the need to build synergy with relevant Indian stakeholders and restore natural river flows through fair and cooperative water-sharing arrangements.Shared ResourceFormer Ambassador Sufiur said water should be treated as a shared resource, not as a commercial commodity.“Equity, fairness, and the principle of causing no harm to either party must remain at the heart of water-sharing negotiations,” he added.The discussion featured eminent experts, including Engr ANH Akhter Hossain, former Secretary, Government of Bangladesh; Dr. Md. Ataur Rahman, Professor, Department of Water Resources Engineering, BUET.Discussants called for a stronger national framework combining engineering knowledge, environmental protection, legal preparedness, basin-level planning, and diplomacy.Shafik Islam, Professor of Tufts University, described the issue as “engineering diplomacy, where rigor meets reality,” noting that “the treaty is only the tip of the iceberg; understanding the patterns, structures, and mental models beneath it is essential.”

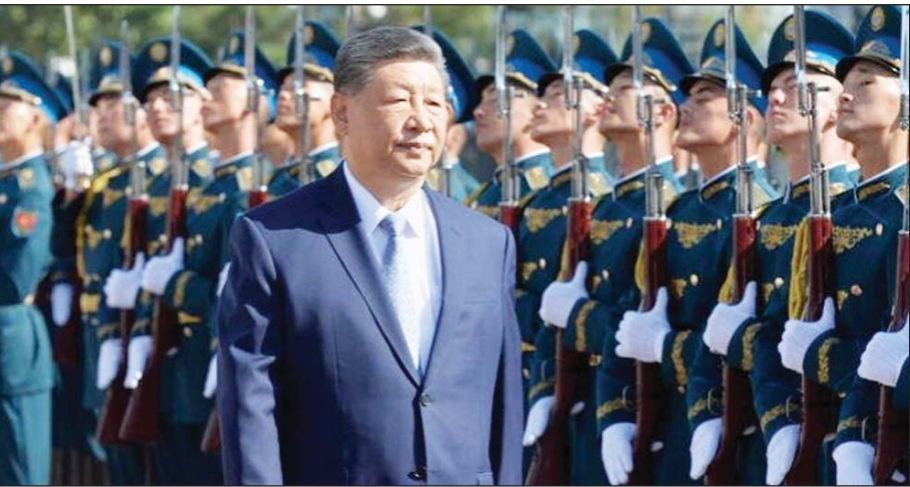
The session was chaired by Professor Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Vice-Chancellor of North South University.He said, “When the glass remains empty in downstream water sharing, we must find scientific and engineering solutions to manage our own water resources.” He added that Bangladesh's water resources must be managed for national benefit while supporting sustainable living.Professor Md. Sirajul Islam, Professor of CEE, NSU, highlighted the focus of the seminar and said, “For Bangladesh, water-resource planning must consider seasonal river changes, sedimentation, transparency, and expert opinion before major interventions are made.”Delivering the concluding remarks and vote of thanks, Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Director of SIPG, NSU, urged policymakers to prepare for multiple negotiation scenarios.He said, “We need greater cohesion and civility in South Asia, in all kinds of negotiation.” He further cautioned, “Policymakers must be prepared with Plans A, B, and C; treaty renewal should not be taken for granted.”The seminar was jointly organised by SIPG and the CEE, NSU, at North South University. It brought together policymakers, water experts, engineers, diplomats, academics, and civil society representatives to discuss Bangladesh's water security, the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty, the Teesta issue, and the proposed Padma Barrage.



New US missile may have caused wide civilian deaths in Iran: report

International Desk
A new US ballistic missile may have caused widespread deaths and damage in the Iranian city of Lamerd during its first reported combat use, raising concerns about deploying the weapon near populated areas, according to an analysis by conflict monitor Airwars and weapons experts. Three missiles struck Lamerd on Feb. 28, killing at least 21 civilians, including seven children, Iranian officials said. Airwars found civilians were killed up to 50 meters from the explosion sites, while damage extended more than three times farther. The analysis suggests the weapons were US-made Precision Strike Missiles (PrSM), which are designed to explode in midair and release tens of thousands of high-speed tungsten pellets. Airwars mapped the strike sites using satellite images, videos, photographs, social media posts and other public material. The Associated Press independently reviewed the evidence. Six weapons experts, including two former military officials, said the damage was consistent

with a PrSM attack and that such missiles should not be used near civilians. The US military has confirmed using PrSMs in Iran but denies striking Lamerd. It suggested footage showed an Iranian Hoveyzeh cruise missile. Experts said the missile visible in the footage did not match that model. Israel also denied striking as far south as Lamerd. The intended target remains unclear. An Iranian Revolutionary Guard compound is nearby, but satellite images showed no damage there. The PrSM can strike targets more than 499 kilometers away and is replacing the Army Tactical Missile System. Unlike its predecessor, it releases thousands of tungsten pellets in all directions, making it highly lethal. Since the Lamerd strikes, the Pentagon has awarded Lockheed Martin a contract worth more than \$4 billion to increase production. Britain and Australia are also purchasing the missiles. Experts said the weapon has useful military capabilities but should be reserved for appropriate targets away from civilian areas.



China, Russia and India leaders meet at SCO summit amid US rivalry

International Desk
Leaders of China, Russia and India joined other heads of state in Kyrgyzstan on Monday for a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a group seeking to strengthen cooperation among non-Western countries and counter US global influence. Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended events in Bishkek. Putin and Xi held bilateral talks, with Russian state media reporting that Putin expressed Moscow's readiness to make visa-free travel with China permanent. Putin is also expected to meet Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday. Russia, more than four years into its full-scale war in Ukraine, and Iran, months into conflict with the US and Israel, see the summit as an opportunity to strengthen ties with non-Western partners. Founded in 2001 by China, Russia and

four Central Asian countries, the SCO has expanded to 10 members: China, Russia, India, Iran, Pakistan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Several other countries are dialogue partners. China and Russia have promoted the SCO as an alternative to Western-led groups such as the G7, with Beijing seeking to expand its influence and provide development and financial support. However, the SCO is neither a unified political nor military alliance. Its members have major differences and separate interests. For India, analysts say the summit is largely about diplomacy and strategic positioning. India has rivalries with both China and Pakistan but sees the SCO as a way to protect its interests and monitor regional power shifts. Turkey, a dialogue partner since 2012, also wants permanent membership as part of its effort to balance ties with the West and expand its influence across Eurasia.

UAE says it intercepts Iranian drone over its territorial waters

International Desk
The United Arab Emirates said its air force intercepted an Iranian drone over its territorial waters on Monday, amid renewed military tensions between the United States and Iran following a month-long lull in fighting. The UAE Defense Ministry said the drone was detected approaching from Iran and was intercepted over Emirati waters. No damage was reported. The Foreign Ministry described the incident as a "dangerous escalation" and a violation of the country's sovereignty and security. The ministry also rejected an Iranian army claim that Dubai's Al Minhad Air Base had been targeted. The incident followed US strikes on Iranian rocket launchers Sunday, after Washington said Iranian Revolutionary Guard forces were preparing to launch



rockets and lay sea mines in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran responded by firing missiles toward US sites in Jordan, with Jordanian forces intercepting eight missiles. Iran's Foreign Ministry said Tehran would exercise its right to self-defense and respond decisively to military aggression. The renewed tensions come as Washington increases economic pressure on Iran and seeks to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, which Tehran restricted after US and Israeli attacks began on Feb. 28. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, who supports a negotiated settlement, said before attending a Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Kyrgyzstan that Iran did not seek war but would respond firmly to aggressors. The conflict has pushed Brent crude above \$90 a barrel, about 25% higher than at the start of the war.

1 dead, 5 injured in shooting at rave in Switzerland

International Desk
A shooting at a rave in Switzerland's northern canton of Aargau left one person dead and five others injured early Sunday, local police and media reported. Police were searching for potentially more than one suspect. Aargau cantonal police said a 22-year-old woman died from her injuries at the scene. Four men and one woman, aged between 24 and 27, were taken to hospital with injuries ranging from minor to serious. Police said all six victims were residents of Switzerland and withheld their names in accordance with the country's privacy laws. However, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni identified the woman who died as an Italian citizen, along with two other victims. In a post on X, she expressed condolences over the death of Maria Spinelli, whom she described as a young Italian woman killed in the shooting in Aarau. Meloni also expressed concern for the other injured victims, including the two Italian citizens, and said she trusted Swiss authorities to determine what happened and identify those responsible. At a press briefing Sunday, Aargau police said virtually all available forces were involved in the search for the suspect or suspects. "The manhunt is continuing nonstop at full speed," police spokesperson Bernhard Graser told reporters. He said police had yet to establish a possible motive. Asked whether terrorism could be a possibility, Graser said the fact that the rave was already coming to an end made that scenario unlikely, while a fight could also have triggered the shooting. Public shootings are uncommon in Switzerland despite relatively widespread gun ownership. "In terms of its nature, this incident is certainly unique in recent years," Graser said, describing the incident as extraordinary and explaining the large police presence at the scene. Police were alerted to the shooting around 2:30 a.m. local time in Aarau, the capital of Aargau, about 46 kilometers (29 miles) west of Zurich, police spokesperson Pascal Wenzel told Swiss public broadcaster SRF. The "Aarau Rave VOL. 7" was being held at a horse racing track in the Schachen district of Aarau when the



shooting occurred, SRF reported. Firefighters cordoned off a large area around the site. A major police operation continued Sunday afternoon, with residents urged to stay away from the area as investigators searched for evidence and possible links to the crime. Large numbers of police officers, firefighters and ambulance crews were deployed. Police from Freiburg in neighboring Germany also joined the search for the suspect, German news agency dpa reported. "Right now, virtually the entire Aargau police force is out on the streets," Graser said, adding that authorities had no information about the whereabouts of the suspect or suspects. He said, however, that police had ruled out the possibility of an immediate further threat. Swiss daily Blick reported that people attending the rave initially mistook the gunshots for fireworks before someone shouted for everyone to get down. The shooting occurred shortly after the event ended, the newspaper reported. Police later took remaining attendees to a nearby gym, where many were questioned, Graser said. Authorities appealed to witnesses who had photos or videos of the incident to provide them to investigators. The Aargau Racing Club, which operates the horse racing track, said it was shocked by the shooting. "We extend our deepest sympathy to all those affected and their families, who are facing this difficult and trying situation," it said on its website, while thanking emergency responders and others involved in the operation. Swiss DJ Tekibo, who performed at the rave, wrote on Instagram that the incident was "absolutely heartbreaking." "Techno and raves are supposed to be a place for freedom and safety, never a place where something like this happens," he said. Aarau has a population of about 22,300 and lies around 30 kilometers (18 miles) south of the German border.

US Treasury blocks certain journalists from G20 meeting in North Carolina

International Desk
The U.S. Treasury Department is preventing certain journalists from covering a finance meeting among the world's most powerful countries, the latest example of how President Donald Trump's administration has restricted media access. Individual reporters from The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News were not granted credentials to the Group of 20 finance ministers' meeting in Asheville, North Carolina, the Times reported. The Treasury has not explained the decision. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told The Associated Press in an interview Sunday that "it has nothing to do with point of view." The reporters who've been denied access include the Times' Alan Rappeport, who has been covering such meetings and the Treasury Department since 2017. However, another reporter for the Times, Berlin bureau chief Jim Tankersley, is allowed to attend. The Times said in a statement that denying American journalists access to an event in the U.S. is "not just another disturbing effort by the administration to undermine independent journalism, but a blatant attempt to evade public scrutiny." "With the war in Iran, sanctions, the bond markets, and inflation on the agenda for the G20 finance ministers, the stakes of this gathering are significant for the global economy and the American people," the Times said. "Excluding specific reporters and entire news organizations is a disservice to the public and an

assault on press freedoms that we strongly condemn." Bloomberg News, in a story published Sunday evening, said "numerous" journalists from the news agency, including some based in Europe and Asia, had their accreditation requests rejected. It said denying the agency access to the meeting "undermines media freedom and public accountability." The Wall Street Journal declined to comment. Bessent is hosting the G20 meeting, which runs Saturday through Tuesday. It includes finance ministers, central bank governors and senior officials from the world's top economies. This year's G20 summit, which involves heads of state, is being held in December at Trump's golf club in Doral, Florida. Tensions have been escalating between the U.S. media and the second Trump administration, playing out both in the public arena and at times in the courts. For example, the Defense Department declared earlier this year that its press office had become a classified space inaccessible to journalists. The ouster came after the Pentagon had demanded that reporters agree to government-imposed restrictions on their work, prompting most news outlets to leave the building last fall. The Associated Press has also sued Trump over access to the White House press pool. The news organization's access was curtailed for sticking with the name "Gulf of Mexico" after the administration ordered it rechristened the "Gulf of America."

Home World Europe
Ferry carrying nearly 270 passengers, crew capsizes off northern Cyprus

International Desk
A ferry carrying nearly 270 passengers and crew capsized off the coast of northern Cyprus on Sunday, according to Turkish media reports. The catamaran-style ferry was en route from Kyrenia, also known as Girne, in the Turkish-controlled northern part of ethnically divided Cyprus, to the Turkish port of Tasucu in Mersin province. Turkish Ambassador to Nicosia Ali Murat Basceri said there were casualties in the incident but did not provide a specific number while speaking to Turkey's state-run TRT television. Basceri said many of the 259 passengers and eight crew members had been rescued, with some taken to hospitals for treatment. Kyrenia Mayor Murat Senkul said the ferry, operated by Filo Denizcilik, sank off Diana beach along the northern coast of Cyprus. According to TRT, the vessel began taking on water about 7.5 kilometers (4 nautical miles) off the coast.

Russia's jet-powered drones leave Kyiv shelves bare, heighten fears in Ukraine

International Desk
Russian forces launched relentless attacks on Kyiv and nearby areas for a fifth consecutive day Monday, disrupting food supplies and daily life as Ukraine struggles to counter Russia's increasingly used jet-powered drones. Repeated strikes on warehouses and food distribution centres in Kyiv's Brovary and Boryspil areas left some supermarket shelves empty and wounded four people, officials said. Nearly constant air raid alerts have also disrupted daily routines as schools prepare to reopen Tuesday. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russia's strategy was aimed at wearing down Ukrainians. Between Thursday and Sunday, he said, Russia launched nearly 1,500 drones, including about 800 jet-powered ones,



which Ukraine is finding difficult to intercept. Four Ukrainian companies have developed interceptor drones, with one showing the most promising results. A Zelenskyy adviser, Serhii Beskrestnov, urged people not to panic over food shortages, saying producers and retailers were restructuring supply chains and European countries could help if necessary. Russia also continued targeting Ukraine's energy infrastructure. An overnight drone attack damaged an energy facility in the northern Chernihiv region, while Moscow said it was preparing "massive strikes" on Ukraine's power grid. Meanwhile, Russia said it shot down 239 Ukrainian drones over several regions, occupied Crimea and the Black Sea. A Ukrainian missile strike on Russia's Belgorod region killed three people Sunday, according to local authorities.



Shabana Azmi on Batwara 1947 box office failure



Entertainment Desk

Sunny Deol-starrer Batwara 1947 was among the most anticipated films of the year, but the film wasn't wholeheartedly accepted by the audience, with its underwhelming box office performance serving as proof. Recently, Shabana Azmi spoke about the film's subpar performance and suggested that one possible reason could be that the audience wasn't able to accept Sunny Deol playing a Muslim character. Shabana Azmi, who plays a pivotal role in the film, told Zoom, "The thing is that you cannot accept Sunny Deol as a Muslim. In Coolie and in many other films, Amitabh Bachchan very comfortably played Muslim characters. In Deewaar, he put 786 and that was accepted. So how do

we understand this? Are they creating an environment where such decisions are being taken on purpose? I am not able to understand. I am surprised at how people are reacting to it. Even the ones who have watched the film think Sunny Deol is playing a Pakistani. He is not. It is simply not registering in their heads."

Shabana argued that the film is not politically incorrect in any way and said that audiences may be finding it difficult to accept a Partition story that does not fit the familiar narrative. She said, "The problem is

that you cannot touch the subject of Hindustan and Pakistan in this setup, which is very disappointing. This is a film which is politically not incorrect in any way. You can't find fault with it. Sunny has done a very good job. It is very surprising and also contradictory that when I meet people, why are they praising the film so much?" the actor concluded. The film sees Sunny Deol play the character of Sikandar Mirza, a patriotic businessman from Meerut, who is forced to flee to Pakistan with his wife Hamida (Preity Zinta) and their children after facing targeted riots. After staying in a refugee camp in Lahore, they are allotted a haveli as their new home, where they hope to restart their lives.

Kajol on GenZ discovering her films

Entertainment Desk

As Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham completes 25 years this year, Kajol says that a whole new generation of viewers is discovering and revisiting the films that defined her career. The actor says she has had several young people approach her after watching K3G (2001), Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (1998) and Pyaar Toh Hona Hi Tha (1998). "There is a whole revival of the '90s and 2000s scene that has come up," she shares, adding, "Younger people come up to me and say, 'Oh, we just watched K3G. We've just watched Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (1998). We've just watched Pyaar Toh Hona Hi Tha (1998). What a cool film it is!' It's very exciting." Asked which character she identifies with the most, the 52-year-old quips, "Anjali from Kuch Kuch Hota Hai. I feel like there I was a tomboy then!" For Kajol, the renewed interest in the era goes beyond nostalgia, with younger audiences now discovering the sensibility of films made decades ago. "There is that whole wanting to, you know, watch films like that, which were somewhere, I think, made with a lot of passion and cleanliness," she shares. "They were kind of much more romanticised than films yesterday. So I think people want films like that. They want to watch films like that. I hope we can make films like that till yesterday." Interestingly, while a new generation is discovering her work, Kajol says her own Gen Z children, Nysa Devgn, 23, and Yug



Devgn, 15, aren't keen on watching her films. "They feel I'm a little too convincing in films and that I'm too good an actor at times!" she says. Explaining their take, she adds, "They're like, 'We don't watch your movies because we don't want to watch our mum cry too much.'" She jokes, "If I was a bad actor, maybe they would have seen more of my films. But because I cry so well on screen, they're like, no, we don't watch your movies because we don't want to watch our mom cry too much on screen." Having spent decades in the industry, Kajol has also seen her share of news reports about herself, some accurate and some not. While there have been reports of her joining Atee and Allu Arjun's Raaka (earlier titled AA22xA6) and the Prabhas-starrer Spirit, the actor remains unfazed by what is written about her. "I don't pay attention to all of these news articles, really. I mean, 90% of them are all rubbish anyway," she says, adding, "The day I do sign a film, I'm very clear about it. People will know within minutes, everybody will know that I'm doing this."

Arafat: A Reclusive Creative Artisan

Entertainment Desk

Very little is discussed about the work of sound engineers in Bangladesh's music industry. Yet the success of a song or a live concert, as well as the audience's overall experience, depends heavily on sound. Despite this, the craftsmen behind the sound have traditionally remained behind the scenes.

Arafat Kirti is one such quiet and creative professional. He is a music producer, mixing and mastering engineer, and live sound engineer. Over the years, he has built an extensive body of work in both Bangladesh and the United Kingdom.

His journey began with studio-based music production. As a music producer and mixing and mastering engineer, he has worked on numerous songs, albums, and original soundtracks. Many of these projects have been commercially released and have also gained considerable popularity among listeners.

One of the defining characteristics of his work is his ability to preserve an artist's individuality, the beauty of the music, and the natural sound of musical instruments while bringing them to the standards of modern digital sound.

Met cancels planned John Galiano fashion exhibit following backlash

Entertainment Desk

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has cancelled a planned exhibition honouring British fashion designer John Galiano following strong criticism over his past antisemitic and racist remarks.

The exhibition had been scheduled as the Costume Institute's spring 2027 show and was expected to coincide with the annual Met Gala. The museum said another exhibition would be announced later.

"Following thoughtful discussions with John Galiano, we have together decided not to proceed with the exhibition," the museum's director and CEO Max Hollein said in a statement.

Galliano said he supported the decision and expressed regret over his past remarks, particularly the pain caused to Jewish and Asian communities. Galliano was once one of the fashion industry's most celebrated designers and served as creative director of Christian Dior. However, he was dismissed after racist and antisemitic remarks he made in 2010 and



2011 became public. He was later convicted in France over antisemitic comments.

After several years away from the spotlight, Galliano returned to the fashion industry in 2014 as creative director of Maison Margiela, where he worked for a decade. He would have been only the third living designer to receive a solo exhibition at the Met's Costume Institute.

The planned exhibition had faced growing opposition, including from New York City Council Speaker Julie Menin, who welcomed the museum's decision to cancel it.

Menin said she had repeatedly opposed honouring Galliano, arguing that the exhibition had caused deep pain to the Jewish community at a time of rising antisemitism.

She described the cancellation as the right decision, saying the harm and distress caused by the planned exhibition were unacceptable.

I can also make it shorter and sharper for direct UNB website publication.

Adhora Khan's int'l film debut with 'Violence'

Entertainment Desk

actress Adhora Khan is set to begin a new chapter in her



ing Bengali-language movie, "Violence".

The film, which explores themes of love, relationships, conflict and politics, will feature Adhora in a central role. Directed by Kamal Hossain Babor, produced by Mohammad Rahman and Sabrina Chowdhury, the entire film is scheduled to be shot in Canada. In the movie, Adhora will portray a university student who was born and raised in Canada. Expressing her excitement about the project, the actress said that although "Violence" will be her first international feature film, working on projects outside Bangladesh is not entirely new to her. "I have previously worked on several projects in the United States and Canada. Some of those works have already been released.

Bangladeshi suspect in Saif Ali Khan attack changes course, seeks guilty plea

Entertainment Desk

The Bangladeshi man accused of attacking Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan during an alleged robbery attempt at his Mumbai home has told a court he wants to plead guilty and seek a lighter sentence.

Mohammad Shariful Islam, 31, filed an application before a Mumbai sessions court on Friday expressing his willingness to admit guilt, according to The Indian Express.

The court has asked prosecutors to respond to the plea.

The move marks a significant shift in the case. Charges were framed against Islam on Aug 14, when he pleaded not guilty, according to Hindustan Times.

His lawyer Vipul Dushing said his client now regretted what had happened and wanted to plead guilty while asking the court for leniency.

The case has been listed for Sept 11, when the prosecution's response is expected to be considered.

Shariful faces charges relating to robbery or dacoity involving an attempt to cause death or grievous hurt, being armed with a deadly weapon and house-breaking or trespass.

He also faces charges under the passport and immigration laws over allegations that he entered and lived in India illegally.



The Indian Express said the most serious charges carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

The case stems from an attack at Saif's residence in Mumbai's Bandra area on Jan 16, 2025.

Police allege an intruder entered the actor's home during a robbery attempt and attacked him, leaving him with serious injuries that required surgery at Lilavati Hospital.

Shariful was arrested in Thane two days later. Police subsequently alleged that he was a Bangladeshi national living illegally in India and had used the alias Vijay Das. He has remained in judicial custody since his arrest.

His latest application comes just as the case had begun moving towards trial following the framing of charges earlier this month.

The court has not yet accepted the proposed guilty plea, with prosecutors first being asked to state their position.

Taapsee Pannu turned down roles to avoid typecasting, told directors

Entertainment Desk

Taapsee Pannu has established herself as an actor in the film industry by starring in several female-centric films, including Pink, Mulk, Thappad and Assi.

The actor is now gearing up for the release of her upcoming release, Gandhari, which is an action thriller about a mother's struggle to save her daughter. In a new interview with news agency PTI, the actor opened up about her career and surviving in an industry where getting typecasted in a certain image is very easy.

The actor shared how she does not want to be trapped in a particular image. "Everybody is going into their comfort zone and using tried-and-tested methods. For instance, for glamorous roles, they (industry) have a set of five actresses they can cast, and for hard-hitting, issue-based films, they have another set of five actresses to cast. I've actually started turning down films for this reason, telling makers that the audience will easily guess the ending. So, (I tell them) 'Don't cast me in this, it's bad for your film'.



I've gone and 'de-sold' myself to a few films," she added.

"It's a snowball effect. From the beginning of my career, I had no options in regular mainstream cliched roles, which are actually money-spinners for actresses. I didn't get those kinds of roles; hence I took the other type of roles, and to my luck, those films and roles later became mainstream," she said.

Directed by Devashish Makhija and written and produced by Kanika Dhillon, the film is set in the fictitious town Joypurra and shows the blind mother's journey through hidden truths, mounting danger and unexpected allies, where

hope must continually stand its ground against darkness. "It's more like a mother's response, like how far can she go if her child is taken away from her? It's different from a crime against women. A child can be anyone's child, but the point is that if her offspring is taken away and she has to take things into her own hands, how far can she go? According to my understanding, there is no limit; you have unleashed a superpower that no one can control," Pannu said.

Sydney Sweeney tells Tom Cruise 'watch out' after wild airplane stunt

Entertainment Desk

Sydney Sweeney has taken a playful swipe at Tom Cruise after strapping herself to the top of a moving aeroplane and filming the stunt.

Sweeney posted a video on Monday showing herself on top of a single-engine plane as it flipped upside down several times while she remained secured to it, Fox News reports.

"Watch out Tom Cruise," she captioned the post. The 28-year-old actor wore leggings and a navy crew neck, with her hair in pigtail braids, as she stayed calm through the dramatic manoeuvres.

The official Top Gun Instagram account responded to the stunt with, "Feel the need for speed", referencing Cruise's famous action franchise.

Sweeney also used a wrist-mounted camera to capture parts of the stunt.

Just days earlier, she had shared a glimpse of her summer with boyfriend Scooter Braun. On Aug 22, Sweeney posted a carousel captioned "Camp '26" with a superhero emoji, showing the pair enjoying a lakeside getaway. The "Euphoria" star appeared in a Wonder Woman-inspired outfit, while Braun dressed as Superman. Other images showed them swimming, relaxing in the sun and singing karaoke.



Venice Film Festival brings stars, Oscar hopefuls and timely documentaries

Entertainment Desk

The 83rd Venice Film Festival opens Wednesday on the Lido, launching the fall awards season with major stars, Oscar hopefuls and documentaries focused on Elon Musk, Russia and Gaza.

Noel and Liam Gallagher, Robert Pattinson, Rooney Mara, George Clooney and Penélope Cruz are among those expected. Clooney and Ellen Burstyn will receive lifetime achievement awards.

Tom Cruise to reprise 'Days of Thunder' role in 2028 sequel

Alex Gibney's nearly four-hour documentary examines Musk's rise and influence. The filmmaker, who interviewed hundreds of people, said the Tesla and SpaceX CEO declined to participate and described his findings as challenging Musk's public image.

Julia Loktev's nearly six-hour "My Undesirable Friends: Part II — Exile" follows independent Russian journalists forced to flee after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Gaza is also featured in "NAZA," a late competition entry from two filmmakers behind the Oscar-winning "No Other Land." Venice4Palestine has urged the festival to cut ties with Israeli government-linked institutions.

Awards contenders include Martin McDonagh's "Wild Horse Nine," Florian Zeller's "Bunker," Danny Boyle's "Ink" and Lance Oppenheim's "Primetime."

Only Danish-Egyptian director May El-Touky is competing among women filmmakers, despite Venice's 2018 pledge to achieve gender parity.

Outside the competition, Venice Days opens with Lili Horvát's "My Notes on Mars" and features a programme in which more than half the selections are directed by women.

Calhanoglu fires Inter to nervy Cagliari win, Como stun Napoli

Sports Desk

Hakan Calhanoglu's early strike earned Inter Milan a 1-0 win at Cagliari on Sunday as they continued a perfect start to their Serie A title defence, while Como edged Napoli 2-1 to spoil Massimiliano Allegri's home debut.

Turkey midfielder Calhanoglu guided home a first-time strike from the edge of the box after nine minutes to make it two goals in two games and set the tone for a first half dominated by the champions in Sardinia. A combination of wayward finishing and fine goalkeeping from Elia Caprile kept the scoreline close at half-time, and Inter's profligacy continued after the break as Lautaro Martinez, Francesco Pio Esposito and Alessandro Bastoni squandered good chances.

England international Curtis Jones made his debut from the bench in the second half, but Inter's lack of composure in front of goal almost came back to bite them as Cagliari threatened a shock equaliser with a flurry of late chances. Cristian Chivu's side ended the game with 29 shots on the board and only one goal to show for them, but it was enough to send them top of the table after two games, ahead of AC Milan, Juventus and Lazio on goal difference.

"These are your classic games where if you don't close them out, you can run into trouble," Chivu told Sky Italia. "In the last few minutes, we fell apart, getting confused and panicking.



"But we held firm, and we created a lot. If there is one regret, it is not finishing off the many chances we had." Gennaro Gattuso's Lazio also made it two wins from two by beating Genoa 1-0 in Rome thanks to a second match-winning strike in a row from summer signing Davide Frattesi.

- Fabregas hopes for striker - Earlier, Como pulled off their latest feat of Serie A giant-killing as a win at the Stadio Diego Armando Maradona ruined Napoli coach Allegri's home bow. Martin Baturina fired Cesc Fabregas's enterprising side into a deserved lead in the 17th minute as chances fell at both ends in soaring temperatures in Naples. Rasmus Hojlund's brilliant strike drew the hosts level on the half-hour mark, but his good work was quickly undone when a defensive mix-up led to Anastasios Douvikas scoring for the second game in a row. Kevin De Bruyne, who inspired Napoli to an opening win over Genoa with a goal and assist from the bench, was

unable to turn the tide after coming on early in the second half. Como survived late pressure to hold on as Stanislav Lobotka's stoppage-time strike was ruled out for offside.

"It is a very valuable win... the first half was very good and in the second we understood that we were facing champions, and we held out," Fabregas told broadcasters DAZN. Fabregas's side upset the established order in Italian football last season by qualifying for the Champions League for the first time, where they were drawn against the likes of holders Paris Saint-Germain, Barcelona and Manchester United. But the Spanish coach admitted that he is hoping for more new signings before the transfer window closes on

September 1, to help cope with a busy schedule. "Obviously, I'm expecting a striker," Fabregas said. "Douvikas can't play both the league and the cups. We suffered a lot with (Alvaro) Morata last year, for months he was out injured. "Playing every three days at this level isn't easy." Como, who were held by Udinese in their opener, moved up to four points, while last season's runners-up Napoli remained on three points. The second round of the Serie A season concludes on Monday when Roma travel to Lecce before Atalanta host Bologna.



Bellingham, Mbappe fire as Real Madrid ease to Malaga win

Sports Desk

Jude Bellingham and Kylian Mbappe both struck as Real Madrid's perfect start to La Liga under Jose Mourinho continued in a 4-0 cruise against Malaga on Sunday. Los Blancos scored three times in just over 10 minutes in the first half to open up a comfortable lead over the Andalusian visitors to the Santiago Bernabeu. Sandwiched between Bellingham and Mbappe's strikes was an own goal by Malaga goalkeeper Alfonso Herrero, while Arda Guler tapped in a fourth late on.

"I've got the freedom to go higher or lower if we need, I'm enjoying myself a lot," Bellingham told Real Madrid TV of his attacking midfield role under Mourinho. The former Birmingham and Borussia Dortmund star was given a standing ovation from the fans when he was substituted in the second half. "It's an honour to play for this club and in front of these fans and the ovation was very nice," added Bellingham. After two victories in their opening two games and with superstar trio Mbappe, Bellingham and Vinicius Junior starting the season well, Madrid's confidence was high. Mourinho rotated, making five changes to the team that started their opening matches, giving Trent Alexander-Arnold and Marc Cucurella among others their first starts this season. Bellingham opened the scoring after 19 minutes with an excellent solo goal, beating two defenders before drilling through Herrero's legs. Bellingham forced the second goal seven minutes later, after Herrero denied Mbappe. The England international headed the rebound towards goal and defender Carlos Puga desperately tried to clear off the line, with the ball bouncing in off the unfortunate stopper Herrero. Mbappe rattled home the third with a volley from



Alexander-Arnold's cross for his fourth goal of the campaign, leaving him top of Spain's scoring charts. Promoted side Malaga threatened just before half-time, with Rafa Rodriguez striking the post after a corner was played to him, and Chupe hitting the side netting. - Clean sheet banked - Madrid cruised through the second half, with Bellingham hitting the outside of the post as they occasionally threatened to extend their lead. They only managed to get a fourth late on, when Vinicius teed

up substitute Guler to finish from point-blank range. "The second half was more about managing the game, at a lower tempo," Mourinho told Real Madrid TV. "Malaga were calmer on the ball, but every time we stepped up the pace, it always felt like we could score one or two more. "One of our objectives was to keep a clean sheet." Madrid managed to do that for the first time this season and Mourinho said it

was important for Los Blancos. "Football isn't just about having fun with the beauty of the goals -- it's also about going home thinking that we're a solid unit," added the Portuguese veteran. Deportivo La Coruna secured their first win of the season with a 3-1 victory over Valencia.Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang netted his third goal of the campaign for the Galician side, who also benefitted from own goals by Cesar Tarrega and Mouctar Diakhaby. Edin Terzic's Athletic Bilbao also claimed their first win, 2-0 at Celta Vigo, with goals from Alex Berenguer and Robert Navarro. On Monday, champions Barcelona host Rayo Vallecano in their third match of the campaign, having comfortably won their opening games.

England v Pakistan second Test: Three talking points

Men's, women's hockey team hold 1st training

Sports Desk

The Bangladesh U-20 men's and women's teams have completed their first training sessions yesterday (Monday) in Moqi, China ahead of the U-20 Junior Asia Cup Hockey Tournament. Following the opening day's training, players from both Bangladesh teams expressed satisfaction with their accommodation, the main venue and the available training facilities. However, they remain somewhat concerned about the weather conditions at the venue ahead of the tournament.

The players are making every effort to quickly adapt to the cold weather there and adjust themselves fully to the conditions. Despite the challenges, everyone in the teams remains mentally upbeat and fully confident of making a positive and strong start to the tournament. Both the U-20 men's and women's teams have travelled from Bangladesh to represent the red and green in the mega tournament, which is scheduled to begin on September 4. The main objective of both teams is to strengthen their position on the world stage by achieving a good result in the tournament.

Bangladesh face Uzbekistan tonight

Sports Desk

Bangladesh will begin their AFC U-20 Asian Cup qualifying campaign when they face hosts Uzbekistan in their opening Group B match at the Do'stik Stadium in Tashkent tonight (Monday). The match kicks off at 8 pm Bangladesh time. The eight group winners and seven best runners-up from the qualifying round will advance to the AFC U-20 Asian Cup finals. Bangladesh, who have been placed in Group B in Uzbekistan, will face Syria and India on September 3 and 6, respectively, in their remaining group-stage matches.

Even if Bangladesh fail to finish as group champions, they can still qualify for the finals by finishing as one of the seven best runners-up. The Bangladesh team, which recently won the SAFF U-20 Championship, will be looking to carry that momentum into the qualifying campaign and secure a place in the finals.

place in the England side, it was a particularly cruel exit as what should be a game of skill was turned into a lottery by uneven bounce. It was also a worrying sign for Marylebone Cricket Club, the owners of Lord's. The pitch for the previous Test at Lord's, against New Zealand, was rated as "unsatisfactory" by the International Cricket Council, with next year's World Test Championship final relocated

across London to the Oval partly as a consequence. And while previous surfaces at Lord's, renowned for its steep slope across the ground, faced criticism for being bland and too much in favour of the batsmen, clearly there are limits. MCC recognised they had an issue after the New Zealand match, announcing the creation of "an agronomy advisory group" and a "phased pitch-relaying programme", although any benefits from may not be seen for several years and are unlikely to be of much consolation to Gay. Shakeel salvages some batting respect for Pakistan Pakistan have yet to make 200 so far this series, with the tourists dismissed for 171 and 135 during an innings and 103-run defeat in the first Test at Headingley before managing 110 and 194 at Lord's. But that Pakistan, already bottom of the World Test Championship table before this latest thumping loss, at least got close to a benchmark total on Sunday was largely down to Saud Shakeel's enterprising 97. Coming in with Pakistan in dire straits at 14-3, he initially scored briskly without taking undue risks before a flurry of thrilling boundaries, including two superb hooked sixes off fast bowler Josh Tongue took him to within sight of a hundred. Shakeel fell just short of what would have been his fifth century in 25 Tests when he holed out off Tongue, the left-hander failing to join Abbas on the Lord's honours boards following the veteran seamer's five-wicket haul earlier Sunday. "In the batting, we weren't up to the mark (in the first innings)," said Babar Azam, the Pakistan captain. "Saud Shakeel showed his class and dedication in the second innings."



Sports Desk

England thrashed Pakistan by 194 runs to win the second Test at Lord's on Sunday and so take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in a three-match campaign. Below AFP Sport looks at three talking points that emerged as England completed their first multi-match Test series win in over a year. Relentless Robinson The present England management have sometimes given the impression the only thing that matters in a pace attack is sheer speed. But Ollie Robinson has demonstrated the importance of accuracy and movement as well. Robinson lacks the express pace and physical threat of Sussex and England teammate Jofra Archer. But the seamer's range of skills were on display at Lord's where, albeit helped by a green-tinted pitch, Robinson was named player-of-the-match for a haul of 8-35 that included a remarkable 4-11 in 13 overs during Pakistan's first innings. While concerns over his fitness and questions regarding some social media posts have threatened to derail his England career, there have rarely been any doubts over the 32-year-old Robinson's talent. In his three Tests this season the Sussex captain has taken 23 wickets at a stunningly low average of 8.34, with England skipper Joe Root saying on Sunday Robinson was "horrificous (to face) in these conditions." Pitch problems a worry for Lord's The way England opener Emilio Gay fell lbw for 31 to a 'pea-shooter' delivery from Pakistan paceman Mohammad Abbas was the kind of dismissal that really should not happen on the third day of a Test and certainly not at a ground that styles itself as the Home of Cricket. For Gay, struggling to cement his

Monaco beat Marseille to go top, Rosenior's Paris FC thump Nice

Sports Desk

Monaco stormed to the top of Ligue 1 with a 2-0 win over Marseille on Sunday as former Chelsea boss Lionel Rosenior led his new charges Paris FC to a 3-0 home thumping of Nice. German Paris Brunner scored both goals as Monaco maintained the only remaining perfect record in Ligue 1 after two matches. "Since I joined, he's been the type of player who expresses himself on the pitch, in training, with goals, pressing, tracking back -- he wants to learn," said Monaco coach Filipe Luis about his match-winner. "That's the way he is. It's all up to him if he wants to keep doing his talking on the pitch. "As long as he keeps doing that, he'll be there. He's very young, I'm really happy with the way he played. "But the most important thing is that he remains

ambitious, passionate, because he is passionate when he plays and I love that." The 20-year-old opened the scoring on 13 minutes with a header from captain Aleksandr Golovin's cross from the right. Nine minutes after half-time, he cut inside Marseille centre-backs Geoffrey Kondogbia and CJ Egan-Riley before shooting past goalkeeper Jeffrey De Lange. In the capital, newly-recruited Malian striker Lassine Sinayoko broke the deadlock from the penalty-spot on 20 minutes. Samir Chergui doubled that after a blistering counter-attack after 51 minutes, while Vincent Marchetti pounced on a loose ball late on to make it 3-0 to PFC. Former Strasbourg boss Rosenior was brought back to France following his torrid experience at Chelsea by the multi-billionaire Arnault family, owners of the Louis Vuitton brand and Paris FC.

FIFA president Infantino 'must go', says ex-UEFA boss Platini

Sports Desk

French football great Michel Platini said on Sunday FIFA president Gianni Infantino "must go" following the scandals that have rocked world football's governing body. The 56-year-old Infantino has been under fire since his aborted plan to bring private investment into FIFA events, such as the World Cup. He was also lambasted over a number of controversies during the recently-ended World Cup in North America. "Economic affairs are one thing but Infantino has failed because he is the guarantor of the rules of the game and he didn't respect them," former UEFA president Platini told Canal+. Platini hit out at the so-called hydration breaks at the World Cup, which often lasted as much as four minutes and were used by the host broadcaster for advertisements. He also pointed to the half-time show during the final which largely overran the required maximum of 15 minutes, and the furore around FIFA suspending the red card ban given to American forward Folarin Balogun following a phone call made by US President Donald Trump to Infantino. "The ad breaks are not in the rules, the 30-minute half-time break in the final is not in the rules, and the red card, that's the worst," said Platini. "He's the guarantor (of the rules), he doesn't respect them, he must go," added Platini about Infantino, who was UEFA's secretary general under the Frenchman's leadership. Since the World Cup, UEFA threatened to boycott FIFA tournaments until Infantino scrapped the FIFA Forward Enterprises plan to bring in private investment. European football's governing body UEFA has also accused Infantino of "criminal mismanagement" over the private financing. - 'He always loved money' - Other regions, CONCACAF and Asia, have



joined UEFA in putting pressure on Infantino, who is hoping to run for re-election in March. "It won't be sporting institutions that sort this out and bring him down," Platini said. "If UEFA wants to bring down Infantino, it will be through the courts." "I always knew that he loved money and power," Platini added about the Swiss-Italian. Platini was himself accused of fraud in 2015 when he was UEFA president and eyeing the top job at FIFA to replace Sepp Blatter, who was likewise accused of giving an illegal 2-million-dollar payment to the Frenchman. Platini was eventually acquitted of any wrongdoing in 2025 but was forced to step down at the time, with Infantino leaping on the opportunity to be elected FIFA president in his stead in 2016."He didn't bring me down, he benefitted from it," said Platini. "But now that there are lots of investigations into him all over the world, there is some noise about how he knew about certain things -- let's see what happens next." Platini is suing Infantino, and former FIFA officials Marco Villiger and Domenico Scala, in France "to seek compensation for all the damages he has suffered as a result of the tactics used to prevent him from being elected FIFA President in 2015". He accuses the trio of a "criminal conspiracy to commit false accusation... influence peddling... and aiding and abetting influence peddling".

Poorly Djokovic crashes out of US Open first round

Sports Desk

Ailing Novak Djokovic suffered his earliest Grand Slam exit in 20 years on Sunday, falling in five brutal sets to Mariano Navone in the first round of the US Open. The 48th-ranked Argentine's 7-6 (7/5), 5-7, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1 victory ended Djokovic's latest bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title, the monumental achievement looking ever less likely for the 39-year-old. It also ended his run of 78 Grand Slam first-round victories, a streak stretching all the way back to Djokovic's 2006 loss to Paul Goldstein at the 2006 Australian Open. "I think it was obvious that it was an awful feeling on the court for me," said Djokovic, who vomited several times and battled late-match cramps. "It's something that I've been carrying, unfortunately, pretty much every match this year. Vomiting,



throwing up, a serious issue there. Then my whole body starts to collapse, basically cramping and pain. "The back just gave up in the end and shoulder, I couldn't close it out." Djokovic, who took medication during the match, appeared to have finally taken control when he broke Navone for a 2-1 lead in the fourth set with a vintage backhand winner down the line. But Navone won the next five games, raising his arms in celebration after fighting off two break points for a 5-2 lead and breaking Djokovic again to force the fifth. Djokovic took a medical timeout before the final set, receiving massage on his spine and more medication. But Navone jumped to a 3-0 lead in the decisive set and despite the urging of fans there was no road back for the Serb as his opponent dropped just one point on his own serve as he sprinted to the finish line.

It 'hurts' says Messi of decision to retire from international football

Sports Desk

Lionel Messi said on Monday he is retiring from international football after leading Argentina to a second successive World Cup final in July. Messi, 39, wrote on Instagram: "It was a decision that hurt and still hurts deep in my soul but I understand that it is the right time. "I swear I always gave everything, not just in the last few years when we won everything but before that too, and I always fought and gave my all for this shirt," he added. Messi led Argentina to World Cup glory by winning the 2022 final against France in a penalty shootout in Doha, but his side lost 1-0 to Spain in the 2026 final in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Following the death of his father Jorge in August, Messi had said he had "serious doubts" about continuing to play football of any sort for "much longer". Messi's contract with Major League Soccer club Inter Miami runs until the end of the 2028 season. He has played 207 times for Argentina and is also Argentina's leading scorer, scoring 125 goals.





Jaflong-New Market Road in Dilapidated Condition, People of Two Upazilas Suffer

Naeem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat, Sylhet

The important Jaflong-New Market Road in Gowainghat Upazila of Sylhet has been in a dilapidated condition for a long time. Large potholes, uneven surfaces and damaged sections at various points of the road are causing severe hardship to local residents every day. The situation worsens after even a little rain, as water accumulates at several points along the road.

Locals allege that the road is gradually becoming unfit for travel due to the lack of necessary repairs and maintenance for a long time. Particularly during the rainy season, accumulated rainwater further deteriorates the damaged sections, making the situation even worse. As a result, the movement of small vehicles, including auto-rickshaws and motorcycles, has become difficult, while the risk of accidents has also increased.

Every day, local residents as well as traders, students, patients and working people use this

important road. In addition, Jaflong, one of the country's most popular tourist destinations, attracts a large number of tourists from different parts of Bangladesh every day. Consequently, tourists are also facing considerable inconvenience due to the poor condition of the road.

Local residents said that if the road is not repaired soon, the suffering will increase further in the coming days. They also complained that although several reports have previously been published in different media outlets highlighting the poor condition of the Jaflong-New Market Road, no permanent solution has yet been implemented.

Residents have demanded that the concerned authorities urgently repair the damaged sections of the road and make it safe and suitable for normal vehicular movement. They expressed hope that effective measures will be taken soon to free the people of the two upazilas and tourists from their long-standing suffering.

Drug Dealer Arrested with 110 kg of Ganja in Singerbil

M Badol Khandaker, District Correspondent Brahmanbaria

A drug dealer named Noydal Chandra Das (45) was arrested with 110 kg of ganja during a police raid in Vijayanagar, Brahmanbaria.

On Sunday (August 30) evening, Vijayanagar Police Station conducted a raid at his own house in Kashinagar village, Singerbil Union, and arrested him.

According to police sources, acting on secret information that a large consignment of drugs was stored at Noydal Chandra Das's house in Kashinagar village, a special team of Vijayanagar Police Station carried out the operation. During the raid, 110 kg of ganja was recovered from his house and Noydal Chandra Das was arrested red-handed on charges of involvement in the incident. Confirming the incident, the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Vijayanagar Police Station said that preparations are underway to file a case against the arrested drug dealer under the Narcotics Control Act. The police's zero tolerance operation against drugs will continue.



KCC administrator urges household cleanliness to curb dengue

Khulna Correspondent

Khulna City Corporation (KCC) Administrator Nazrul Islam Manju today said measures to prevent dengue and chikungunya had been launched three months ago in line with government directives.

"Alongside keeping the city clean, we have made all-out efforts to raise public awareness and ensure the safety of city dwellers. However, the expected results in reducing dengue infections have not been achieved," he said.

The KCC administrator made the remarks at a discussion and exchange-of-views meeting as the chief guest at Sonadanga PWD Secondary School.

He stressed that ensuring a safe environment for city residents required maintaining cleanliness not only on roads and in drains but also around individual homes.

"Everyone must ensure a clean environment around their homes. Bushes and stagnant water must be removed," he said. The school authorities organised the programme to raise awareness among students about dengue and chikungunya, as dengue infections have been increasing at an alarming rate in Khulna city. Head teachers of several schools under Sonadanga Police Station also attended the programme.

Manju urged students to play an active role in raising awareness about dengue among their friends and family members. He also called upon teachers to take initiatives to clean their respective school campuses at least once a week.

He expressed hope that increased awareness through educational institutions would help reduce dengue infections. A dengue-awareness quiz competition was held among students at the concluding session, and the KCC administrator distributed prizes among the winners. Head Teacher Md Liakat Hossain presided over the programme.

Financial management training for Netrokona officials concludes

Netrokona Correspondent

A two-day training programme on public procurement and financial management for government officials concluded here today.

Deputy Commissioner Khandakar Mushfiqur Rahman inaugurated the programme on Sunday at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room.

A total of 40 officers and employees from 9th to 16th grades of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner and subordinate Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) offices participated in the training organised by the district administration.

Subject-matter experts and resource persons, including Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs Golam Mohammad Bhuiyan, Deputy Commissioner Khandakar Mushfiqur Rahman, Additional Deputy Commissioners, Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) and Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) officials, conducted various sessions. The sessions covered public financial management and procurement procedures under existing laws and regulations, including the Public Procurement Act (PPA) 2006, Public Procurement Rules (PPR) and e-GP system. Practical exercises were also conducted to familiarise the participants with public procurement processes and the e-GP platform.

Speakers at the closing session expressed hope that the training would enhance the officials' professional skills and help ensure transparency, accountability and proper use of public funds.

GPA-5 Achievers Honoured at Reception in Sitakunda

Md. Omar Faruk | Special Correspondent

A reception was held in Sitakunda to honour 13 meritorious students of Kumira Residential Girls' School and College who achieved GPA-5 in the 2026 Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination.

The reception was held on Monday (August 31) at noon at the hall room of Kumira Residential Girls' School and College. The event was organised to recognise and encourage the outstanding academic achievements of the students. The programme was presided over by the college's Principal, Md. Nasir Uddin, and conducted by Lecturer Asif Mahmud. Lion Mohammad Amzad Hossain Chowdhury, Senior Vice President of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, attended the programme as the chief guest.

Among the special guests were Mohammad Lokman Mia, Head Teacher of Latifa Siddiqui Girls' High School; Mumtaz Rokhsana Akter, Acting Head Teacher of Madam Bibirhat Shahjahan High School; Abdullah Al Kayum Chowdhury, General Secretary of Sitakunda Press Club; journalist and Advocate Md. Nasir Uddin; Md. Nazrul Islam, Head Teacher of Rose Garden Academy; Md. Ataur Rahman, Head Teacher of S. A. Chowdhury Institute; and Nasrin Nahar, Head Teacher of City Model School.

Prof. Md. Khorshed Alam, Prof. Kaniz Sadrun Nesa, Prof. Abul Hashem, Prof. Kazi Rezaul Karim, Senior Teacher Birendra Nath Ghosh, Aruna Poly, Shuvo Chowdhury, Mahmudul Islam, Amit Chowdhury, Raihan Hasan, Afia Khatun, Israt Jahan Runa, Kamrun Nahar, Kaisar Hasan, guardian Kazi Nazim, and other teachers, students and guardians were also present at the programme.



In his speech, Chief Guest Lion Mohammad Amzad Hossain Chowdhury congratulated the students on their outstanding results and said, "The achievement of these meritorious students is not theirs alone; it is also the achievement of their teachers and responsible guardians."

Addressing the students, he said, "You have left a mark of excellence at this educational institution. You must maintain this success and continue to achieve outstanding results in the future."

He further emphasised that the collective support of teachers, guardians and the wider community is essential for improving the quality of education. He assured the institution of his continued cooperation, saying, "I will remain supportive of this educational institution whenever assistance is needed."

The speakers congratulated the GPA-5 achievers and encouraged them to maintain their academic excellence, pursue higher education and contribute positively to society and the country. The programme concluded in a festive and enthusiastic atmosphere, with students, teachers and guardians celebrating the academic success of the young achievers.



Training on digital skills development for marginalized women in Dimla

Mohinul Islam Sujan

A two-day digital skills development training has been held for marginalized women in Dimla, Nilphamari to provide social security benefits at the field level.

The two-day training, organized by the Agrajatra project to strengthen the economic, social and political participation of marginalized women living in areas vulnerable to climate change in Bangladesh, concluded on Monday (August 31) at Bais Pukur Jele Para of Khalisha Chapani Union in the upazila. The training was implemented by Pallisree in collaboration with BMZ and Netz Bangladesh. The trainer was Makim Chowdhury, Unit Manager of Pallisree Agrajatra Project, and the associate trainer was Ayesha Siddika Asha, Advocacy Facilitator.

Earlier, this two-day training was held at the Sahebpara Technical Institute in Panga Matukpur Union of Domar Upazila of the district on August 24 and 25. The training taught how to download and fill out application forms in writing for the purpose of obtaining social security.



21.5 kg Marijuana Seized Under Cover of Potato and Salt Shipments in Feni; 2 Arrested, Truck Confiscated

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

RAB-7 arrested two suspected smugglers along with 21.5 kilograms of marijuana while they were attempting to traffic the consignment under the guise of potato bags and Confidence brand salt sacks.

The raid took place on Sunday (August 30) afternoon during a routine checkpoint operation in front of the Police Officers' Mess in the West Rampur area along the Dhaka-Chattogram highway in Feni Municipality. A cargo truck used for transporting the drugs was also seized.

The arrestees have been identified as Md. Siam Hossain (24) and Sabbir (19), both residents of the West Ramnagar area under Magura Sadar Police Station. They were operating as the driver and helper of the truck, respectively.

According to RAB sources, the checkpoint was established following a tip-off that a truck carrying drugs alongside a salt shipment was traveling from Chattogram toward Jhenaidah. Around 3:45 PM, when the suspicious cargo truck was signaled to pull over, the driver and helper attempted to flee. RAB personnel pursued and apprehended them. Subsequent searches inside the vehicle revealed 43 wrapped rolls containing 21.5 kg of marijuana skillfully hidden inside three potato sacks. Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) A.R.M. Muzaffar Hossain of RAB confirmed that the estimated market value of the seized marijuana is around Tk 2.15 lakh. The illegal drugs were being smuggled under the cover of 13,000 kg of salt and 150 kg of potatoes. The arrestees, along with the seized goods and the truck, have been handed over to Feni Sadar Police Station for necessary legal proceedings.

In Fakirhat, the cultural competition on the occasion of Nazrul Year

S A Kalam Fakirhat, Bagerhat

The formal activities of the government-declared 'Nazrul Year' have begun to present the life, literature, philosophy, ideals, and vast creations of the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam in a new way at the national level.

As part of this, the Upazila administration organised a grand inauguration ceremony of a cultural competition with the participation of students from primary, technical, and secondary schools to celebrate Nazrul Year in Fakirhat, Bagerhat.

On Monday (31 August) at 10 am, the event was presided over by Upazila Executive Officer Md. Rokunuj Zaman at the Upazila Parishad auditorium. The main speaker was A H M Jamal Uddin, Chairman of Malek Naya Dhukur and Director of the National Poet Education and Research Institute. The welcome speech was delivered by Fakirhat Assistant Commissioner (Land) Md. Sharif Newaz.

In a joint moderation by Upazila Primary Education Officer and Academic Supervisor Asaduzzaman, further speeches were given by Officer-in-Charge (OC)



Md. Oliullah Khan of Fakirhat Model Police Station, BNP leader Sheikh Iftikhar Ahmed Palash, Upazila NCP President Md. Mizanur Rahman, and Gana Adhikar Parishad leader Md. Khairul Basar among others.

At this time, Upazila Agriculture Officer Sheikh Sakawat Hossain, Secondary Officer Md. Golam Mostafa, Cooperative Officer Milan Kumar Das, Project Officer Imrul Kayes, DGM of Palli Bidyut Anand Kumar Kundu, Women Affairs Officer Tahira Khatun, Assistant Programmer Md. Alamgir Hossain, along with various officials from different government departments, teachers, and students were present.

Student gathering and cultural competition on the occasion of 'Nazrul Barsho' in Amtoli

Amtoli (Barguna) Correspondent

A student gathering and cultural competition on the occasion of 'Nazrul Barsho'-2026 has been held in Amtoli, Barguna, with the aim of spreading the equality, humanity and non-communal spirit of the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam among the new generation of students.

The student gathering and cultural competition was held at the Upazila Parishad premises on Monday at 10 am organized by the Amtoli Upazila Administration.

Addressing the students at the event, the speakers said that Kazi Nazrul Islam was an uncompromising voice against injustice, discrimination, communalism and exploitation. The desire for equality, human dignity, non-communalism, love, freedom and a society free from exploitation has been deeply reflected in his literature and creative works. If this humane and non-communal philosophy of Nazrul is spread among the current generation of students, they will be able to play an important role in building a non-discriminatory, humane and harmonious society.

Amtoli Press Club President and Senior Journalist Md. Rezaul Karim Badal moderated the program and Amtoli Upazila Executive Officer (Additional Duty) Md. Ashrafur Islam was present as the chief guest.

Amtoli Upazila Secondary Education Officer Md. Tipu Sultan, Upazila Academic Supervisor Md. Selim Mahmud, Upazila Primary Education Officer Md. Shafiu Alam, Assistant Upazila Education Officer Md. Rafiqul Islam and Upazila Forest Officer Md. Monirul Haque were present as special guests.

In addition, Amtoli Journalists Coordination Council General Secretary Journalist Hayatuzzaman Miraj Mridha, Amtoli Upazila Branch General Secretary Journalist Abu Jihad, Headmasters and Assistant Teachers of various educational



Later, various cultural competitions including Nazrul music, poetry recitation, patriotic songs were held with the participation of students.

Md. Ashrafur Islam, in his speech as the chief guest, said: Nazrul's creations are not only for a specific time or generation; his thoughts and philosophy are equally relevant even today. It is necessary to follow Nazrul's ideals to eliminate division, discrimination and intolerance in society and establish mutual respect, harmony and human values. In addition to acquiring academic knowledge, Nazrul's life and literature can play an important role in making students responsible towards the country, people and society.

Through the program, students were urged to retain Nazrul's equality, humanity and non-communal spirit and implement it in their personal and social lives. At the same time, emphasis was placed on developing the students' talent, thinking and creativity through cultural practices.