



## PM urges youths to become entrepreneurs braving challenges

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today urged youths to become entrepreneurs braving challenges, saying the government is by their side. "You will have to go through many challenges. However, the government is here to support you and guide you. We will do our utmost to stand by you," he said at a special event titled "Youth, Startups and Promising Bangladesh" at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhavan of the

### PM inaugurates 'National Startup and Entrepreneurship Platform'

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today inaugurated the National Startup and Entrepreneurship Platform, a unified digital platform designed to support startups and entrepreneurs by providing government services, training, mentoring and

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University of Dhaka this morning. The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division, in collaboration with the University of Dhaka, organized the event. Addressing the young entrepreneurs, the prime minister said many of them had already made significant progress. He praised them for contributing to society and the country's overall development, adding that their efforts are needed for the benefit of millions of people across the country. More than 230

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## Govt. wants to ensure justice by returning Hasina: Zahed

Staff correspondent

Prime Minister's Information advisor Dr Zahed Ur Rahman today said the government wants to ensure justice through trial by bringing death-row convict Sheikh Hasina back to the country. "The government is determined bringing Sheikh Hasina to justice. Her trial process will continue in a transparent manner. The people of this country want the death penalty given to her for her crime to be upheld. At the same time, a formal request has already been sent to India for her extradition," he said. The information adviser made the remarks responding to a question at the weekly regular press briefing at the conference room of the Press Information Department

(PID) at the Secretariat here this morning. Principal Information Officer Syed Abdal Ahmed and Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Riasat Al Wasif were present at the briefing. Clarifying the government's position on Sheikh Hasina's extradition and trial process, Dr Zahed Ur Rahman said the government is not thinking about any political or geopolitical pressure. The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have already confirmed that India has been formally requested to extradite Sheikh Hasina for trial, he said, adding "We welcome her because we want to ensure justice in this country." He also said the country's people want to see the crime that

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## Preparatory meeting held in Magura to observe July Martyrs' Day

Staff correspondent

A preparatory meeting was held in Magura today to observe 'July Martyrs' Day' on July 16 and 'July Mass Uprising Day 2026' on August 5 with due solemnity. The meeting was held this morning at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room with Deputy Commissioner Md Motakabbir Ahmed in the chair. Family members of the July Martyrs, officials from various government departments, politi-

cal leaders, and other prominent figures participated in the meeting. Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) from the district's three upazilas also joined the meeting via video conference. During the meeting, various programmes were finalized to observe the days with due solemnity. The speakers emphasized the importance of observing the days while upholding the spirit of the July Mass Uprising. They sought cooperation from all to ensure the successful observance of the days

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### Govt. steps up embankment repairs, riverbank protection and waterlogging mitigation: Azad

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Water Resources Forhad Hossain Azad said today the government has intensified measures to repair embankments, protect riverbanks and address waterlogging across the country.

"The government is focusing not only on emergency disaster response but also on long-term sustainable solutions. Measures are being implemented to reduce future flood damage through improved river management, embankment strengthening, modernisation of sluice gates, waterlogging mitigation and flood control infrastructure," he said. Speaking at a press briefing following an inter-ministerial meeting at the Department of Information conference room in the Secretariat, the state minister said more than 700,000 geo-bags had already been supplied to vulnerable areas for emergency riverbank protection and embankment preservation.

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### Judiciary's strength rests on collective efforts: Justice Ashfaque

Staff correspondent

Justice Md Ashfaque Islam of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court today said the strength and independence of the judiciary rest on the collective efforts of judges, lawyers and all stakeholders, expressing the hope that the Bar and the Bench would continue to work together to uphold justice. "The strength of the judiciary is not the strength of any individual judge, nor is it the strength of any individual lawyer. It is the result of our collective efforts. Therefore, I hope that the Bar and the Bench will continue to work together for the betterment of the judiciary in the future as well," he said while addressing his farewell reception organised jointly by the Office of the Attorney General and the Supreme Court Bar Association. The apex court judge on his last day on the podium said Bangladesh' constitution is not merely a document for governing the state, adding, it embodies the spirit of the nation's independence and its commitment to democracy, justice and the protection of

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### Govt gives top priority to flood victims' rehabilitation, relief: Dulu

Staff correspondent

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Asadul Habib Dulu, MP today said the government is working with the highest priority to ensure rehabilitation, relief assistance and healthcare services for people affected by floods in the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT), Cox's Bazar, Chattogram, Sylhet and other flood-hit districts. He made the remarks at a press conference held after an inter-ministerial meeting at the conference room of the Press Information Department (PID) at the Secretariat this afternoon. The minister said the meeting, organised by the Ministry of Local Government, was attended by the ministers of the ministries of Health, Agriculture and Water Resources, along with the relevant secretaries and senior officials. He said the meeting took important decisions on post-flood rehabilitation, assessment of damage to the agricultural sector, addressing health risks and the speedy reconstruction of damaged infrastructure. The minister said although severe flooding occurred in the CHT, Cox's Bazar and Chattogram regions due to heavy rainfall, floodwaters have started receding in many areas. The government's immediate priority is now to ensure the swift rehabilitation of the affected families, he added. Mentioning that 59 upazilas, 368 unions and 12 municipalities in a total of

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## Water recedes, devastation emerges across Chittagong

Staff correspondent

Floodwaters triggered by days of heavy rain and landslides have started receding across Chittagong, exposing widespread devastation. Houses have collapsed, roads have been damaged, cropland and vegetable fields have been destroyed, fish worth crores of taka have been washed away from farms, and poultry farms have suffered extensive losses. As residents return home, many are left in tears after seeing the scale of the destruction. In Satkania upazila, floodwaters began receding on Monday, allowing many people to return from government shelters. However, they found homes covered in mud, debris and garbage. Furniture and household belongings

have been damaged, while many homes have partially or completely collapsed. Shortages of food and safe drinking water have added to the suffering. According to the Satkania Upazila administration, around 1,500 people had taken shelter in government shelters as of Sunday. Of them, about 1,200 had returned home by Monday as floodwaters receded, while the rest are expected to return once conditions improve.

Satkania Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Khandaker Mahmudul Hasan said: "Floodwaters have started receding. Around 85% of the areas across the upazila's 18 unions were affected. Water has already receded from several unions, although some areas remain

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## Nationalist Cultural Alliance to Work Unitedly for Promoting Culture, Humanity and Democratic Values

■ Free Medical Camp Planned for Flood Victims; Programmes Announced for July Uprising Day

Md Omar Faruk, Special Correspondent

The first executive committee meeting of the newly formed Chattogram District unit of the Nationalist Cultural Alliance was held on Monday (13 July) at 7:00 pm in the conference hall on the second floor of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Chattogram. The meeting was presided over by the Convener of the Chattogram District unit and renowned cultural personality Dilshad Ahmed. It was conducted by Member Secretary Dr. Mohammad Isa

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## Govt adds typhoid vaccine to routine EPI from Aug 1

Staff correspondent

The government will introduce the Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) into the routine Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) from August 1, with all children aged 15 months set to receive a single dose to provide long-term protection against typhoid fever. The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has issued implementation guidelines and preparatory instructions to divisional directors, civil surgeons, chief health officers of city corporations, and upazila health and family planning officers to ensure the smooth rollout of the vaccine nationwide, said a DGHS notification. According to the notification, following the successful implementation of the National Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine Campaign in 2025, the decision to include the vaccine in the routine immunization programme was taken based on the recommendation of

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## Sarah Cooke sees Commonwealth Games as symbol of shared values

Staff correspondent

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarah Cooke has said the Commonwealth Games are something truly special and they bring together a diverse family of nations - connected by shared values of fairness, respect, and opportunity. Demographics "As this fantastic group

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## Cultural personalities, institutions get Tk 25 lakh grant in Rangpur

Staff correspondent

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs, through the district administration, has distributed a grant of Taka 25 lakh among 74 cultural personalities and 29 cultural organizations from various levels in the district. The grant was distributed as part of the government's ongoing nationwide initiative under the Ministry of Culture to patronize regional artists and support poor cultural organizations across the

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## Porijon Foundation awards scholarships to RU students

Staff correspondent

The Porijon Foundation is awarding scholarships to 122 underprivileged but meritorious students of Rajshahi University (RU). Today, Porijon Foundation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Arif Chowdhury, a US-based engineer, shared this information while discussing the scholarship program with Vice-Chancellor Professor Faridul Islam. He stated that this scholarship initiative will continue in the future as well. Also present at the discussion were Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Administration) Professor Abdul Alim, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Mamunur Rashid and Student Adviser Professor A H M Khurshid Alam, among others. The

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### HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS

Acting Editor



**Md. Neyamul Hossain**  
Acting Editor

THE Daily Bangla Sky Newspaper  
Appointing healthy with the finest with to e ageness  
rapidly beto her's boost of success.

Pavils and sunset

## Do not overload young learners

Education planners have come up with two major ideas that appear commendable on the surface, but can turn into a cause of concern at the implementation phase. The first is a set of draft guidelines from the primary and mass education ministry, which suggests that materials to be taught in every class from one to five should be designed after defining what a child should know and be able to do by the end of class five. The second is the National Curriculum and Textbook Board’s plan, as reported by Prothom Alo, to design the content of four new textbooks—two for class four and two for class six. Together, they show a system being overhauled, perhaps for the right reasons.

In Bangladesh’s primary schools, curricula are often built around what teachers can cover, rather than what pupils can learn. The habit of measuring progress by pages completed, rather than skills acquired, has produced generations of pupils who can recite a textbook passage without being able to write an original paragraph, or repeat a multiplication table without applying it to a word problem. Therefore, it is a sensible corrective that every class should produce “one observable learner action”—reading, writing, solving and explaining—and that every textbook will come with a teacher guide, a remedial pathway and an assessment checklist. Also, countries that have improved learning outcomes at scale did so by prioritising reading and arithmetic in the first three years of school, before introducing more ambitious content. Bangladesh’s proposal to treat class three as a “bridge” between learning to read and reading to learn follows the same logic and is one of the more precise ideas. However, one real cause for concern is that students may end up overburdened. Where the proposed reform gets heavier is the second half: the growing list of new subjects. For class four, there’s a sports textbook that teaches eight disciplines, from badminton to martial arts, alongside first aid and “sport and mental well-being;” a culture textbook cataloguing folk songs, regional dress, minority languages and festivals. For class six, there’s a technical-education primer built around dignifying manual skills; and “Learning with Happiness,” a subject devoted to gratitude, good company and the avoidance of bad influences. These lessons are important in a culturally diverse country as ours, and also because many children spend too little time in physical activity here. Besides, vocational dignity is a serious economic proposition in a country that still undervalues technical skill relative to white-collar credentials. But four new subjects, arriving at the same moment as a wholesale redesign of the core curriculum, may overload students. Materials should not become too text-heavy or packed with difficult concepts before learners are ready. Textbook-writing committees need a sharp sense of what actually resonates with young learners. The risk is not that any particular book is badly conceived. It is that the weight of ambition sometimes outpaces the system’s ability to teach it well. Therefore, the motto should be fix what fails, and assess it honestly.

## PM urges youths to become

student entrepreneurs from eight universities, along with many successful entrepreneurs, attended the event. Sharing a glimpse of his life, the premier said, “At one stage, I ventured into business to earn a decent living. But shortly after starting, I became actively involved in politics. Realizing that it was not possible to pursue both at the same time, I chose to devote myself entirely to politics.” Recalling the persecution he faced in the past, he said, “To move forward, I had to endure inhumane persecution. I had to go through many tests of patience. But today, Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah, I have reached this position.” Addressing young entrepreneurs, the Prime Minister said, “Your journey will also be very challenging. You will have to overcome many challenges. But we will stand by your side. I do not know how much we will be able to do, but we will make our utmost effort to support you, Insha’Allah.” Referring to a recent innovation event held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center, he said, “It reminded me of the science fairs we enjoyed in our childhood. Students from schools across the country showcased a wide range of innovative projects they had developed. I also recently attended another event where 22 lakh primary school students from across the country took part in various sports competitions.”

He added, “Politics often leaves me discouraged. But after attending those two events and seeing those children, my disappointment disappeared and I felt much more confident. Today, after listening to your presentations and seeing your work, my confidence has grown even stronger.” Tarique Rahman said, “As a politician, I have goals and objectives. My party has plans. We are entrusted with running the country, so we think constantly about its future and about every sector. We have worked day and night to bring positive change.” “After seeing you today and the children at those two events, I feel confident that we will be able to hand over responsibility to a capable new generation. You will be able to continue advancing the country from where we leave off. With that hope and firm belief in you, I conclude my remarks,” he added. Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam and Prime Minister’s Adviser on Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Rehan Asif Asad also addressed the event. Acting ICT Division Secretary Md. Mamunur Rashid Bhuiyan, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr. A.B.M. Obaidul Islam, and Prof Dr. Md. Morshed Hasan Khan of the university’s Marketing Department, who is also a member of the event management committee, also spoke. After the programme, the Prime Minister visited the startup exhibition stalls on the premises of the Senate Bhaban, inspected the innovative projects and technology-based initiatives and exchanged views with the entrepreneurs. The event, held under the slogan “Let’s Build the Nation Through Startups, Bangladesh First,” began with recitations from the religious scriptures. A documentary on Bangladesh’s startup ecosystem was screened followed by a session titled “Not a Story, But Reality,” in which successful startup founders shared their experiences. During the event, the Prime Minister officially launched the National Startup and Entrepreneurship Platform (startup.ictd.gov.bd), an initiative of the ICT Division aimed at connecting young entrepreneurs, ensuring access to necessary resources, and providing overall support. He also took part in an engaging open discussion with students on startup and entrepreneurship development. To further encourage innovation and entrepreneurship among young people, the Prime Minister presented grant cheques to representatives of six selected startups. Lutfunnesa Meghna, founder of Rafiha Fashion House, a company working to promote Bangladesh’s traditional Jamdani textile, informed the Prime Minister that she had applied for financial assistance from the ministry. In response, the Prime Minister immediately handed her a grant cheque as well. The programme was organized to integrate young people’s innovative ideas, creativity and entrepreneurial potential

# Why must our streets flood even after so much investment?

## Md. Neyamul Hossain

Every monsoon, the same cities flood again, and every year the response is the same—more drains, more concrete, more contracts. But the underlying hydrological realities are rarely accounted for. Our cities build drains while simultaneously destroying the natural channels meant to receive excess water. From Khulna to Dhaka to Chattogram, among the cities most battered by the ongoing heavy rainfall, the root causes are strikingly similar, even though each city likes to treat its waterlogging as a local emergency requiring its own emergency response. But none of the situations is unique. It is the same failure repeated in three different regions. And three common reasons can be attributed to this failure. First, rapid siltation has raised their surrounding riverbeds, reducing the effectiveness of gravity-fed drainage, particularly during high tide. In Khulna, rivers that once flowed well below the city’s drainage outlets now rise to, or even above, those levels during peak tide, meaning stormwater has nowhere to drain naturally. Water will never flow uphill, no matter how many new pipes are laid to encourage it to try. Second, natural canals—the arteries that once carried excess water away from residential areas—are being systematically encroached upon, narrowed, and often converted into rigid concrete boxes, drastically reducing their carrying capacity. A natural waterway that once adapted to season.

into the country’s mainstream development. eveloping a new generation of entrepreneurs and integrating the innovative potential of young people and women into the country’s economic progress has become a national priority. In line with this vision, the current government’s 2026 election manifesto has placed special emphasis on startup and entrepreneurship development to promote economic growth, job creation and technological transformation. Meanwhile, a Tk 500 crore Startup Fund has already been established for promising entrepreneurs, which is expected to play a significant role in financing and expanding innovative ventures.

## PM inaugurates 'National Startup

investment opportunities under one umbrella. The prime minister launched the platform at a special programme titled ‘Youth, Startup and Promising Bangladesh’ at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban of the University of Dhaka this morning. The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division organised the event in collaboration with Dhaka University, with the slogan, ‘Let’s build the nation through startups, Bangladesh first.’ The platform aims to integrate the innovative ideas, creativity and entrepreneurial potential of the country’s youth into the mainstream of national development.

A documentary on Bangladesh’s startup ecosystem was screened at the outset of the programme. The event also featured an experience-sharing session titled ‘Golpo Noy Shotyi’ (True Stories, Not Fables), where successful startup founders shared their entrepreneurial journeys. Later, the prime minister joined an open discussion with university students on startups and entrepreneurship and distributed grant cheques among six selected entrepreneurs. He was also presented with a commemorative crest. Speakers at the programme said the National Startup and Entrepreneurship Platform would serve as a national digital launchpad for entrepreneurs.

Through the integrated platform, entrepreneurs will be able to access government support programmes, application services, training, mentoring, investment opportunities, partner organisations and other essential services from a single point. They said nurturing a new generation of entrepreneurs by harnessing the innovative potential of youth and women has become a national priority.

In line with this vision, the government’s Election Manifesto 2026 has accorded special importance to startup and entrepreneurship development to accelerate economic growth, create employment and promote technological transformation. As part of the initiative, the government has already formed a Tk 500 crore Startup Fund to finance and support promising innovative ventures.

Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam and the Prime Minister’s Adviser on Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Rehan Asif Asad attended the function as special guests. Acting Secretary of the ICT Division Md Mamunur Rashid Bhuiyan delivered the introductory speech, while Professor Dr Md Morshed Hasan Khan of DU Marketing Department and a member of the programme management committee delivered the welcome address. DU Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr ABM Obaidul Islam delivered the vote of thanks.

## Judiciary's strength rests

human dignity.” It is the responsibility of the judiciary to uphold that commitment. A judge’s loyalty is not to any individual, group or authority. Rather, a judge’s allegiance is to the constitution, the law and his or her own conscience,” he added. Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus Kazol and Supreme Court Bar Association President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon spoke on the illustrious judicial career of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam. His colleague judges from both the divisions of the Supreme Court and a good number of lawyers attended the function, among others.

Born on July 15, 1959, Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam obtained his LLB (Hons), and LL.M from University of Dhaka. He was enrolled as an Advocate of the District Court and the High Court Division of the Supreme Court in 1983 and 1985 respectively. Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam was elevated as Additional Judge of the High Court Division on August 27, 2003 and appointed Judge of the same division on August 27, 2005. He was elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on December 8, 2022.

## Water recedes, devastation

inundated and many roads are still under water. As people return home, we are preparing a list of damaged houses. If there is no further rainfall, we hope the water will recede from all areas within the next few days.” Thousands of people remain stranded in parts of Banshkhalī. Saif Anwar, a resident of Chhanua union, said many people had returned only to find their homes destroyed.

“Many poor families are crying after losing everything. Government relief has been inadequate, and many affected residents have not received any assistance. Daily wage earners have lost their livelihoods, leaving them in an extremely vulnerable situation,” he said. Shafakat Hossain Chatgami, a resident of Gandamara union, said several unions, including Gandamara and Chhanua, remain under water, forcing many families to stay in their damaged homes instead of moving to shelters. Banshkhalī UNO Md Ruhul Amin said around 30,000 people in the upazila remain affected by floodwaters. “If there is no more rain over the next few days, we expect the water to recede further. Many people have already started returning home. More than 4,000 houses have collapsed, according to our preliminary estimate. Our teams are working to prepare a detailed damage assessment,” he said.

Flooding and waterlogging have affected 16 upazilas, including Chittagong city. The affected areas include Chittagong city, Mirsarai, Sitakunda, Fatikchhari, Raozan, Rangunia, Hathazari, Satkania, Patiya, Chandanaish, Lohagara, Sandwip, Boalkhalī, Anwara, Banshkhalī and Karnaphuli. A total of 122 unions and localities have been affected, with Banshkhalī and Satkania among the worst-hit areas. Thirteen people have died and 12 others have been injured in flood- and landslide-related incidents. Currently, 16,821 people are staying in 415 shelters. Chittagong Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Zahidul Islam Miah said the district administration had distributed 684 tonnes of rice and Tk62.5 lakh in cash assistance as of Monday. The administration had requested 622 tons of rice and Tk1.15 crore in relief and will continue distributing assistance in the coming days.

## Govt. wants to ensure

Sheikh Hasina committed be tried and the death sentence that has already been given to her be upheld and implemented. The adviser said during the interim government, the ICT Act was reformed according to very modern and global standards. If Sheikh Hasina wants, she will get the opportunity to defend herself by bringing the best foreign lawyers in the world, he said. Dr Zahed said there is also an opportunity to have foreign observers and record the entire trial process with video cameras. “All processes will be conducted through a completely transparent trial. However, if Sheikh Hasina can prove herself innocent in court, that she is not a criminal - in that case, the court can also give any other order. That is why I am saying that the government wants to give justice to a person who destroyed the state. Justice has to be ensured in this way,” he said. Regarding the court’s ban on the dissemination of Sheikh Hasina’s statements through the media and social media, Dr Zahed said this restriction is not an executive order or a government decision but a court directive. As the executive body responsible for running the state and enforcing the law, the government’s responsibility is to implement this court directive, he said. The information adviser said if any political party or media worker feels that their rights are being violated by

river is clogged, degraded, or poorly connected, the whole network will fail. One can see this pattern behind Khulna’s recurring waterlogging crises in recent years, and it is the same pattern playing out in Dhaka and Chattogram. Authorities keep treating waterlogging as if it is a localised engineering issue—a pipe problem here, a pump problem there—when it is, in fact, a basin-wide failure of hydrological management. Each new drainage project treats the symptom in isolation, while the disease—continued degradation of our network of rivers, canals, and wetlands—is left untreated. There is also another cost of this approach that is rarely considered: the erosion of public trust. Residents watch hundreds of crores committed to drainage works, endure months of navigating dug-up roads and disrupted traffic, and then watch the very same streets flood the next monsoon. When the promised relief never arrives, they are naturally left questioning the justification behind causing such disruptions, and whether these projects are meant to address the problem at all. Right now, as we are inundated with images of waterlogged streets across Bangladesh’s cities, such scepticism is natural.

Going forward, authorities should abandon piecemeal pipe-laying in favour of what might be called a “living river” approach, treating urban drainage and natural river systems as a single connected ecosystem rather than separate engineering problems. In practice, this means three things. Wetland protection laws must be strictly enforced rather than routinely waived for development, because every wetland paved over is a retention capacity permanently removed from the system. The narrowing and boxing-in of natural canals must stop, and where it has already happened, canals must be restored to their original carrying capacity. Outfall rivers also need engineered sediment-bypass systems to keep them functioning as gravity-fed drainage outlets, rather than as silt-choked dead ends, so that the water a city’s drains collect has somewhere to go.

None of this is exotic engineering. Sediment management, wetland retention, and canal restoration are well-understood approaches used successfully elsewhere in the region. What is missing in Bangladesh is not technical knowledge but institutional willingness to treat a river’s health as infrastructure in its own right, deserving the same budget line and the same long-term maintenance commitment as a concrete drain.

This also requires coordination across the agencies that currently work in isolation. City corporations lay drains, water development authorities manage rivers, and land administration bodies oversee decisions that often allow the encroachments that narrow canals in the first place—often without speaking to one another. A living-river approach cannot work as long as the agency building a drain, for instance, has no control over the wider system that determines whether it can function effectively. Real reform will require all these agencies to plan and work together, with a basin-level central unit to be held accountable for any unexpected outcomes.

Until the authorities manage urban drains and natural waterways as one connected system, Bangladesh’s multi-crore drainage projects will remain ineffective when they are needed most.

this order, they can go to court and challenge it. If the court lifts the ban, everyone will have to obey the laws of the state, he added. About the role of political parties in the constitutional amendment and reform process, he said BNP has made it clear before and after the elections that it will work on the basis of the ‘July Charter’ signed in parliament. However, the adviser said, BNP had a ‘note of dissent’ on some issues of the charter, including the formation of the upper house, which they informed the people in advance and took the election mandate.

He called upon the opposition party to participate in this dialogue and the parliamentary process instead of getting involved in debate on the referendum on constitutional amendment. Dr Zahed said the opposition should try to include their demands in the amendment through discussions and they should present their arguments before the people in parliament. This is how the electoral system or democracy works, he added. Regarding floods and waterlogging in different parts of the country, Dr Zahed said, “What is happening in Dhaka and Chattogram cities after a few hours of rain is not a flood, but waterlogging caused by long-term unplanned urbanisation.” He said although the previous government spent thousands of crores of taka on various mega projects, only a small fraction of it has been implemented, which is mainly the result of graft and unplanned development. The current government has started anew to resolve this structural crisis, he said.

## Four more RMG

Ltd. in Gazipur earned 88 points under the same rating system. Karim Textiles Limited, located in Kaliakoir, Gazipur, received Gold certification with 73 points under LEED O+M: Existing Buildings v4.1, and Karim Tex Limited in Dhamrai, Dhaka, achieved Silver certification with 53 points under LEED O+M: Existing Buildings v4. Bangladesh also continues to dominate the global rankings for green garment factories, with 53 of the world’s top 100 highest-scoring LEED-certified factories located in the country.

## Nationalist Cultural Alliance to

Chowdhury. The meeting discussed the organisation’s future plans, organisational activities and several contemporary issues in detail.

Among those present were Dr. Jubayer Al Mahmud, environmentalist Mohammad Ali Shahin, Engineer Mohammad Kamruzzaman, Mahbub Sumon, Altaf Hossain, Mousumi Chowdhury, Engineer Kamrul Hasan, Engineer Abul Bashar, Touhidul Islam Rana, Kamrul Hasan Riyad, Fawzia Sharmin Shampa, Nadia Tannin, Dr. Ziaul Haque, Mohammad Ilias (Ilu), Shihab Uddin Riyad, Dr. Harun, Dr. Raihan Uddin, Dr. Arfatul Islam Mizbah, Dr. Abhi Bhowmik, Samia Ahmed Chowdhury, Mohammad Forkan and other members of the executive committee.

The meeting adopted several important decisions to strengthen and expand the organisational activities. Considering the recent flood situation in South Chattogram and the sufferings of the affected people, the organisation decided to organise a free medical camp in the flood-hit areas to provide healthcare services and humanitarian assistance.

The committee also approved a series of programmes to observe July Uprising Day on 5 August. The programmes include a discussion meeting, screening of a documentary on incidents of repression during the previous government’s tenure in Chattogram, and a painting competition titled “July Revolution” for children and adolescents.

Speakers at the meeting said the Nationalist Cultural Alliance would work in a united manner to promote culture, humanity and democratic values, while strengthening its role as a people-oriented organisation. They also emphasised expanding humanitarian initiatives alongside cultural activities, particularly during times of national crises and natural disasters.



## 53 of 100 top green factories now in Bangladesh

Staff correspondent

Four more ready-made garment (RMG) factories have recently achieved the internationally recognized Leed (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. With this, the number of Leed-certified garment factories in the country has risen to 290. Among these, 125 are Platinum, 145 are Gold, and the rest are Silver and Certified. Most remarkably, 53 of the world's top 100 highest-scoring

Leed-certified factories are now located in Bangladesh. This is an unparalleled achievement compared to any other country in the world, reflecting Bangladesh's leadership in sustainable industrialization. Mohiuddin Rubel, founder and CEO of Bangladesh Apparel Voice, shared this information on social media. Among the four newly certified factories, two achieved Platinum, one Gold, and one Silver certification: Canvas Garments Private Limited, located in the North Nasirabad

Industrial Area of Chattogram, achieved Platinum certification with 90 points under the Leed O+M: Existing Buildings v4.1 rating system. Matrix Sweaters Limited, located in Chowrasta, Gazipur, also secured Platinum certification with 88 points under the same rating system. Meanwhile, Karim Textiles Limited in Kaliakair, Gazipur, achieved Gold certification with 73 points. Karim Tex Limited in Dhamrai, Dhaka, secured Silver certification with 53 points. Leed

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SSC in January, HSC in June from next academic year

Staff correspondent

The government has undertaken an initiative to reschedule the country's public examinations to make the academic calendar more time befitting and better aligned with international standards. Under the plan, the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and equivalent examinations will be held in January, while the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent examinations will take place in June from the next academic year. Education Minister Dr. A N M Ehsanul Hoque Milon told parliament today. He disclosed the plan while replying to a starred question from treasury bench member Lutfur Rahman (Cox's Bazar-3) in the House. The day's sitting resumed with Deputy Speaker Barrister Kayser Kamal in the chair. The minister said the move is aimed at gradually bringing greater consistency between the beginning of the academic year and the schedule of public examinations, while reducing the loss of valuable academic time for students. He said the govern

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## No affected family to be deprived of relief: State Minister Aninda

Staff correspondent

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Aninda Islam Amit on Tuesday said no flood-affected family in Cox's Bazar would be deprived of relief and rehabilitation assistance as the government has allocated additional relief materials and cash support to meet the needs of those affected. Speaking to reporters after distributing relief among flood victims in Jhilongja Union of Cox's Bazar Sadar, the state minister said the government had stood by the flood-hit people from the very beginning and would continue extending all necessary assistance until normalcy was restored. Natural Disasters He said a coordination meeting held at the office of the Cox's Bazar deputy commissioner on Monday reviewed the flood situation, ongoing relief operations and rehabilitation plans.

The meeting, attended by district and upazila administrations, local lawmakers and officials of different government agen-

cies, also decided to provide additional allocations for every upazila based on local demand to ensure assistance reaches all affected families. Amit said the government's objective, under the directives of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, was not limited to emergency relief distribution but also to restoring the normal lives of affected people as quickly as possible. He said rehabilitation efforts would include repairing damaged houses, rebuilding roads, bridges and culverts, restoring educational and religious institutions, and rapidly assessing losses in agriculture, fisheries and livestock to implement appropriate recovery measures. Referring to fatalities caused by landslides during the recent floods, the state minister warned that living on hill slopes remained extremely dangerous. He said the government planned to rehabilitate people residing in high-risk areas by providing land and housing in safer locations. Stressing the importance of public awareness, he urged the media to play an

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## 27 robber gang members surrender to Coast Guard with arms, ammunition

Staff correspondent

A total of 27 members of the notorious "Chhoto Jahangir Bahini" including its chief surrendered to the Bangladesh Coast Guard in the Sundarbans in Chapulia Canal area of Mongla upazila in Bagerhat district on Monday. Local business directory They surrendered before the Coast Guard around 5 pm with some locally and foreign-made firearms and ammunition, Coast Guard West Zone (Mongla) Zone Commander Captain Mohammad Mesbahul Islam said on Tuesday. During the surrender, three foreign-made firearms, one eight-shot shotgun, one four-shot shotgun, five locally made single-barrel guns, 15 locally manufactured pipe guns, two Chinese-made pipe guns, 340 rounds of live ammunition and 55 rounds of spent cartridges were deposited. Gang chief Jahangir Sheikh, 45, was among them. All of them hailed from different areas of Bagerhat, Khulna and Pirojpur districts. According to Coast Guard officials, Chhoto Jahangir gang had long been involved in robbery in the Sundarbans and was accused of kidnapping fishermen and forest

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## HSC examinees block roads in Dhaka, demand suspension of exams amid floods

Staff Correspondent

A section of Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinees staged demonstrations and blocked roads in parts of the capital on Tuesday, demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dr. A N M Ehsanul Haque Milon over the continuation of examinations amid adverse weather and alleged errors in question papers. The protesters began demonstrations around 11:30am at Science Laboratory intersection and almost simultaneously in Uttara, causing major disruptions to traffic and suffering for commuters. Earlier, a group of examinees announced blockades at several locations including Science Laboratory intersection, Shahbagh, Uttara and Mirpur through a social media platform named "Shikharthi Oikya" (Student Unity), demanding the minister's resignation. At Science Laboratory intersection, the blockade halted vehicular movement on roads connecting Shahbagh, Mohammadpur and Mirpur. In Uttara, students from different colleges took position on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in front of the BNS building, bringing traffic to a standstill. Airport Zone Assistant Commissioner of Traffic (Uttara Division) HM Hasibur Rahman said some students blocked the road in front of the BNS building and no vehicles were able to move. "At this moment, they have blocked Dhaka-Mymensingh highway. Vehicles on both sides are stranded. We requested them to clear the road after speaking with them, but they are not listening," he said. The sudden blockade brought much of Uttara to a halt with outbound international travellers facing particular difficulties. Police were also deployed at the scene. HSC examinees block roads in Dhaka, demand suspension of exams amid floods. Protesters at

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## Can exotic mangoes rewrite the future of Bangladesh's coastal farming?

Staff correspondent

For decades, Bangladesh's coastal farmers have lived with a stubborn reality. Saline soil, prolonged waterlogging and the growing impacts of climate change have steadily narrowed their crop choices, leaving many vulnerable to repeated production losses. Demographics Now, a research initiative in Patuakhali is challenging that assumption with mangoes. Scientists at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) say they have successfully grown and evaluated 32 mango varieties, including several exotic cultivars, under the saline and waterlogged condition of the southern coast, raising hopes that commercial mango cultivation. The findings come from BARI's Regional Horticulture Research Centre at Lebukhali in Dumki upazila, where researchers have spent years testing whether improved mango varieties from around the world can adapt to the country's coastal environment. If the results continue over multiple growing seasons, researchers believe the initiative could diversify farming, increase rural incomes and eventually create export opportunities. A different future for coastal agriculture Bangladesh's coastal belt has traditionally been regarded as unsuitable for many high-value fruit crops because of rising soil salinity and seasonal waterlogging. Climate change has only intensified those constraints. The BARI research seeks to turn those limitations into opportunities by identifying varieties capable of thriving where conventional orchards struggle. During the 2024-25 season, scientists evaluated 31 exotic

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## US-Bangla Airlines to resume Dhaka-Kathmandu flights from September

Staff correspondent

US-Bangla Airlines is set to resume scheduled flights on the Dhaka-Kathmandu route from September, ending an eight-year suspension of its services on the sector. Initially, the private carrier plans to operate four flights a week using Boeing 737-800 aircraft. Confirming the development, US-Bangla Airlines General Manager (Public Relations) Kamrul Islam said preparations for launching the service are in the final stage and a formal announcement will be made soon. The airline's return to the Dhaka-Kathmandu route after nearly eight years is expected to increase competition in air travel between Bangladesh and Nepal, as only a limited number of air

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## Trauma Link Launches Emergency First Response Service in Sitakunda to Save Road Accident Victims

■ 63 Volunteers Receive First Aid Kits, Vests, ID Cards and Training Certificates

Md. Omar Faruk, special correspondent Sitakunda, Chattogram

To ensure immediate first aid for road accident victims, the voluntary organization Trauma Link has officially launched its emergency response service in Sitakunda. Implemented in partnership with the Rahim Family Foundation, the initiative initially covers a 15-kilometre stretch of the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway, from Fakirhat to Baro Aulia. The inauguration ceremony was held on Monday afternoon at the King of Kumira Community Centre in Kumira, Sitakunda. During the event, members of the Volunteer First Response Team were provided with first aid kits, safety vests, ID cards and training certificates. A total of 63 trained volunteers officially joined Trauma Link's emergency response network. According to the organizers, Trauma Link plans to expand its operations across the entire 45-kilometre highway section within Sitakunda by dividing the route into three operational zones. Upon receiving reports of road accidents, trained volunteers will immediately reach the scene to provide lifesaving first aid and continue assisting victims until ambulances and medical professionals arrive. The programme was hosted by Zubayer Mahmud, Area Coordinator of Trauma Link. Among the distinguished guests were Md. Belal Hossain, Senior Station Officer of Sitakunda Fire Service; Master Md. Abul Kashem, Managing

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## 101 parks to be constructed in country: Housing Minister

Staff correspondent

The government has planned to construct 101 parks across the country to address the acute shortage of parks, playgrounds and open spaces. Housing and Public Works Minister Zakaria Taher disclosed the information in Parliament on Tuesday while replying to a scripted question from opposition bench lawmaker Nurul Islam (Chapainawabganj-3). Executive Branch "The Housing and Public Works Ministry has planned to build 101 parks across the country to address the acute shortage of parks, playgrounds, and open spaces," he said. In response, the minister said data collection is currently underway to implement the plan. He said the Development Project Proposals (DPP) are awaiting approval for the several projects to construct Park at Anwara Udyan at Farmgate, Dhaka, develop playgrounds in three places- Rampura, Khilgaon High School and Khilgaon Rehabilitation Area, and construct Khilgaon community centre including Eidgaon and park. Highlighting recent progress, Zakaria Taher said the construction of two parks in Chattogram and two in Cox's Bazar, the modernisation of Ramna Park in Dhaka, have already been completed and the facilities have been handed over for public use. He added that construction of another park is currently underway in Tarakanda of Mymensingh district. The minister said the government is giving top priority to environmental protection in all development activities to promote planned urbanisation. He said special emphasis is being given on the construction of multistorey buildings to ensure optimum land use through proper planning and research. The government is also encouraging the use of advanced construction technologies, environmentally friendly building materials, energy-efficient systems, rainwater harvesting, dedicated sewage treatment plants and adequate green

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## Zero Point Erupts in Protest After Attack on Journalist Sajeeb in Chhagalnaiya: Human Chain and Rally Held

Jahangir Alom, Staff Reporter

Chhagalnaiya has erupted in fierce protests following a brutal attack and attempted murder of Nizam Uddin Sajeeb, the Chhagalnaiya correspondent for Mohona Television, while he was performing his professional duties. Local journalists organized a human chain and protest rally demanding exemplary punishment for those involved. The program, organized by the 'Chhagalnaiya Press Club,' took place on Monday (July 13, 2026) at 10:00 AM at the Zero Point of Chhagalnaiya municipal town. The event commenced with a recitation from

the Holy Quran by Salim Ullah Bhuiyan, the correspondent for Dainik Nagorik Bhabna. The opening remarks were delivered by M. Nurul Amin, the Chhagalnaiya correspondent for Dainik Gonokantho. The protest rally was presided over by Md. Sheikh Kamal, former President of Chhagalnaiya Press Club and correspondent for Dainik Ittefaq. Moderated jointly by ABM Nizam Uddin, Associate Editor of Dainik Digital Somoy, and Nazrul Islam Chowdhury, correspondent for Dainik Feni, the rally was addressed by former Press Club Presidents Kabir Ahmed Siddique, Md. Mostafa, Abul Hasan,

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বাংলাদেশ  
পল্লী বিদ্যুতায়ন বোর্ড

আলোকিত গ্রাম, উন্নতির বাংলাদেশ

৮০ টি  
পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ  
সমিতি

বিদ্যুৎ বিল নিয়ে  
অভিযোগ আছে?

বিদ্যুৎ বিল সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো অভিযোগ  
জানাতে আমাদের অফিসিয়াল  
চ্যানেলের মাধ্যমে যোগাযোগ করুন।

অভিযোগ জানান  
আমাদের অফিসিয়াল  
হেল্পলাইন

হেল্পলাইন নম্বর  
১৬৮৯৯  
(সারা দেশে ২৪/৭)

সরাসরি উপস্থিত হোন  
সংশ্লিষ্ট পল্লী বিদ্যুৎ অফিসে  
আপনার অভিযোগ সর্বোচ্চ  
গুরুত্ব সহকারে সমাধান  
করা হবে

গ্রাহক অভিযোগ  
নিরসনে আমরা  
সদা তৎপর

সর্বোচ্চ গ্রাহক সেবা  
নিশ্চিত আমাদের  
বন্ধপরিচর

বিদ্যুৎ আছে, উন্নয়ন আছে আলোকিত হোক প্রতিটি ঘর

## 53 of 100 top green

certification is one of the most globally accepted benchmarks for eco-friendly buildings and industrial factories.A factory achieves this certification by meeting strict standards across key indicators, including energy savings, efficient water use, carbon emission reduction, waste management, the utilization of natural light and ventilation, a healthy work environment, and sustainable infrastructure.Currently, major global fashion brands in Europe, the United States, and beyond are prioritizing eco-friendly factories.Consequently, Leed certification is not just a prestigious accolade; it is one of the most powerful tools for staying ahead in the highly competitive international market.Bangladesh is the world's second-largest apparel exporter. Over the past decade, local entrepreneurs have not only focused on scaling export volumes but have also invested heavily in building green production systems.Investing in green factories is reducing electricity and water consumption, lowering long-term production costs, and decreasing carbon emissions.At the same time, ensuring a healthy and safe work environment for workers has boosted the confidence of international buyers.Experts point out that sustainable production is no longer a luxury or an added bonus in the global market; it has become a primary requirement for buyers. In this reality, Bangladesh's progress will play a critical role in retaining future export markets."The addition of four new Leed-certified factories is a matter of great pride for Bangladesh's apparel industry," said Mohiuddin Rubel, founder and CEO of Bangladesh Apparel Voice."With 290 Leed-certified factories—including 125 Platinum and 145 Gold—and 53 of the world's top 100 highest-scoring factories located here, it proves that Bangladesh is leading the world in sustainable and green manufacturing."International buyers no longer just want products at competitive prices; they expect the production process to be eco-friendly and responsible. Bangladeshi entrepreneurs have successfully adapted to this shift. Investing in green factories improves energy and water efficiency, cuts carbon emissions, and ensures a safer, healthier workplace for workers."He further emphasized, "To sustain this achievement, it is not enough to focus only on large industries; we must also bring medium and small factories under the green transition. Simultaneously, we must prioritize increasing productivity, leveraging technology, developing skilled human resources, and diversifying products. Only then can Bangladesh's garment industry strengthen its competitive edge in the global market and establish itself as a long-term global role model for sustainable production."Dominance in global listHaving 53 of the world's top 100 highest-scoring Leed-certified factories is a clear testament to the country's industrial capability.Not just in sheer numbers, but multiple factories in Bangladesh consistently rank among the world's best for achieving the highest scores.Globally, there is a growing emphasis on reducing carbon emissions, combating climate change, and promoting green manufacturing. The European Union's new environmental regulations, carbon-related restrictions, and the supply chain sustainability mandates of international brands present both new opportunities and increased competition for Bangladesh.According to experts, simply increasing the number of Leed certifications will not be enough.There must be further investment in boosting productivity, technological modernization, workers' skill development, product diversification, and research and innovation.At the same time, small and medium garment factories must be integrated into this green transition.

## SSC in January, HSC in

ment is also working in phases to hold public examinations even earlier in the academic year in the future as part of broader education reforms.

## No affected family to be

active role in informing people about the risks of hill settlements.The minister also said the government would take a tough stance against illegal hill cutting and encroachment, adding that influential groups would not be allowed to engage in such activities.On relief operations, he said coordinated efforts involving the district and upazila administrations, the Army, Navy, Air Force, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Coast Guard, elected representatives and private organisations had made relief distribution and rehabilitation more effective. DemographicsThe government intended to strengthen this coordination further, he added.

Replying to a question about repairing damaged sluice gates and embankments, Amit said he had already discussed the matter with the state minister responsible for the Ministry of Water Resources. He expressed hope that they would jointly visit Cox’s Bazar within the next one to two weeks to inspect the damaged infrastructure and take necessary measures.

## Can exotic mangoes rewrite

mango germplasms alongside local materials, assessing their adaptability, yield, fruit size, colour, sweetness, edible portion, storage life and disease tolerance.

Among the standout performers were six striking red-skinned varieties — Miyazaki, Lady Jane, Chiang Mai, Taiwan Red, Kuzai and King Chakapat.Red-skinned mangoes remain rare in Bangladesh, giving them strong commercial appeal.Researchers believe they could command premium prices in domestic markets while offering long-term export potential.Bigger, sweeter and available beyond the seasonsSome varieties distinguished themselves not only through appearance but also through productivity and quality.Brunei King produced exceptionally large fruits, averaging about 2.35 kilograms each — several times heavier than ordinary mangoes commonly sold in local markets.Chiang Mai recorded the highest edible portion, with about 81 percent of the fruit consisting of flesh rather than peel and seed, making it attractive for consumers and processors alike.Sada Dofala registered 26 percent total soluble solids (Brix), indicating an exceptionally sweet fruit.Chiang Mai also emerged as the highest-yielding variety, with an estimated production potential of 2.73 tonnes per hectare. Kingston Pride and Katimon also demonstrated encouraging productivity under coastal conditions.Researchers identified another commercially significant trait in the Chokanon variety: off-season fruiting.Bangladesh's mango season usually runs from May to August. A variety capable of producing fruit outside that window could allow growers to reach markets when supplies are limited and prices are considerably higher. DemographicsPost-harvest performance has also been encouraging. Banana Mango remained in good condition for nine to ten days at room temperature, increasing its suitability for transport to distant markets and, potentially, export.

Beyond mangoesThe research programme extends well beyond a single fruit crop.Scientists are simultaneously developing production technologies for year-round guava cultivation in waterlogged areas and for mango, guava, dragon fruit, malta and pomelo under saline conditions.The broader objective is to diversify agriculture across Bangladesh's coastal belt, reducing farmers' dependence on a limited number of traditional crops while improving resilience against climate-related shocks.

The research centre is also working directly with farmers by providing improved saplings, technical training, orchard management support and advice on disease control and modern fruit production.

Farmers begin to take noticeThe research has already generated interest among growers.Md Abdul Jabbar Akand from Galachipa said he established a mango orchard on waterlogged land this year after receiving guidance from BARI.“Earlier we never imagined exotic mangoes could grow in our coastal con-

ditions,” he said. “Now, after seeing the growth of the trees and the fruiting, we are much more confident.”Sufia Khatun, a farmer from Bauphal, said she is planning to expand from guava into mango cultivation if quality planting materials become available.Md Kabir Mridha of Kalapara said fruit cultivation on saline land had reduced production risks but added that wider success would depend on farmers having reliable access to improved saplings, technical assistance and stable markets.Research still underwayResearchers caution that the findings remain preliminary.Senior Scientific Officer Dr Mahamuda Ratna said almost all tested varieties except MI PK-013 and MI PK-025 have shown encouraging performance in fruit quality, colour, edible portion, harvesting period and storage characteristics.However, she said recommendations for commercial cultivation would only be made after evaluations over multiple growing seasons.Principal Scientific Officer Dr Md Alimur Rahman said the ultimate goal is to identify mango varieties best suited to Bangladesh's coastal climate while developing production technologies that enable profitable fruit cultivation under saline and waterlogged conditions. Demographics

## US-Bangla Airlines to resume

lines currently operate flights on the route. GeographicReferenceUS-Bangla suspended operations on the Dhaka-Kathmandu route after the crash of Flight BS-211 at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu on March 12, 2018.

The Bombardier Dash 8-Q400 aircraft, operating from Dhaka, crashed while attempting to land, in what is considered one of the deadliest aviation accidents in Bangladesh's civil aviation history.

The move to restart flights to Kathmandu is being seen as part of US-Bangla Airlines' broader strategy to expand its international network. It follows the airline's recent plans to increase its fleet and launch new international destinations, marking another significant step in its expansion strategy.

## Trauma Link Launches

Director of MAC Corporation and noted industrialist; Lion Md. Gias Uddin, President of the Upazila Social Welfare Federation; Md. Khorshed Alam, educationist and former banker; journalist Md. Kamrul Islam Dulu; Md. Ahsan Habib, Sub-Officer of Kumira Fire Service; ASI Md. Kaiyum Mia of Baro Aulia Highway Police Station; Mohammad Hossain, Programme Manager of Trauma Link; along with representatives from various social, administrative and volunteer organizations.

Speakers highlighted that the first few minutes after a road accident are crucial for saving lives. They noted that timely first aid provided by trained volunteers can significantly improve the chances of survival before professional medical care becomes available. They also expressed optimism that Trauma Link's initiative would make a meaningful contribution to road safety and humanitarian emergency response in Sitakunda.

The programme concluded with the formal distribution of first aid kits, ID cards, safety vests and training certificates among the Volunteer First Response Team members।

## 27 robber gang members

resource collectors for ransom.

Coast Guard Media Officer Lieutenant Commander Sabbir Alam Sujan said continuous operations by the force have significantly weakened robber gangs operating in the Sundarbans, leaving them unable to continue their criminal activities.

## HSC examinees block roads in

Science Laboratory said they have three key demands: the resignation of the Education Minister, suspension of examinations until adverse weather condition improves, and an explanation over alleged errors in question papers.The students said that they were being forced to travel to examination centres through floodwaters, storms and heavy rainfall. They said large parts of Chattogram Division remained inundated, while flooding also begun affecting areas in Cumilla, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat and questioned why the examinations have not been suspended despite the situation.

## 101 parks to be constructed

spaces in urban development projects, he added. The parliamentary session resumed at around 3pm with Deputy Speaker Kayser Kamal in the chair.

## Zero Point Erupts in Protest After

and Kamrul Hasan Liton.

Other speakers included former General Secretaries Jahangir Kabir Liton and Abdul Awal Chowdhury; former Vice Presidents Md. Masum Billah Bhuiyan and Shah Alam; former Joint General Secretaries Kazi Nurul Alam Nilu and Shah Ziaul Haque Rubel; and executive members Milon Khondoker, Sepal Nath, Pinu Shikdar, M Delwar Hossain, Kofil Uddin, Ziaul Haque Bappi, Joynal Abedin, Shakhawat Patwary, and Md. Solim Ullah Bhuiyan, among others. Journalists Nurul Amin, Mitul Chowdhury, Kamrul Hasan, Kazi Md. Mohib Ullah, Abdul Halim, and other local media professionals were also present to express their solidarity. 'A Brutal Plot to Cast the Body into the River' Expressing their outrage at the rally, speakers stated, "This attack is not just on Sajeeb as an individual, but a naked assault on independent journalism and the free press as a whole."

Highlighting the brutality of the incident, the speakers added, "Armed terrorists from an illegal sand extraction syndicate aimed a revolver at journalist Sajeeb's chest and shot at him in an attempt to murder him. After severely beating him, they kicked him into the Feni River. The attackers' primary objective was to brutally murder Sajeeb and wash his body away in the river. Fortunately, local residents rushed to the spot immediately, preventing the terrorists from completing their mission."

Thanks to Administration, Warning Issued?The speakers thanked the police administration for taking immediate action and arresting two accused named in the First Information Report (FIR)—Imam Hossain and Yunus.

However, they warned that the masterminds remain at large. They demanded that the chief instigators behind the incident and the remaining armed terrorists who directly participated in the attack be swiftly identified and brought to justice. Otherwise, the journalist community warned they would be forced to announce tougher programs.

## Cultural personalities, institutions

country.Deputy Commissioner of Rangpur Mohammad Ruhul Amin distributed cheques of the grant at a function held at his conference room in the city on Monday afternoon as the chief guest. Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Md Ramiz Alam presided over the function.Additional Deputy Commissioner (Education and ICT) Md Shariful Islam, District Cultural Officer KM Arifuzzaman, Rangpur Cultural Unity Council President Mahmudunnabi Dollar, Rangpur Musical Bands Association (RAMBA) President Jahir Alam Nayan, JASAS Rangpur District President Md Nuruzzaman Manik attended the event as special guests.

## Govt gives top priority to flood

eight districts, including Sylhet, have been affected by floods, he said that according to preliminary estimates, around 609,411 families have been affected.So far, reports have confirmed the deaths of 54 people. Most of them died in land-slides, he added.

The minister said the government has already allocated Taka

1.75 crore and 3,250 metric tonnes of rice to carry out emergency relief operations in the affected areas, alongside dry food is also being distributed. In addition, Taka 20 lakh has been allocated to each affected district from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.Asadul Habib Dulu said the supply of cooked food and dry food at shelter centres is continuing, while Bangladesh Army, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and Coast Guard have been deployed for rescue operations.Speedboats and rubber boats have also been sent by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief to assist the rescue efforts, he said.

He said the relevant agencies have been assigned to undertake the rapid repair of damaged roads and infrastructure. The Roads and Highways Department will repair highways and roads, while infrastructure under the Local Government Division will also be repaired promptly, he said, adding that necessary measures will be taken to repair rural earthen roads and the food-friendly programme will continue in the flood-affected areas.

The minister said the Ministry of Health has taken necessary preparations to address various health risks, including water-borne diseases, in the post-flood period. At the same time, necessary measures will be taken to rehabilitate farmers after assessing the damage to the agricultural sector, he added.Highlighting that this year's flood is one of the worst disasters to hit the Chattogram region, the minister said for this reason, the Prime Minister has attached the highest importance to the matter, holding several meetings with the relevant ministries, divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners and providing necessary directives. He said, following the Prime Minister's directives, he will begin field visits to the flood-affected areas from Wednesday.

## Govt adds typhoid

the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group and the decision of the Inter-Agency Coordination Committee.Under the new schedule, all children aged 15 months will receive one dose of TCV at permanent and temporary EPI vaccination centres. The vaccine can also be administered during the same session as the second dose of the Measles-Rubella (MR-2) vaccine.Field workers have been instructed to identify eligible children through house-to-house visits, determine vaccine requirements, and ensure vaccination during the scheduled sessions.The directive also emphasized registering children in the Vax: EPI app, downloading vaccination cards, and updating vaccination information through the Smart Health BD/e-Tracker app after vaccine administration.

It also instructed authorities to take measures to facilitate birth registration through coordination meetings at the upazila level.Regarding vaccine management, the directive stated that five-dose vials will be used under the routine programme, and the vaccine must be stored and transported at a temperature between 2 and 8 degrees Celsius.

n accordance with the multi-dose vial policy, opened vials may be used in subsequent sessions, subject to meeting the prescribed conditions, to minimise vaccine wastage.The notification also called for strengthening awareness among parents about the typhoid vaccine through house-to-house communication, public announcements, courtyard meetings, and interpersonal communication involving local public representatives, teachers, imams, religious leaders, and community leaders.The DGHS said the programme must be implemented with the highest priority at all levels concerned to ensure long-term protection of the country's children against typhoid fever.

## Porijon Foundation

Vice-Chancellor thanked the Porijon Foundation authorities for providing the Porijon Scholarship to RU students. He presented a souvenir of appreciation to the foundation's CEO. Notably, the Porijon Foundation regularly provides scholarships to underprivileged yet meritorious RU students.

## Govt. steps up embankment repairs, riverbank

Azad expressed hope that the overall flood situation would continue to improve if favourable weather conditions persist, adding that the ministry will maintain constant monitoring of all vulnerable areas and remain prepared to respond to any emergency.He added that the Ministry of Water Resources has another 600,000 geo-bags in reserve, while a substantial stock of plastic synthetic geo-bags has also been stored for immediate deployment if required.Azad said the government has undertaken more than 1,500 emergency work packages\* in flood-prone and vulnerable areas across the country. The projects are being implemented through local Members of Parliament, district administrations and officials of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB).

Of these, nearly 500 work packages have already been completed, while work on around 1,000 others is currently underway, he said."If heavy rainfall or a fresh flood situation develops in the coming days, these geo-bags and other emergency equipment will be used immediately to prevent river erosion and protect embankments," he said.Azad said the severe flooding and waterlogging experienced in the Chattogram Division over the past week were caused by exceptionally heavy rainfall.Although Bangladesh receives an average annual rainfall of around 2,200 millimetres, record rainfall was recorded in Chattogram Division between July 6 and July 13, triggering floods in Chattogram, the Chattogram Hill Tracts and Cox's Bazar.During the period, Chattogram recorded about 1,454mm of rainfall, Bandarban 1,102mm, and Cox's Bazar 846mm, he said, describing such rainfall within a short period in a single division as an extremely rare event.The intense rainfall caused flash floods, waterlogging and widespread flooding, he added. The state minister said he, along with the Water Resources Secretary and the Director General of the Bangladesh Water Development Board, visited Chattogram on July 12 to inspect the flood situation.

They held meetings with local lawmakers, the mayor of Chattogram City Corporation, the chairman of the Chattogram Development Authority and other officials before visiting affected areas.

Azad said the inspection specifically examined whether any ongoing projects under the Ministry of Water Resources had contributed to waterlogging.He noted that the Army-supervised waterlogging mitigation project in Chattogram is about 95% complete and is expected to be handed over to the Chattogram City Corporation by the end of this year.Once completed, the project is expected to provide a long-term solution to the city's chronic waterlogging problem and significantly reduce similar incidents in the future, he said.According to the state minister, several areas of Cox's Bazar suffered the worst damage during this year's floods, with embankments and polders damaged at four locations.He said embankments were breached in Puratontkhali and Purba Para near the newly established Matarbari upazila due to intense water pressure.

emergency repair work has already begun with the participation of local residents, he said.Another embankment was damaged in Purba Mehernama, while residents in several areas cut embankments themselves to drain accumulated floodwater. Similar incidents occurred in Shilkhali, he said.Following these incidents, authorities have instructed the rapid reconstruction of damaged embankments and the rehabilitation and repair of sluice gates to improve future drainage capacity, he said.Azad said that as of 6:00am on July 14, water levels in several rivers remained above danger levels.The Kushiyara River was flowing 26 centimetres above the danger level at both the Fenchuganj station in Sylhet and the Markuli station in Sunamganj.The Surma River at Chatak was 6 centimetres above the danger level, while the Someswari River at

Kamalakanda in Netrokona was 13 centimetres above the danger mark. The Teesta River at Dalia in Nilphamari was also flowing 7 centimetres above the danger level.However, he expressed optimism that river levels are gradually receding as rainfall has decreased, and said rivers currently flowing above danger levels are expected to return to normal within the next one to two days.The state minister said all officials and employees of the Ministry of Water Resources have been instructed to remain on round-the-clock duty in affected areas.Rapid repairs and emergency protection measures are being carried out wherever embankments have been damaged, he said.He added that the ministry undertakes extensive preparations before every flood season, but this year preparedness was further strengthened in anticipation of possible extreme rainfall.

## Sarah Cooke sees Commonwealth

of athletes from Bangladesh departs for Glasgow in a few days, I wish them the very best," she said.The British High Commission in Dhaka organised a send-off reception, hosted by High Commissioner Sarah Cooke, to celebrate the Bangladeshi athletes who are set to participate in the Commonwealth Games 2026, taking place in Glasgow, Scotland later this month.

The United Kingdom is proud to once again host the Commonwealth Games, this time in the vibrant city of Glasgow in 2026, said the High Commission on Tuesday.This marks the UK's third time hosting the Games since 2014, reaffirming their commitment to the Commonwealth and to the power of sport to unite, inspire, and drive positive change. The event recognised the dedication, hard work and achievements of the Bangladeshi athletes, while conveying best wishes as they prepare to represent the nation at the Commonwealth Games.Bangladesh will be competing in four categories – athletics, boxing, artistic gymnastics and swimming. Demographics The event highlighted the strong and enduring partnership between the United Kingdom and Bangladesh, while celebrating the values of the modern Commonwealth. Alongside the Commonwealth Games athletes, the reception was attended by senior government representatives, members of the Bangladeshi Olympic Association, Heads of Mission from different High Commissions in Dhaka, and sports and media personalities.

## Kushtia Jamaat secretary relieved over employment at women's educational institution

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has relieved Sujauddin Joardar of his duties as secretary of its Kushtia district unit because he is employed at a women's educational institution, in line with a decision of the party's central leadership. Bangladeshiculture blogEnamul Haque, Ameer of Kushtia city Jamaat, has been appointed as the new district secretary.Kushtia district Jamaat Ameer Principal Khandaker AKM Ali Mohsin confirmed the development to reporters on Monday night.According to a party statement issued on Monday, the central leadership has decided that any male member (Rukon) employed at a women's educational institution cannot hold organisational responsibilities within Jamaat-e-Islami. Following the directive, Enamul Haque was assigned the post of district secretary.The statement said the decision was unanimously approved at a meeting of the district executive council held on July 13.Speaking to reporters, Sujauddin Joardar said the party's constitution bars members employed at women's educational institutions from serving as Rukon or holding responsible organisational posts.He said the policy applies nationwide following the central committee's decision, adding that he accepted the decision without any resentment.Sujauddin noted that he had joined Bagowan Dr Fazlul Haque Girls' College as a teacher before becomin district secretary. At that time, he said, the relevant provision of the party constitution had been relaxed, allowing him to serve in the post.He added that if he resigns from his teaching position, he could be reinstated to his previous organisational role.Newly appointed district secretary Enamul Haque said he was entrusted with the responsibility through a unanimous decision of the district leadership.District Ameer Khandaker AKM Ali Mohsin said the central committee's directive has led to the removal of seven party members nationwide holding similar positions while employed at women's educational institutions. He said Enamul Haque was immediately appointed as the new district secretary by unanimous decision.

## Man sentenced to death, 3 get life term in Sylhet MC College rape case

Staff correspondent

A tribunal in Sylhet on Tuesday sentenced a man to death and three others to life term imprisonment over the gang rape of a young girl in a dormitory of Sylhet MC College in 2020. The condemned convict is Saifur Rahman while the lifers are—Shah Mahbubur Rahman Rony, Tarekul Islam and Arjun Lashkar. All of the convicts were activists of banned Chhatra League. Sylhet Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge Swapan Kumar Sarkar handed down the judgment.The tribunal also acquitted four others—Ainuddin alias Ainul, Misbaul Islam alias Rajon, Rabiul and Mahfuzur Rahman.Earlier, the eight accused were brought before the court in the morning amid tight security.

According to the prosecution, a 20-year-old girl along with her husband went to Shahparan police station by a private car for roaming on March 25, 2020.On way to return home, they stopped the car in front of a shop adjacent to MC College in Tilagarh area for purchasing something.At one stage, some 5/6 young men keep the couple hostages and took them to Baluchar area where they violated the girl in turns after tying her husband up. Later, they beat up the couple and freed them after taking all belongings including cash and the private car.A case was filed with Shahparan Police Station against eight people.Later, police conducted a raid at the dormitory and recovered some weapons while the accused went into hiding. The law enforcers arrested eight people within three days of the incident.All the accused gave confessional statements before the court under section 164.

On December 3, 2020, police submitted chargesheet against them. The college authorities later expelled all the accused in the case.

## Heavy rains, waterlogging heighten dengue risk in Dhaka

Staff correspondent

Days of heavy rainfall and widespread waterlogging in the capital have heightened the risk of dengue, with stagnant water accumulating on roads, at construction sites and in residential areas, creating ideal breeding grounds for Aedes mosquitoes. The impact is becoming increasingly visible at the Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute, where the dengue unit has seen a growing number of child patients in recent days. Localbusiness directory Many children suffering from fever, weakness and other dengue symptoms have been admitted for treatment as hospitals brace for a seasonal surge in infections.Bangladesh recorded two more dengue deaths and 327 fresh hospitalisations in the 24 hours until 8:00 am on Tuesda.



# Ukraine, nine European countries launch coalition for ballistic missile defense

International Desk

Ukraine and nine European countries announced Monday the formation of a coalition to strengthen Europe's protection against ballistic missile threats, drawing on Kyiv's experience from more than four years of defending itself against Russia's full-scale invasion.

In a joint statement issued in Paris during talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the 10 countries said their goal was to build "a shared ballistic missile defense capability for Europe."

The coalition includes Ukraine, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Western Europeans

The announcement came as Zelenskyy met around two dozen European leaders to seek support for measures to counter Russia's missile attacks, which have devastated Ukraine and heightened concerns across Europe over Moscow's broader ambitions.

The leaders said they recognized "the growing threat posed by ballistic missiles," noting that such weapons are more difficult to intercept than cruise missiles or drones.

"We believe that protecting Europe requires a comprehensive solution, in the form of an integrated missile defense architecture, to deter and neutralize future missile threats," the statement said. "We recognize Ukraine's unique experience, gained through its defense against the war of aggression waged by Russia."

The statement did not provide a timeline for establishing the defense system but said the initiative would remain open to other countries.

**Putin vows stronger retaliation**

Russian President Vladimir Putin signaled no willingness to ease military pressure, pledging a strong response to Ukraine's recent long-range attacks on Russian refineries, tankers and fuel terminals, which have contributed to fuel shortages.

"Wherever they attempt to strike Russian territory, we will respond in kind, but our strikes will be several times more powerful," Putin told a meeting with pro-Kremlin activists on Monday.

At the same time, European foreign ministers met in Brussels to discuss Ukraine's defense needs and what they described as Russia's growing threat to Europe.

Zelenskyy is seeking to speed up cooperation with European partners on strengthening Ukraine's air defenses before winter, when Russia has typically intensified attacks on energy infrastructure, leaving many Ukrainians without electricity, heating and water.

He said Ukrainian officials were in Paris to present a proposed Anti-Ballistic Program and meet government leaders, national security advisers and defense companies that could participate in the project.

US President Donald Trump's announcement last week that Ukraine would receive a license to produce Patriot air defense systems was seen as a potentially significant development. However, Ukrainian officials and experts cautioned that establishing such production would likely take years, and it remains unclear how quickly a broader European missile defense system could be developed.

**Ukraine seeks to pressure Russia**

Ukraine and its European allies hope recent Ukrainian military gains will increase pressure on Russia to enter negotiations to end the war, although Moscow has shown little sign of compromise despite peace efforts backed by the Trump administration.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed the Paris meeting, calling it "a coalition of warmongers."

"They are driven by the profound delusion that it's possible to inflict a strategic defeat on our country, so this is a coalition of the deluded, a coalition of those who incite the war," he said.

Western officials and analysts say Ukraine's advances in drone technology have

recently given it an operational advantage by disrupting Russian supply lines behind the front, slowing Russia's military progress and increasing its costs.

**Ukraine reports strikes on Russian vessels**

Robert Brovdi, commander of Ukraine's Unmanned Systems Forces, said Ukrainian forces struck 105 Russian vessels in the Sea of Azov near the Crimean Peninsula between July 6 and July 13.

According to Brovdi, the targets included tankers, dry cargo ships, a ferry and tugboats.

He said the campaign forms part of Ukraine's broader strategy to isolate the Crimean Peninsula, which is experiencing its worst fuel shortage since Russia illegally annexed it in 2014, while disrupting Russian military logistics.

Crimea remains a key rear base for Russian forces occupying parts of southern Ukraine.

The claims could not be independently verified, and Russian officials did not immediately comment.

**European leaders reaffirm support**

The Paris meeting of the Coalition of the Willing, bringing together representatives from more than 30 countries and about 25 heads of state and government, underscored Europe's long-term commitment to Ukraine and sent a signal to Russia as it continues to test European resolve.

Zelenskyy's visit came shortly after the death of US Senator Lindsey Graham, one of Ukraine's strongest supporters in Washington.

Ukrainian lawmaker Oleksandr Merezhko described Graham as "the closest link between Ukraine, our president and Trump."

GeographicReference

The visit also followed a major reshuffle in Ukraine's government, including the resignation of Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko on Sunday.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot said France would summon the Russian ambassador and impose sanctions against Russian hackers over what he described as "a vast cyber campaign aimed at sabotage and espionage" targeting about 10 European countries.

Ukraine's neighbors have also continued to feel the effects of the conflict.

Moldova's Foreign Ministry said a drone launched during overnight Russian attacks on Ukraine's Odesa region crashed and exploded inside Moldovan territory, describing the incident as "serious and unacceptable."

Fresh drone attacks

Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defenses intercepted 350 Ukrainian drones heading toward Moscow since late Sunday, including 50 near the capital.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin confirmed the interceptions, while Moscow regional Governor Andrei Vorobyov said 81 drones had been shot down overnight.

He said three people were killed and three others injured in the Pionersky settlement west of Moscow.

Ukraine's Air Force, meanwhile, reported that Russia launched 134 long-range attack drones and three guided missiles against Ukraine.

In Ukraine's Odesa region, regional military administration chief Oleh Kiper said a Russian strike on port infrastructure set fire to a merchant vessel carrying fertilizer under the flag of Togo, killing five crew members and injuring 10 others.

**Russia claims to foil Ukrainian drone plot**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said it had prevented a Ukrainian plan to attack the Ukrainka air base in the far eastern Amur region and the Shagol air base in the Chelyabinsk region of the southern Urals.

According to the FSB, small drones were allegedly smuggled into Russia's Bryansk region using balloons, while larger transport drones were moved by vehicle near the targeted air bases by Ukrainian agents, who were subsequently arrested.

The announcement follows Ukraine's covert "Operation Spiderweb" a year ago, which Ukrainian officials said destroyed or damaged nearly one-third of Russia's strategic bomber fleet using drones secretly transported into Russian territory.

# Bangkok bar fire death toll rises to 30 as dozens remain hospitalized

International Desk

The death toll from a devastating fire at a music bar in Bangkok has risen to 30, while more than 70 people remain hospitalized, Thai authorities said on Tuesday.

According to Bangkok city officials, 24 of the injured are in critical condition following the blaze, which broke out late Sunday at the Rong Beer Na Ladprao bar in the northern part of the Thai capital.

Firefighters brought the fire under control after about 30 minutes, but the incident has become Bangkok's deadliest fire in nearly two decades.

The venue, which describes itself as a brewery or beer hall, has a capacity of around 600 patrons, although authorities have not confirmed how many people were inside when the fire started.



Police said many of the victims were found trapped inside windowless bathrooms, where they had apparently sought shelter from the flames.

Authorities have launched an investigation into the cause of the fire and whether the establishment complied with safety regulations.

On Tuesday, former customers, relatives and other mourners gathered at the site to pay tribute to the victims, leaving flowers and handwritten condolence messages in Thai and several other languages, including Korean.

Burned musical instruments, charred chairs and other debris from the bar remained scattered around the area after being removed by investigators examining the scene.



# US strikes Iran as tensions flare over Strait of Hormuz; Tehran launches retaliatory attacks

International Desk

The United States carried out fresh airstrikes on Iran early Tuesday, hours after President Donald Trump announced that Washington was "reinstating" a blockade on Iran in the Strait of Hormuz and suggested that other countries' ships could be charged for safe passage through the strategic waterway.

Iran responded by launching attacks on Bahrain and Jordan and targeting two United Arab Emirates-linked oil tankers passing through the Strait of Hormuz. The attacks killed one sailor and injured eight others, while the UAE warned it could retaliate against Tehran, raising fears of a wider regional conflict.

The latest escalation comes as the US and Iran struggle for control of the Strait of Hormuz, a key global shipping route that has carried about one-fifth of the world's traded crude oil and natural gas during peacetime.

Oil prices reacted quickly, with Brent crude rising above \$84 a barrel in early Tuesday trading, its highest level in a month. Although still below the nearly \$120 seen during the height of the conflict, the increase could push up energy costs worldwide.

The renewed fighting has also further weakened a temporary ceasefire between Washington and Tehran. The two sides were nearly halfway through a 60-day period meant to produce a permanent agreement addressing Iran's disputed nuclear programme and other issues.

According to the US military's Central Command, the strikes targeted Iranian coastal defence systems, missile and drone sites, and maritime facilities around Abu Musa, Bandar Abbas, Bushehr, Chahbahar, Jask and Konarak.

Iran confirmed that the areas had come under attack but did not immediately report casualties or damage.

The US military said the operation was intended to reduce Iran's ability to attack civilians and commercial vessels in the Strait of Hormuz.

Speaking at the White House shortly after the strikes, Trump described the operation as "another major attack."

"We're hitting them very hard. And it'll continue, and we'll see what happens," he told reporters.

He also claimed the US was taking control of the strait and restoring the blockade.

GeographicReference

Trump also expanded on his earlier proposal to charge ships for using the Strait of Hormuz, marking a major shift from longstanding US policy supporting free navigation through international waterways without tolls.

Such a move would challenge long-established international maritime practices and could further disrupt global trade and increase tensions in the region.

Meanwhile, the UAE's Defence Ministry said Iran fired two cruise missiles at the oil tankers Mombasa and Al Bahiyah in the Strait of Hormuz. Both vessels caught fire, but the blazes were later brought under control.

The UAE said one Indian sailor was killed while six Indian and two Ukrainian crew members were injured.

Abu Dhabi



warned that it reserved the right to respond.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard claimed responsibility for the attack, saying the ships had ignored repeated warnings and entered what it described as a minefield.

Bahrain also reported fresh Iranian missile attacks early Tuesday, sounding air raid sirens three times and urging residents to seek shelter.

Jordan's military said it intercepted four Iranian missiles. The country hosts US military forces and has been targeted by Iran several times in recent days.

Earlier Monday, Trump said the interim agreement reached with Iran last month had been designed to test Tehran's intentions, accusing the Iranian government of failing to honour its commitments.

Iran, however, maintains that it has the right to regulate shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and potentially impose fees under the interim agreement, a claim rejected by Washington.

The US military and the International Maritime Organization have tried to establish an alternative shipping route along Oman's coast outside Iranian control, but Iran has also attacked vessels using that route, prompting repeated US military responses and further exchanges of fire.

GeographicReference

On social media, Trump said the US was restoring the Iranian blockade while insisting that other countries would continue to have open access to the strait.

He also proposed that the US recover security costs by collecting 20% of cargo values from commercial shipping, although no details were provided.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who is visiting the region, said there would be no fees for ships using the waterway.

The US military said its blockade of Iranian ports would resume from midnight Wednesday local time in Dubai.

Separately, Israeli and Lebanese delegations were scheduled to meet in Rome on Tuesday for US-mediated talks aimed at advancing a framework agreement announced last month.

The deal calls for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon in exchange for the disarmament of the Iran-backed Hezbollah group, although implementation has stalled.

A ceasefire remains in place in Lebanon, but uncertainty persists over whether it can survive if the conflict between the United States and Iran expands into a full-scale war.



# Ebola treatment workers strike in DR Congo over unpaid wages amid worsening outbreak

International Desk

Dozens of workers at an Ebola treatment center in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo launched a strike on Monday, protesting unpaid salaries and bonuses, adding fresh pressure to the country's rapidly expanding Ebola outbreak.

The strike comes as Congo continues to battle an outbreak of the rare Bundibugyo strain of the Ebola virus, which has no approved vaccine or treatment. Health authorities confirmed last week that the outbreak has spread to two additional provinces.

The protesting workers at Rwampara General Hospital in Ituri province—the epicenter of the outbreak—include epidemiologists, case investigators, drivers and gravediggers. They accuse authorities of failing to pay them for the past two months.

The demonstrators shut down the treatment center, blocked access roads and burned tires outside the facility in protest.

"We don't know how it is possible to go unpaid for two months," one health worker said, adding that despite the protest, they do not want to abandon their work.

The Rwampara facility is separate from another treatment center in Ituri where clinical trials of two experimental Ebola treatments began earlier this month.

Congolese authorities officially declared the outbreak on May 15 after the virus had spread undetected for several weeks. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the delay in confirming the outbreak was partly due to initial testing for a more common Ebola strain.

GeographicReference

During a recent visit to Ituri, Health Minister Roger Kamba said the government was reviewing payroll records after discovering that names of individuals not involved in the response had been added to payment lists.

He said the verification process aims to ensure that frontline workers receive their due compensation while addressing complaints from those who have not been paid.

According to Congolese health authorities, the outbreak has so far resulted in 1,926 confirmed cases, including 702 deaths.

Meanwhile, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said a second American humanitarian worker infected with Ebola in eastern Congo had been transferred to Germany for treatment. The first infected American was a doctor working in Congo during the early stages of the outbreak.

# Houthi launch missiles, drones at Saudi airport amid renewed escalation

International Desk

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels said they launched missiles and drones targeting Saudi Arabia's Abha International Airport on Monday, hours after blaming Saudi airstrikes for hitting Sanaa International Airport in a sharp escalation of tensions.

No casualties were immediately reported from either attack.

Houthi military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said the group carried out the strike in retaliation for what it described as Saudi attacks on Sanaa airport. He also warned commercial airlines against using Saudi airspace until what he called the blockade on Sanaa International Airport is lifted.

Saudi authorities did not immediately comment on the reported strikes. However, the spokesperson for the Saudi-led coalition, Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki, later said Saudi air defenses had intercepted ballistic missiles launched toward the kingdom's southern region without providing further details.

Earlier in the day, Yemen's internationally recognized government said the strike on Sanaa airport was intended to prevent an Iranian aircraft from landing.

Yemeni Defense Minister Gen. Taher al-Aqili said the airport runway was targeted to stop an Iranian plane from returning a Houthi delegation from Tehran following the funeral of Iran's late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

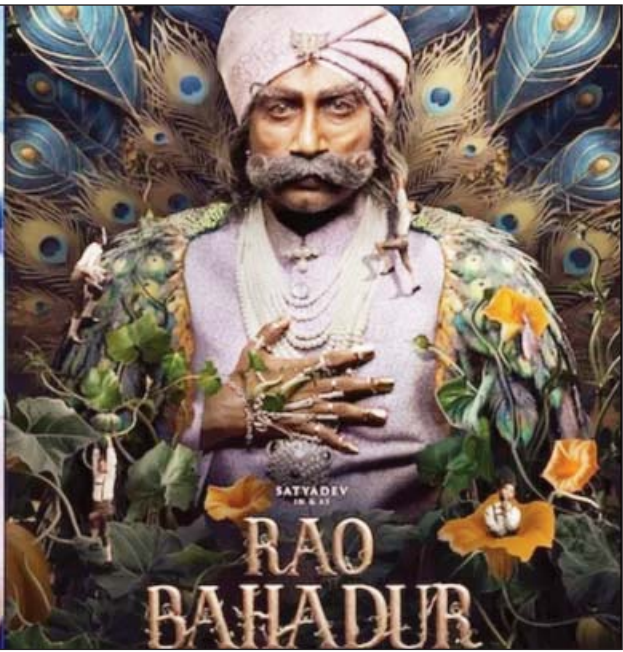
According to the Houthis, the Iranian aircraft was diverted to Hodeida Airport instead.

The Yemeni government also announced the closure of all airports across the country until further notice and ordered the evacuation of Sanaa airport and surrounding areas.

The Presidential Leadership Council said it had rejected Iran's request to allow a Mahan Air flight from Tehran to Sanaa, accusing the Houthis of attempting to receive the aircraft outside established civil aviation procedures.

The latest exchange marks the most serious confrontation between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia since a UN-brokered truce took effect in 2022, ending years of frequent cross-border attacks.

The developments prompted an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council, where UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Khaled Khiri warned against a renewed cycle of violence.



## Mahesh Babu-backed Rao Bahadur earns praise from Sandeep Reddy Vanga

### Entertainment Desk

Filmmaker Sandeep Reddy Vanga has praised the Mahesh Babu-backed psychological drama Rao Bahadur, calling it a rare film that reminds audiences why they love cinema. After watching the film, the Animal director shared his appreciation on X, applauding its storytelling, performances and filmmaking. He urged movie lovers to give the film a chance.

"Just watched Rao Bahadur. This is one of those rare, rich films that reminds you why we fell in love with cinema in the first place," Vanga wrote.

"I have one request to every genuine film lover... give this film three hours of your life. It deserves your attention, your patience, and your applause," he added.

Vanga also praised director Venkatesh Maha for bringing his vision to life despite budget limitations, saying it required courage and conviction. He described lead actor Satyadev's performance as "sensational" and commended the entire team for delivering "pure filmmaking" without relying on shortcuts.



## Armeen Musa becomes member of Recording Academy

### Entertainment Desk

Bangladeshi singer, songwriter and composer Armeen Musa has joined the Recording Academy as a member, becoming part of the Academy's voting membership for the Grammy Awards.

The Recording Academy, which presents the Grammy Awards, is dedicated to supporting, celebrating and advocating for music creators worldwide. Through recognition, education, professional development and industry leadership, the organisation works to advance the interests of the global music community.

Musa previously made history as the first Bangladeshi composer to be associated with a Grammy-nominated album. Her original composition, "Jaago Piya", written by her mother, Professor Nashid Kamal, was featured on the Berklee Indian Ensemble's album "Shuruaat", which received a nomination for Best Global Music Album at the 65th Grammy Awards.

## Zahid Hasan reunites with Raz after eight years for 'Pothhara Mon'

### Entertainment Desk

Veteran actor Zahid Hasan has reunited with filmmaker Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Raz after an eight-year hiatus for the upcoming romantic drama "Pothhara Mon". The drama also stars Khairul Basar, Tanjim Saiara Totini and Deepa Khandakar, with Dr Ejazul Islam and Monira Akter Mithu appearing in key supporting roles.

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According to Raz, "Pothhara Mon" explores love, emotional conflict and the complexities of human relationships.

"The story revolves around love, relationship struggles and human emotions. I wanted to create a narrative in which viewers can recognise moments from their own lives," the director said.

Raz last directed Zahid Hasan in the seven-episode television series "Chelemanushi", which aired in 2018. Expressing his excitement about the reunion, Raz said, "I'm delighted to be working with Zahid Bhai again after such a long time. His performance has elevated the drama. We also have a wonderful team that brings together both experienced and younger actors."

Zahid Hasan also welcomed the collaboration, saying he has always enjoyed working with the filmmaker.

"My experience of working with Raz has always been positive. It's a pleasure to be back under his direction after so many years. The story is heartfelt, and my character is quite challenging. The atmosphere on set has also been fantastic," he said.



Filming for "Pothhara Mon" began in Uttara, Dhaka, on July 10 and is scheduled to conclude yesterday (July 14).

The story has been written by Zakia Hossain Trisha, while the screenplay was developed by Asad Zaman and Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Raz.

The drama is slated for release on the Cinemawala

## Runa Laila to perform solo at Shilpakala Academy

### Entertainment Desk

Runa Laila will perform at the main stage of the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on July 18. Academy officials and the singer's team have confirmed the event.

Runa Laila recently returned to Bangladesh. She had spent over a month in the United States on family business. Since coming home, she has been busy preparing for this programme.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has been organising a series of solo music programmes featuring the country's renowned artistes since last year. Previously, special programmes were arranged featuring Sabina Yasmin and Syed Abdul Hadi.

Following that tradition, Runa Laila will now perform. She will sing around ten of her popular and beloved songs at the event. The programme will feature notable songs sung at various points across her six-decade musical career.



## Rashmika shares her experience of shooting for 20hrs underwater

### Entertainment Desk

South actress Rashmika Mandanna, who has always loved to reinvent herself on screen, has taken the challenge a step further.

The actress has shot a long and complex action sequence underwater without the help of a body double for the much-awaited pan-Indian film 'Maisaa'. The makers claim that this is India's first large-scale female-centric underwater action sequence, which could create new history in Indian cinema.

After the shooting, Rashmika wrote, "I know, I was hidden from everyone's eyes for a while. Because this is what we were doing. This is the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my life."



## Samantha enters 100cr club with a record average

### Entertainment Desk

Samantha Ruth Prabhu is a popular face of Indian Telugu cinema. She has also worked in Bollywood. However, the lion's share of her career has been in Telugu. And the actress has created a record there. Her 'Maa Inti Bangaaram' has become the first female-led Telugu film to earn Rs 100 crore.

The 39-year old actress shared the news through a video post on Instagram on Sunday, along with an emotional message.



## Babita recollects bittersweet childhood, unfulfilled dreams

### Entertainment Desk

Internationally acclaimed actress Babita has been nurturing a deeply personal dream for the past four to five years—one she hopes will become the most meaningful legacy of her life.

Speaking about it with quiet emotion, the celebrated actress said, "It is a beautiful dream, one that has stayed with me for the last four or five years. If I can fulfil this wish, I will truly be happy."

Babita's paternal ancestral home is in Bijoy Nagar, Jashore, where many of her fondest childhood memories were made. It is there, on her family's ancestral land, that she hopes to build a mosque.

A few days ago, Babita visited Jashore with her elder sister, veteran actress Suchanda, and younger sister Champa. During the visit, they also finalised the plot of land where the mosque will be built.

"I have now selected the land for the mosque, and that alone has given me immense peace," she said. "I feel grateful that the Almighty is giving me the opportunity to do something meaningful. I want to build a beautiful mosque."





# The new rules behind World Cup decisions

## Sports Desk

It was another game-changing moment at the World Cup that had more to do with television replays in a room far away than a moment of brilliance on the field. Soccer The sending off of Switzerland's Brael Embolo in Saturday's quarter-final game against Argentina was the latest call that may have left fans scratching their heads, not least because of the confusing name of the newly implemented law that swung the match. It is called the "mistaken identity" rule. Yet, technically, Embolo was not shown a second yellow card — resulting in a red — for a case of mistaken identity. It was because the referee Joao Pinheiro did not see in real time that the forward had simulated a foul under a challenge from Argentina's Leandro Paredes. Paredes was initially shown a yellow card, which is a key factor. Under FIFA rules, because Paredes was shown a card, the video assistant referee (VAR) can intervene and recommend that the onfield official reviews the sideline monitor. After review the referee deemed Embolo to have committed a "clear simulation" and showed him a second yellow card and sent him off. The rules state that the VAR can assist when the referee penalizes the "wrong team for an offense that results in a red or yellow card being shown to the wrong player." It was a pivotal point in the match, coming five minutes after Switzerland had made it 1-1. Argentina won 3-1 after extra time. "The referee made the wrong decision," Switzerland coach Murat Yakin said. "I know they will protect their referee but this rule destroyed our game yesterday, and it's very painful, and to be eliminated in that way hurts a lot." It is not the first time at this World Cup that teams have hit out against new rules or technology. **Germany infuriated by disallowed goal** Newly tightened regulations contributed to Germany's shock elimination in the round of 32. Defender Jonathan Tah's potentially game-winning goal in extra time

against Paraguay was ruled out after VAR review for a foul on goalkeeper Orlando Gill. Replays showed Germany's Waldemar Anton push Gill to the ground, but the minimal contact led to criticism of the decision. FIFA's referees chief Pierluigi Collina said officials had been told to punish incidents when players try to block opponents and make no attempt to play the ball, especially where goalkeepers are concerned. SocialSciences Germany went on to lose the game in a penalty shootout, with Tah firing a decisive spot kick over the bar. Elimination could have a seismic effect on German soccer, with coach Julian Nagelsmann resigning and Jurgen Klopp expected to take over. **High tech ball costs Croatia** The words "connected ball technology" will likely haunt Luka Modric and Croatia for years to come. The high-tech soccer ball fitted with "advanced sensors" used at this World Cup cost Croatia a dramatic late equalizer against Portugal in the round of 32. Josko Gvardiol thought he'd scored in added time to make it 2-2, but the goal was ruled offside after VAR review because the in-ball sensors picked up the slightest of touches from Croatia's Igor Mantanovic in the buildup that was undetectable to the naked eye or even video replays. FIFA said the in-ball sensors, which capture data 500 times per second, were so finely tuned to be "capable of determining any slight contact ... allowing officials an unprecedented level of data to make fast, accurate decisions." Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic, who has since stepped down, was not impressed. "All these decisions take the joy out of football," he said. **Egypt heartbroken against Argentina** It was shaping up to be one of the great World Cup upsets. Egypt led 2-0 against defending champion Argentina in the round of 16 and might have been 3-0 up if not for VAR. With the score at 1-0 in the second half, Egypt's Mostafa Zico finished off a sweeping attack. But wild cele-

brations were cut short when a foul on Argentina's Lisandro Martinez earlier in the move was confirmed on video review and the goal was disallowed. Soccer Argentina staged a spectacular late comeback to win 3-2. Egypt coach Hossam Hassan launched a furious tirade. "We have suffered injustice," he said. The Egyptian soccer federation went further. "Several key incidents raised serious concerns and left profound questions about the consistency and fairness of decisions that directly influenced the course of the game," it said. Questions were raised about the amount time between the foul on Martinez, which happened deep in Egypt's half, and the goal at the other end of the field. FIFA referees chief Collina responded to criticism to say there was "no defined limit regarding either the distance from goal or the amount of time between the incident and the goal." "Nobody can question the integrity of the FIFA World Cup match officials," he added. A double blow for Norway against England The high tech sensor was called into action again as England beat Norway 2-1 in the quarterfinals. Norway's players and staff were adamant the ball hit a cable that suspends overhead cameras in the buildup to Jude Bellingham's equalizing goal in the first half. If it had, play would have been stopped. But FIFA insisted there was no contact, saying the sensor "showed no peak in the 'heartbeat of the ball' when in the air, and therefore no evidence that the ball touched the overhead wire." Soccer Norway also had a goal disallowed when the score was 1-1 after VAR spotted a foul by Erling Haaland on England's Elliot Anderson. The infringement came before the corner was taken and, under new rules to try to limit fouls by attacking teams during corner routines, VAR is allowed to intervene regarding incidents that happen even before the ball is kicked.

## Birthday boy Yamal stands by 'no fear' comment ahead of France clash



"I was asked if I was afraid of France, and I said no," Yamal explained. "We are European champions. It's simply football," the teenager explained. Yamal said he had marked his 19th birthday by buying a chunky jewel-encrusted necklace he wore to his press conference. The real birthday present, though, would be a place in Sunday's World Cup final. "I haven't received many gifts yet. The best gift would be a win on Tuesday and a trip to New York," he said. While other stars at this World Cup have been in blistering goal-scoring form, Yamal so far has only found the net once during the tournament -- but is ready to add to his tally against France. "I don't focus on goals, but it's always special to score in a match like this. I accept the challenge. That's why I came here," Yamal said, promising a "beautiful match for the spectators."

## Sports Desk

Lamine Yamal insisted on Monday he would take no fear into Spain's World Cup semi-final against France as he celebrated his 19th birthday. The Barcelona prodigy raised eyebrows following Spain's 2-1 quarter-final defeat of Belgium last week after being quoted as saying that France rather than Spain ought to be "afraid" given recent defeats against La Roja. A relaxed-looking Yamal addressed those comments as he spoke to reporters on Monday at a press conference.

## Neer Beats Belgian Grandmaster to Stay Perfect in Budapest

## Sports Desk

International Master (IM) Monon Reza Neer defeated Belgium's Grandmaster Igor Glek in the second round of the Vezzerkepzo Summer 2026 GM Tournament, currently being held in Budapest, Hungary. Playing with the white pieces on Monday, Neer delivered an impressive performance to overcome the experienced Belgian Grandmaster, said a press release. Earlier, the Bangladeshi IM had defeated India's FIDE Master Vaibhav Jayant Raut in the opening round of the tournament. With two wins from two games, Neer has a perfect score of two points and currently sits at the top of the standings after the second round. The 10-player round-robin tournament features competitors from Bangladesh, Belgium, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, Serbia, and Chinese Taipei, including three Grandmasters, five International Masters, and two FIDE Masters.

## Spain to go on 'front foot' against France in World Cup semi : De la Fuente

## Sports Desk

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente said his team plan to go on the "front foot" against World Cup favourites France when they face off in a heavyweight semi-final showdown on Tuesday. De la Fuente told a press conference on Monday that Spain will attempt to impose their possession-based game on France in what is shaping up as a gripping clash of styles. While France coach Didier Deschamps insists Spain remain favourites for the World Cup, betting markets overwhelmingly back France to clinch a second title in three attempts. Les Bleus have powered into the last four with a scintillating brand of attacking football based around such talents as Kylian Mbappe, Michael Olise and Ousmane Dembele. But De la Fuente -- whose team have beaten France in their last two meetings -- is quietly plotting another ambush at the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas on Tuesday. "We've already analyzed France in great detail, we've known each other for a while now," De la Fuente said. "We faced each other for a few years now and they have great players, but so do we. We have to put all of our virtues on the table and try to counteract the strengths of the opponent. "And that's what football is about - the team that strikes a better balance is usually closer to getting the victory. "We'll have to think about their players. We'll try to win those duels and will try to be on the front foot during the game, imposing our style." - France 'far better' -



De la Fuente though is under no illusions about the difficulty of the task facing his side. France, he said, had improved significantly since Spain defeated them 5-4 in a hectic UEFA Nations League semi-final in Stuttgart last year, when the Spaniards led 5-1 before a late rally. That encounter would bear no resemblance to Tuesday's game, De la Fuente said. "We're talking about two very different matches," he admitted. "Tomorrow is another semi-final. I will just try to repeat the positive scenarios, but there were other details where things weren't that positive. "We were winning 5-1, and in a few minutes they managed to make it 5-4. So we're trying to repeat what we did well and the opposite of what we didn't do well. "We need to try and impose our game. We have completely antagonistic playing styles, so we'll try to be on the front foot and take the initiative." De la Fuente also believes a maturing France squad will be a tougher proposition. "I think they are a better team, far better, because those players have grown, and what they are doing now, is better than what they were doing then," he said. "So they've improved their skills in the past two years, and that's the reality." While controlling possession and tempo will be key, De la Fuente will also tell his players to savour the challenge. Asked what his final message to his team would be, he replied: "Let's get out there and enjoy it. "We are in a unique setting. Who knows whether we will come back? We must be the team that we know that we can be. We must be strong and try to counter the strength of the opponent."

## Nat'l Inception workshop held to revise national youth policy

## Sports Desk

The Ministry of Youth and Sports on Tuesday organized a national inception workshop at the BIAM Foundation in the capital to initiate the revision of the National Youth Policy 2017, said a press release. The workshop was supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Bangladesh and implemented with technical assistance from the national consultant and VSO Bangladesh. The workshop formally launched the policy revision process through stakeholder consultations, evidence gathering and broad-based engagement. Speaking as the chief guest, State Minister for Youth and Sports Md. Aminul Haque said that the primary objective of the revised youth policy would be to enhance young people's skills and create employment opportunities in line with global trends. "In line with the Prime Minister's directives, we are working to build a practical and inclusive Bangladesh through broad-based consultations. Winning the confidence of young people is now our top priority," he said. The state minister also announced that a Youth Council would soon be formed to give the highest priority to youth skills development and creative innovation. UNFPA Bangladesh representative Catherine Breen-Kamkong said young people are already playing a leading role in business, innovation and socio-economic development.



She stressed that the revised policy should reflect the aspirations of young people from every region of the country, including marginalized communities, adding that effective implementation would be as important as formulating a modern and inclusive policy. The workshop was chaired by Md. Mahbub-Ul-Alam, Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Among the special guests were Md. Motaheer Hossain, Director General of the Department of Youth Development, and Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Zobaid Hossain, Joint Secretary of the Youth Wing of the ministry, representatives from relevant ministries and agencies, United Nations development partners, civil society organizations and youth representatives from across the country also participated in the workshop.

## Mosaddek aims to make impact after T20 comeback



## Sports Desk

Bangladesh allrounder Mosaddek Hossain Saikat said he is determined to contribute according to the team's needs after earning a recall to the national T20 squad for the ongoing Zimbabwe tour. Mosaddek returned to Bangladesh's ODI side during the recent home series against Australia after a four-year hiatus and retained his place in the squad for the three-match T20 series against Zimbabwe, marking his return to the shortest format after a lengthy break. Bangladesh and Zimbabwe are currently in Bulawayo, where the T20 series begins tomorrow (Wednesday). Ahead of the opening match, Bangladesh continued their preparations at the venue. In a video message released by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), Mosaddek said he has set high expectations for himself following his successful ODI comeback. "The expectations from myself are very high. I performed well after returning to the team and now I have to do even better. I have to play according to the team's needs," he said. The allrounder also spoke on the conditions in Bulawayo as he said its different compared to Harare, where Bangladesh played the Test and ODI matches. "The conditions here are a bit different from Harare. The air is stronger, and the environment is slightly different," he said, adding that his goal is to make an impact in the match he starts in the playing XI. "Whenever I get an opportunity to play, my goal is to make an impact and help the team win. That has always been my priority," Mosaddek remarked. Bangladesh will look to finish the Zimbabwe tour on a positive note when the three-match T20 series gets underway in Bulawayo tomorrow (Wednesday).



## Bangladesh beat Uzbekistan for second straight win in AHF Cup

## Sports Desk

Bangladesh's junior women's hockey team continued their impressive run in the Women's Junior AHF Cup with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Uzbekistan in Muscat, Oman, on Monday night. After a goalless first three quarters, Ema Nadira broke the deadlock in the 50th minute, scoring the decisive field goal to seal Bangladesh's second consecutive win in the tournament. Bangladesh's Riyasa was named Player of the Match for her outstanding performance. Bangladesh will play their next match against Pakistan on Thursday (July 16). The team had earlier made a flying start to the tournament by defeating Hong Kong China 6-0 in their opening match. The Women's Junior AHF Cup features Bangladesh, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Hong Kong China in a round-robin league format.



# Boats ferry HSC examinees to centres as heavy rain inundates Cumilla



## Cumilla Correspondent

Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinees in Cumilla travelled by boat or waded through waterlogged roads to reach their examination centres on Monday as heavy rainfall inundated roads across the city. With roads submerged, transport services were disrupted across parts of the city, making it difficult for students to arrive on time. At the Cumilla Government Women's College examination centre, boats were arranged inside the centre premises to help students enter safely. Around 9:30am, several examinees were seen using boats to reach the centre. Prof Ahsan Parvez, chairman of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Cumilla, said the authorities were considering the difficulties faced by students with sympathy. "Centre authorities are looking at the matter sympathetically," he said. An examinee at the Women's College centre, Taslima Akter, said examinations should have been postponed across all education boards considering the severe weather situation. "Students had to reach examination centres, getting drenched in rain. Many candidates arrived wearing wet

clothes. Some were also seen falling on submerged roads," she said. Guardians of the examinees also expressed frustration over holding examinations during the rainy season. Principal of Cumilla Victoria Government College Prof Abul Basher Bhuiya said 2,100 examinees from eight colleges were sitting for examinations at his college centre. "Although there is water on the field, no water entered the examination rooms. The board has instructed us to provide additional time to students who arrived late due to the situation," he said.

Ahsan Parvez said waterlogging occurred on roads and in front of examination centres in six districts under the board due to heavy rainfall, but no water entered any examination rooms. He said centre authorities had been instructed to consider the delayed arrival of students sympathetically and expressed hope that no examinee will face difficulties in sitting for the examinations. Cumilla City Corporation Administrator Md Yousuf Mollah said he visited the Government Women's College centre before the examination began and supervised arrangements to ensure students could enter safely. Meanwhile, Cumilla city experienced severe waterlogging after 107 millimetres of rainfall in just three hours on Monday. Major roads, narrow lanes and residential areas went under water, with some areas submerged up to knee and waist levels. Many residents suffered as rainwater entered their homes, causing widespread inconvenience. Taking advantage of the situation, drivers of rickshaws and battery-powered auto-rickshaws reportedly increased fares, forcing commuters to pay extra. The Cumilla Meteorological Office said the district recorded 138.2 millimetres of rainfall in the past 24 hours. Of this, 107 millimetres were recorded between early Monday morning and 9:00am.

## One held with 16 maunds of stolen copper cables in Rangpur

### Rangpur Correspondent

The Detective Branch (DB) of Rangpur Metropolitan Police (RpMP) in an operation on Monday night arrested one person with 16 maunds of stolen copper electrical cables and a truck from the Salmatha area of the city. "The arrested man is Ukil Mia, son of Helal Mia of the Alamnagar area in the metropolis," Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Police (DB) of RpMP Sanatan Chakraborty told. Sanatan Chakraborty said that electrical cables of the electricity departments like REB, government hospitals, mosques and houses were being stolen for some time now. "At one stage of the investigation, a raid was conducted based on a tip-off and these cables hidden inside a pile of scrap metal in a truck were seized and one person involved in the incident was arrested," he said. Operations are ongoing to arrest other members of the gang. "We have taken necessary legal action in this incident," he said, and urged all citizens to cooperate with the police by providing any information related to crime. In this regard, the RpMP Commissioner said that no matter how many strategies the criminals adopt, there is no opportunity to escape. Strict legal action will be taken against any person or gang involved in the transportation, storage or sale of stolen goods.



## Preparatory meeting held in Magura to observe July Martyrs' Day

### Magura Correspondent

A preparatory meeting was held in Magura yesterday to observe 'July Martyrs' Day' on July 16 and 'July Mass Uprising Day 2026' on August 5 with due solemnity. The meeting was held this morning at the Deputy Commissioner's conference room with Deputy Commissioner Md Motakabbir Ahmed in the chair. Family members of the July Martyrs, officials from various government departments, political leaders, and other prominent figures participated in the meeting. Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) from the district's three upazilas also joined the meeting via video conference. During the meeting, various programmes were finalized to observe the days with due solemnity. The speakers emphasized the importance of observing the days while upholding the spirit of the July Mass Uprising. They sought cooperation from all to ensure the successful observance of the days.

# Kushtia Jamaat secretary relieved over employment at women's educational institution

## Kushtia Correspondent

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami has relieved Sujauddin Joardar of his duties as secretary of its Kushtia district unit because he is employed at a women's educational institution, in line with a decision of the party's central leadership. Bangladesh travel guide Enamul Haque, Ameer of Kushtia city Jamaat, has been appointed as the new district secretary. Kushtia district Jamaat Ameer Principal Khandaker AKM Ali Mohsin confirmed the development to reporters on Monday night. According to a party statement issued on Monday, the central leadership has decided that any male member (Rukon) employed at a women's educational institution cannot hold organisational responsibilities within Jamaat-e-Islami. Following the directive, Enamul Haque was assigned the post of district secretary. The statement said the decision was unanimously approved at a meeting of the district executive council held on July 13. Speaking to reporters, Sujauddin Joardar said the party's constitution bars members employed at women's educational institutions from serving as



Rukon or holding responsible organisational posts. He said the policy applies nationwide following the central committee's decision, adding that he accepted the decision without any resentment. Sujauddin noted that he had joined Bagowan Dr Fazlul Haque Girls' College as a teacher before becoming district secretary. At that time, he said, the relevant provision of the party constitution had been relaxed, allowing him to serve in the post. He added that if he resigns from his teaching position, he could be reinstated to his previous organisational role. Newly appointed district secretary Enamul Haque said he was entrusted with the responsibility through a unanimous decision of the district leadership. District Ameer Khandaker AKM Ali Mohsin said the central committee's directive has led to the removal of seven party members nationwide holding similar positions while employed at women's educational institutions. He said Enamul Haque was immediately appointed as the new district secretary by unanimous decision.



# 100 chronic disease patients get Tk 50 lakh in Rangpur

## Rangpur Correspondent

The Department of Social Services (DSS) distributed Taka 50 lakh among 100 helpless patients suffering from chronic diseases as a medical assistance grant to help them bear costly medical expenses. At the event held at the Rangpur Group Auditorium of Rangpur Community Medical College and Hospital on Monday afternoon, 100 patients suffering from cancer, kidney disease, liver cirrhosis, stroke, congenital heart disease, and thalassemia were each given a cheque for Taka 50,000. This assistance grant was provided under the government's Financial Assistance Programme for Patients Suffering from various chronic diseases. Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ruhul Amin was present as the chief guest at the function presided over by Rangpur Group Managing Director Md Nazmul Ahsan Sarkar. Moderated by Rangpur Group Additional Director Md Mirajul Muhsin, Deputy Director of Rangpur District Social Services Office Aniruddha Kumar Roy was present as the special guest at the function. Members of the Board of Directors of Rangpur Group,

officials and employees of Rangpur Community Medical College and Hospital and beneficiary patients and their relatives were present. Speaking as the chief guest, Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ruhul Amin said that the government is continuously expanding the scope of social security programmes to stand by the indigent and people suffering from almost incurable diseases in the society. "Such assistance is being provided with the aim that no patient is deprived of necessary services due to the high cost of treatment," he said. He appreciated the sincere role of all concerned in properly delivering government grants to the beneficiaries and emphasized the continuation of this humanitarian initiative. Managing Director of Rangpur Group Md Nazmul Ahsan Sarkar said that the Rangpur Community Medical College and Hospital authorities are working tirelessly to ensure the best service to the patients in coordination with government initiatives. The patients and their relatives who received the medical assistance grants expressed their gratitude to the government as well as the concerned authorities.

## Two held with 22kg of cannabis in Khulna

### Khulna Correspondent

Police arrested two alleged drug peddlers with 22 kilograms of cannabis in Khulna's Labanchara area on Monday night. The arrestees were identified as Md Rubel Hawlader, 31, of Morrelganj upazila in Bagerhat, and Md Simbad Chowdhury, 28, of Rupsha upazila in Khulna. Police said that they were arrested around 8:30 pm during a special drive on Sachibunia Bishwaroad on the Highway under the leadership of Assistant Police Commissioner (Khulna Zone) Md Shafiqul Islam and Officer-in-Charge of Labanchara Police Station Syed Mosharrar Hossain. During the operation, police searched the suspects and recovered 22kg of cannabis packed in 11 parcels wrapped with adhesive tape. Each parcel weighed about two kilograms. The estimated market value of the seized drugs is around Tk 8,80,000. A case has been filed at Labanchara Police Station against them under the Narcotics Control Act. Police said the investigation is underway to identify the source and destination of the narcotics as well as other members of the trafficking network.

## 2 held with 6kgs of cannabis in Bagerhat

### Khulna Correspondent

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB)-6 arrested two alleged drug traders along with six kilograms of cannabis during a drive in Fakirhat upazila of Bagerhat district. According to a RAB-6 press release, the raid was conducted at Katakhal area under Fakirhat Police Station at around 5:40 pm on Monday, acting on a tip-off, as part of the force's ongoing anti-narcotics campaign under its "zero tolerance" policy against drugs. The arrestees were identified as Saim Majhi, 20, of Juskhosa area in Pirojpur district, and Tuhin Hawlader, 18, of Jiodhora Bazar area in Morelganj upazila of Bagerhat. RAB members seized six kilograms of cannabis from their possession during the operation. A case has been filed against the duo under the Narcotics Control Act with Fakirhat Police Station. The arrested persons, along with the seized drugs, were handed over to the police station for further legal action, the release added.



## 6 KDA chairman initiates emergency repairs on Shipyard Road to ease suffering

### Khulna Correspondent

Khulna Development Authority (KDA) Chairman Advocate Shafiqul Alam Mona yesterday said the BNP-led government is committed to building a modern, beautiful and traffic congestion-free Khulna. Speaking while supervising emergency repair work on the dilapidated Shipyard Road in Khulna city, he said the road is one of the region's most important transport corridors, playing a vital role in communication and economic activities. He said commuters, transport operators and businesses have long been suffering due to the poor condition of the road. "To provide immediate relief to the public, we have launched emergency repair work with our own initiative and funding. Our immediate objective is to make the road motorable until the permanent carpeting work is completed," he said. He also urged residents to maintain confidence in Prime Minister Tarek Rahman's leadership, saying the government would fulfill the people's expectations through continued development initiatives. Among others, Bangladesh Cricket Board Director and Khulna City BNP General Secretary Shafiqul Alam Tuhin, KDA Chief Engineer Kazi Sabirul Alam, Dumuria Upazila Brick Kiln Owners' Association President Md. Shahjahan Jomaddar, political leaders and a large number of local residents were present.

## Female vice chairman candidate found hanging in Chandpur

### Chandpur Correspondent

Police recovered the hanging body of a woman who represented as a female vice chairman candidate in the upazila parishad election from a rented apartment in Shahrasti municipality of Chandpur on Monday morning. The deceased was identified as Nazmun Nahar Swapna, 37, a resident of Banglaish village under Lalchandpur Union in Comilla's Monoharganj upazila. Missing auto-rickshaw driver found dead in N'ganj According to a local resident Mainul Islam Kajal, she had contested the last upazila parishad election with the 'Kolosh' (Pitcher) symbol. Her elder brother, Motaleb Hossain, said family disputes were the main reason behind the incident. He said Swapna had been married three times. Mainul Islam, Officer-in-Charge (OC), of Shahrashiti Model Police Station said police recovered the body from a fifth-floor flat in the New Life Hospital building in the Doabhanga area after receiving information. Mehedi Hasan, a member of the building owner's family, said the flat had been rented by an expatriate man named Russell Chowdhury Raju, introduced as Swapna's third husband. Shamshe Hossain (SI), recovered the body, prepared an inquest report and sent it to the 250-bed Chandpur General Hospital morgue for an autopsy. OC Mainul Islam said police have launched an investigation to determine the exact cause of death.