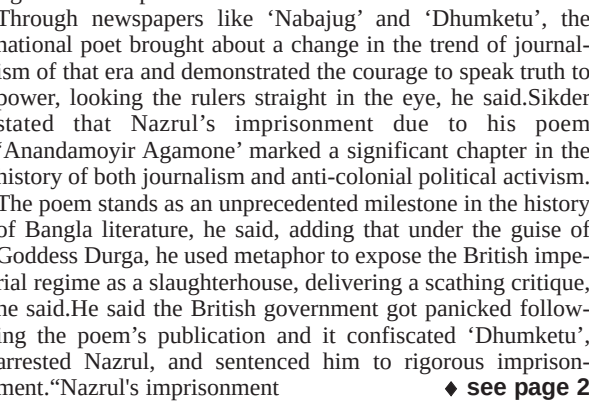




Prioritise building and maintaining public toilets

In Bangladesh's urban areas, we often hear complains about male citizens urinating on roadsides, but fewer complaints are voiced about the dire lack of public sanitation facilities across major cities. A recent report by this daily states that Dhaka city, which sees 1.5 crore pedestrian trips per day, has only 131 permanent and 17 mobile toilets against a requirement of 1,500. The number is based on the global benchmark of one toilet unit for every 1,000 pedestrian trips. In Chattogram, a city of 70 lakh people, there are only 28 functioning toilet facilities against a requirement of 380. Barisal city requires 30 facilities for its 7 lakh residents but, of its 10 existing public toilets, only two are operational. In Rajshahi

In Rajshahi city, there are only 14 public toilets available for its 5.5 lakh people, against a requirement of 60 facilities. Unlike in other countries, there are no official guidelines specifying the distribution of public toilets in Bangladesh's major cities. Even when public toilets are available, they are often unusable due to a lack of proper maintenance. Some facilities are maintained by only one employee, and most are severely unclean and lacking in essential components such as soap and toilet paper.

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Why Bangladesh needs a national health fund

Md. Neyamul Hossain

lishing a national health protection authority was also developed. However, these initiatives did not progress as envisaged.

Rethinking Bangladesh's health sector reform after SWAp Does the need for a more flexible, outcome-oriented approach mean we should abandon the existing budget system? No. What Bangladesh needs is a complementary financing mechanism, one that is flexible, responsive, and increasingly linked to results. This is why we need a National Health Fund. The first step towards that goal could be the enactment of a "National Health Fund Act" that should clearly define the

This is where output- and outcome-based financing becomes important. Future allocations and incentives should consider not merely how much is spent, but how many patients are served, how quickly emergency care is provided, whether essential medicines are available, how long patients wait, whether agreed quality standards are met, and what health outcomes are achieved. The fund should also allow hospitals to purchase specific services from accredited private providers when the required capacity is unavailable within the public facility. Such purchasing should be based on predefined standards and prices. In addition, a separate Emergency Health Fund could be maintained within the NHF, allowing rapid release of resources during disease outbreaks or major disasters under predetermined rules. Flexibility, however, must never become an opportunity for misuse. Accountability must be built into the system from the beginning. Every taka should be digitally traceable through the chain of allocation, expenditure, service and outcome. An open dashboard could disclose how much each facility received, how the money was spent, what services were delivered, and what results were achieved. Alongside conventional financial audits, performance audits should assess not only whether money was spent according.

fund's objectives, sources of financing, eligible expenditures, fund-release procedures, emergency procurement mechanisms, the possibility of purchasing services from the private sector, and arrangements for audit and accountability. An autonomous body, such as a national health fund authority, national health protection authority, or national health commission, could be established to manage the fund, which should have multiple sources of financing. A fixed proportion of the national budget could be allocated annually for the fund. Other potential sources should also be considered, including sectors like mobile telecommunications. A significant share of mobile operators' revenues currently reaches the government through direct and indirect taxes, fees, and spectrum charges. Without changing the existing revenue collection structure, an additional 1-2 percentage points from this sector could be earmarked for the health fund. Given the widespread use of mobile communication, even a relatively small additional allocation could potentially create a predictable and sustainable source of health financing.

A portion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds from pharmaceutical companies, banks, insurers, private hospitals and other businesses could also be channelled into the health fund. Voluntary contributions from development partners, foundations, individuals, and expatriate Bangladeshis could complement these sources. But the defining feature of the NHF must be a careful balance between flexibility and accountability.

The regular government budget should continue to finance routine hospital expenditure like salaries and allowances, regular medicines and supplies, maintenance, utilities, and other operating costs. The NHF, meanwhile, could provide hospitals with block grants for clearly defined purposes. Within established guidelines, these grants could be used flexibly for emergencies, unforeseen needs, and locally identified priorities. This is where output- and outcome-based financing becomes important. Future allocations and incentives should consider not merely how much is spent, but how many patients are served, how quickly emergency care is provided, whether essential medicines are available, how long patients wait, whether agreed quality standards are met, and what health outcomes are achieved.

The fund should also allow hospitals to purchase specific services from accredited private providers when the required capacity is unavailable within the public facility. Such purchasing should be based on predefined standards and prices. In addition, a separate Emergency Health Fund could be maintained within the NHF, allowing rapid release of resources during disease outbreaks or major disasters under predetermined rules. Flexibility, however, must never become an opportunity for misuse. Accountability must be built into the system from the beginning. Every taka should be digitally traceable through the chain of allocation, expenditure, service and outcome. An open dashboard could disclose how much each facility received, how the money was spent, what services were delivered, and what results were achieved. Alongside conventional financial audits, performance audits should assess not only whether money was spent according to financial rules, but also whether the intended results were achieved. The time has come to establish a national health fund. The additional block allocation provided for the health sector in the current fiscal year offers an opportunity to take the first step. A portion of this allocation could be used to launch the NHF and begin building a more flexible, responsive and results-oriented health financing system for Bangladesh.

President urges Coast Guard to

responsibilities. Mirza Fakhru assured him of all-out cooperation for the development of the force.

The President's secretaries and senior officials concerned were present during the meeting.

Cabinet approves amendments to

method to ensure equitable distribution of resources, clarifying provisions related to professional misconduct, and introducing an alternative procurement arrangement for state emergencies. The draft ordinance was placed before the Cabinet by the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division. The Cabinet gave final approval to the draft ordinance subject to vetting by the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division.

JS Speaker seeks Italian

He said Italian machinery and equipment have a significant presence in the Bangladeshi market. He expressed hope that the existing friendly relations between Bangladesh and Italy would expand further on a strategic basis. The Italian ambassador said Bangladesh remains an old friend of Italy and that the Italian government strongly supports Bangladesh's democratic progress.

He expressed Italy's interest in strengthening parliamentary diplomacy through the formation of a Bangladesh-Italy parliamentary friendship group and exchanges of parliamentary delegations.

The ambassador said Bangladesh exports large quantities of ready-made garments, leather goods and ceramic products to Italy every year. During the meeting, both sides emphasised the formation of a parliamentary friendship group, resolving the ongoing Rohingya crisis and exploring oil and gas in Bangladesh's coastal areas to help address the country's energy needs. They also discussed the exploration and drilling of oil and gas wells in the coastal region.

The Speaker invited Italian commercial companies to participate in the exploration and extraction of oil and gas resources available in Bangladesh's coastal areas. Diplomatic representatives of the Italian Embassy and relevant officials of the Parliament Secretariat were present at the meeting.

Final Report on Constitutional

changes to the constitution, Salahuddin Ahmed stated, "We are committed to reforming the existing governance system, elections, judiciary, public administration, and policing. This includes the issue of changing the budget or fiscal year. To ensure the smooth completion of development projects and prevent waste, the government has decided to set the fiscal year from April 1 to March 31, replacing the current July-June cycle. Implementing this requires a constitutional amendment."

Furthermore, outlining the framework for a bicameral parliament (Upper House), he mentioned that many parties agree on forming an Upper House with 100 members. "It will not be elected directly by the public; instead, it will be composed of eminent personalities from various professions and backgrounds, selected in proportion to the seats held in Parliament. However, this Upper House will not possess the authority to amend the constitution. 'Note of Dissent' and the Mandate

Addressing the 'notes of dissent' (differing opinions) expressed by certain parties regarding the July Charter, the committee chairman stated that the issues subject to such dissent were clearly outlined in the election manifesto, upon which the government secured a public mandate. He affirmed that these measures would be implemented in accordance with

that mandate and the promises made to the people.

Noting the propaganda circulating which claims that the BNP opposes reforms due to its majority status the Home Minister dismissed the allegation as entirely false. He reiterated that the July National Charter would be implemented to the letter, exactly as signed.

No Risk of Future Amendments Being Overturned, Responding to journalists' queries about whether this constitutional amendment might face legal challenges in the future, Salahuddin Ahmed stated that the notion that amendments require a reform commission to avoid legal challenges or that the constitution's basic structure cannot be altered is incorrect. He emphasized that the constitution is not an immutable document meant to remain unchanged for all time; rather, it evolves in response to societal needs.

He further explained that if a political party forms a government with a public mandate and secures a two-thirds majority in parliament, it possesses the authority to amend any provision of the constitution to meet public demand. He pointed out that constitutions in many countries around the world have been amended over a hundred times. Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed expressed optimism that, even though opposition parties are currently not in parliament, they would participate in the proceedings when the constitutional amendment bill is introduced.

Journalist faces death

investigate or publish news about irregularities against a government institution or official? Are people in government positions above accountability? If an allegation is not true, there is an opportunity to refute it through statements, documents and legal proceedings by the concerned party. But if money is offered, pressure, threats or threats of filing a case to prevent the publication of news, it raises serious questions about the freedom and security of journalism.

The responsibility of a journalist is to present information of public interest to the public. At the same time, it is important to verify the information, accept the statements of the relevant parties, and follow the principles of responsible journalism when publishing news. If there is incorrect or untrue information in a report, the relevant person or organization has the right to demand correction or take legal action. However, those concerned believe that if there is an allegation of threatening a journalist or disrupting his or her security due to publishing news, an impartial investigation is necessary. Because if the safety of the journalist is not ensured, there may be fear of publishing information of irregularities and corruption in the public interest.

In this incident, there is a demand to verify the truth of the complaint and take necessary legal action and ensure the safety of the journalist. At the same time, those concerned have demanded an impartial investigation into the allegations of irregularities that have been published in the news, including renting out government quarters for the railway, and constructing illegal structures on railway land.

Fire in a parked bus in front

receiving the news, the police and fire service jointly normalised the situation. Legal action is being taken regarding the matter, and a serious investigation is underway.

We will return home only

rally of the Dhaka-Rangpur Long March, held at the Rangpur Zilla School ground on Saturday (September 19) night, demanding implementation of the public verdict of the referendum of the 11-party alliance and the eight-point demands. As part of the same programme, Dr. Shafiqur Rahman also

addressed various roadside rallies of the Long March from Dhaka towards Rangpur throughout the day.

The rally was presided over by Jamaat-e-Islami Naib-e-Ameer A.T.M. Azharul Islam MP. Jamaat's Assistant Secretary and Director of the Rangpur-Dinajpur Region, Maulana Abdul Halim, was also present at the event.

Dr. Shafiqur Rahman said, "Before that something happens, we want the government to come to its senses. If it does not, we will not sit idle. There will be strong protests inside Parliament, and simultaneously, the movement will continue on the streets. And through that movement, we will realize the demands of the people, Insha'Allah."

He further said, "These demands are not our party's demands; these are the demands of 180 million people. Today, thousands of mothers and sisters took to the field and encouraged us. They expressed solidarity and unity. A movement in which mothers have joined will succeed, Insha'Allah."

The Jamaat Ameer said, "The promises we have made to the nation—we must not betray them, we must not deceive the nation, and we must not commit treachery. Lives may be lost, but July will not be abandoned. July will be implemented, Insha'Allah."

He said, "Your aspirations will be fulfilled. Bangladesh will be free from exploitation and corruption, Insha'Allah. Bangladesh will be free from extortion, Insha'Allah. Bangladesh will be free from hegemony, Insha'Allah." Dr. Shafiqur Rahman's speech included a call to expand the movement further if the eight-point demands are not met. Earlier, at various roadside rallies of the Long March, he had also said that the eight-point demands could turn into a single-point demand at any time.

Speaking as a special guest at the rally, National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener and Opposition Chief Whip Nahid Islam said, "The slogan of this government was 'Bangladesh First.' They spoke of putting Bangladesh first. But they are completely failing to ensure Bangladesh's national interests." He said, "So why is the Teesta Master Plan not being implemented, and why are they unable to hold diplomatic discussions or negotiations with Delhi? Why are they unable to secure Bangladesh's national interests in geopolitics? From this, we understand that the BNP has gone to the government not to secure the national interests of the country, but only to secure its own party interests."

Nahid Islam further said that the government needs to play an effective role in matters concerning the national interests of the country, the rights of the people and the implementation of its commitments. In his speech, questions were also raised about the government's position on the implementation of the Teesta Master Plan and issues related to Bangladesh's national interests.

Other special guests who spoke at the rally included NCP Member Secretary Akhter Hossain MP, Bangladesh Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Chairman Dr. Colonel Oli Ahmed Bir Bikram, Mostafizur Rahman Iran, JAGPA's Rashed Pradhan, and AB Party Chairman Mujibur Rahman Manju.

Besides, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami Naib-e-Ameer Professor Mujibur Rahman, Assistant Secretary Rafiqul Islam Khan, Central Executive Council Member and Assistant Regional Director of Rangpur-Dinajpur Region Maulana Momtaz Uddin, Central Executive Council Member and Member of Parliament for Rangpur-3 constituency Mahbubur Rahman Belal, Member of Parliament for Rangpur-5 constituency Golam Rabbani, and Rangpur Metropolitan Ameer A.T.M. Azam Khan also spoke.

Among others who spoke were Liberal Democratic Party Presidium Member Professor Omar Faruk, Bangladesh Khilafat Andolan leader Mufti Fakhru Islam, Islami Chhatra

Shibir Central Secretary Sibgatullah Sibga, Bangladesh Sramik Kalyan Federation Central President Atikur Rahman, Nasir Uddin Patowary, DUCSU VP Sadik, Sarjis Alam, DUCSU GS S.M. Farhad, student leader Rezaul Karim Shakil, former Shibir president Delwar Hossain, Rajshahi University Shibir President student leader Mujahid Faisal, former Shibir president Rajibur Rahman Palash, Barrister Shahriar Kabir, Bangladesh Khilafat Majlis Rangpur Metropolitan President Maulana Ibrahim Khalil, JAGPA central leader Professor Iqbal Hossain, NCP Rangpur Metropolitan Convener Abdul Malek, Rangpur District Convener Al Mamun, and Bangladesh Labour Party Rangpur Metropolitan President Shamsuddin Rajas, among leaders from various levels.

The rally was conducted by Metropolitan Jamaat Assistant Secretary Al Amin Hasan, District Jamaat Secretary Maulana Enamul Haque, and Islami Chhatra Shibir Rangpur Metropolitan President Anisur Rahman. Leaders of the 11-party alliance from various levels in Rangpur were present at the rally.

Nazrul was a pioneer of

and his rebellious stance is a remarkable chapter in the history of our press," he said. The Nazrul researcher said Nazrul transformed the landscape of journalism and introduced a new style of writing editorials and crafting headlines through poetry. Presenting Nazrul before world Abdul Hye Sikder thinks that there is a significant shortfall in adequately showcasing Nazrul's literature at the international level. He mentioned that during his tenure at the Nazrul Institute, initiatives were taken to translate some of Nazrul's works into Chinese, Persian, and Urdu. "However, these efforts were not enough. More effective state-level initiatives are required to translate Nazrul's literature into various global languages and promote those at international level." Recalling his experiences during a visit to China, Sikder mentioned that when officials there were presented with English translations of Nazrul's works, they were surprised that a poet had openly advocated for independence and stood up for the oppressed as early as 1922. Citing similar experiences in Iran, the Middle East, and Saudi Arabia, he emphasised the need for high-quality translations and widespread promotion of Nazrul's literary works to properly showcase him to the world.

Drawing on his long experience in Nazrul research, Abdul Hye Sikder noted that many profound aspects of Nazrul's literature and philosophy have yet to be properly explored. He observed that for a long time, the study of Nazrul was dominated by individuals who were largely overly emotional and lacked adequate education. They prioritised the poet's external exuberance and eccentricity, the core philosophy of the poet was ignored, he added.

According to him, the tradition of modern Nazrul study, initiated by poet Abdul Quadir, was subsequently advanced by researchers like Abdul Mannan Syed, Mohammad Mahfuzullah, and Shahabuddin Ahmad, but much work remains to be done. He stressed conducting an in-depth research on Nazrul's all literary works to make the Nazrul study more dynamic and meaningful. Ideological link between Nazrul and Ziaur Rahman Abdul Hye Sikdar believed that there is an ideological link between Nazrul's rebellious spirit and the political role Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman played during the 1971 War of Liberation and nation-building. He said Ziaur Rahman's mother was an 'A-grade' Nazrul Geeti singer at Kolkata Betar (radio), while Ziaur Rahman had been inspired by Nazrul's spirit since his childhood. Sikder observed that Nazrul prepared a subjugated nation for independence through his literature and journalism.

PM to highlight renewed democratic journey, Rohingya issue at UNGA



Staff correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman will present Bangladesh's renewed democratic journey alongside its positions on major global challenges in his maiden UN General Assembly (UNGA) address, with prominently featuring protracted Rohingya issue. The Prime Minister, who is expected to address the 81st session of the UNGA in Bangla on September 24, will outline the government's vision for the country's future as well as its approach to pressing regional and global issues. Foreign Secretary Asad Alam disclosed the broad focus of the premier's address at a curtain-raiser press conference on his upcoming UNGA visit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here today.

"The Prime Minister will address Bangladesh's renewed democratic journey, the rule of law and accountability, global peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, economic cooperation, the empowerment of youth and women, education and health, the Rohingya issue, the equitable and inclusive use of modern technology, and reform of the multilateral system," he said. The address will be particularly significant as it will be Tarique Rahman's first appearance at the UN General Assembly as Prime Minister and the incumbent government's first opportunity to present its political commitments and vision before the world's highest multilateral forum, he said. Alongside his General Assembly address, the Prime Minister

will seek to refocus international attention on the protracted Rohingya issue and mobilise stronger global cooperation towards its resolution. He is scheduled to attend a Bangladesh-hosted side event on the Rohingya issue on September 23, where he will seek effective international cooperation for the earliest possible repatriation of the forcibly displaced Rohingyas to Myanmar. Responding to a question, the Foreign Secretary described the Rohingya issue as an "ongoing problem" and said Bangladesh would once again use the gathering of world leaders to highlight the magnitude of the issue and the challenges it poses. "We will once again present to the global community the magnitude of the Rohingya issue, the challenges it poses and the international cooperation, assistance and support Bangladesh requires," Siam said. Bangladesh has repeatedly maintained that the safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of the Rohingyas to Myanmar is the only viable and lasting solution to the issue. The Prime Minister's UN engagements will also give particular prominence to climate change, another issue where Bangladesh is seeking stronger international action. On September 23, he will attend a high-level meeting titled "Climate Action and the Just Transition", convened at the initiative of the UN Secretary-General. The following day, he will deliver the opening remarks at a high-level meeting on the existential threats

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Opratim killed in bid to snatch iPhone: SP

Staff correspondent

Police on Sunday claimed that seventh-grader Yashat Shahriar Opratim was killed during an attempt to snatch iPhone he was carrying in the Lalmai Sananda hill area in Cumilla Sadar Dakkhain upazila. Three people have been arrested in connection with the killing, while another person, identified as Siam, 19, has been detained and his alleged involvement is being verified, said Cumilla Superintendent of Police Md Anisuzzaman. While briefing reporters at his office in the afternoon, the SP said

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Bumper jute harvest, higher prices bring smiles to Sharsha farmers

Staff correspondent

A bumper harvest and higher market prices have brought fresh smiles to jute farmers in Sharsha upazila of Jashore this season. Farmers are now selling newly harvested jute at Tk 3,800 to Tk 4,000 per maund, around Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,200 more than the prices they received at the beginning of the previous

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Opratim murder trial to be completed soon: Home Minister



Staff correspondent

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed today expressed hope that the trial in the murder of seventh-grader Ishayat Shahriar Opratim would be completed within a short time, as in the Ramisa murder case. "The court will conduct the trial. We will extend all-out cooperation by completing the necessary legal procedures and submitting the charge sheet," he said. He made the remarks at a press briefing on the contemporary issues at the Home Ministry at the Bangladesh Secretariat here. The minister said people across the country were deeply shocked by the murder in Cumilla, adding that police recovered Opratim's body within 24 hours and arrested four suspects within 12

hours. He said the suspects had confessed to their involvement in the killing. Salahuddin said some of the suspects appeared to be members of a juvenile crime group and had been acquainted with Opratim. "They were friends and used to spend time together. Preliminary information suggests they were five to 10 years older than

Opratim," he said, adding that the ages of the suspects were being verified through their national identity records. The minister said the mobile phone involved in the incident had been recovered from the prime suspect, identified as Tuhin. "All the evidence has been recovered and they have confessed. Police are now taking further legal steps, including whether their statements can be recorded under Section 164," he said. Praising the police, the minister said they had succeeded in arresting all the suspects within 12 hours and recovering key evidence in the case. Opratim, 13, went out of his home around 3pm on Friday with his mother's iPhone to take photographs with friends but did not return. Police later recovered his body from a forested area

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Stone hearted Father Is this even possible

Staff Reporter, Sylhet.

Poverty everywhere, nothing but poverty. What beautiful innocent children in Tahirpur of Sunamganj, three children have died after their father made them drink poison. After making his children drink poison, he also drank poison himself. The father has been sent to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

The incident happened at around 1:00 AM on Friday night (18 September) in Rajaniline village of North BORDAL Union of the upazila.

The deceased children are Mawa Akter (10), daughter of Sarafat Ali of Rajaniline village, and sons Shamim Mia (7) and Tamim Mia (2). Their father Sarafat Ali (35) is currently under treatment. According to local residents and police sources, Sarafat Ali's

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Abandoned Mortar Shell Recovered in Gowainghat, Destroyed by Army Bomb Disposal Unit

Naeem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat Sylhet

An abandoned mortar shell found in Gowainghat, Sylhet, was recovered and safely destroyed through a controlled procedure by the Bangladesh Army's bomb disposal unit. The mortar shell was destroyed on Sunday (September 20) afternoon in the Nayagang-er-Par area of Madhya Jafalng Union under Gowainghat Upazila.

According to police, several local children spotted the mortar shell while playing on Saturday evening. Later, a few young men attempted to break it by striking it against the ground, but failed. After the incident came to light, police went to the spot, secured the area and kept the mortar shell under surveillance. Later, following a court order, the Army's Sylhet ATO bomb disposal unit, led by Captain Monira, arrived at the scene on Sunday afternoon and destroyed the mortar shell through a special procedure. Members of the police and army were present at the scene during the operation.

Authorities advised that if an abandoned mortar shell or any similar explosive device is found, people should not touch or move it and should immediately inform the law enforcement authorities.

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The School That Turned Sunlight Into Savings How Jorarganj Buddhist High School tackled power outages, soaring bills and classroom heat with solar energy



Jwel Nag, Mirsarai, Chattogram.

For years, power outages and rising electricity bills were more than an inconvenience at Jorarganj Buddhist High School. During the summer, they also made classrooms increasingly uncomfortable for near-

ly 2,000 students.

The school eventually took an unusual step for a local educational institution: instead of depending entirely on the national grid, it invested Tk 2.4 million of its own funds in a 12-kilowatt solar power system.

Three years on, the numbers tell a striking story.

The school says its monthly electricity bill, once averaging Tk 25,000–30,000, has now fallen to less than Tk 5,000. School officials estimate that without the solar system, the current monthly bill could have risen to Tk 50,000–60,000.

The investment has therefore become not only an energy project but also a long-term cost-saving measure.

A problem hiding in plain sight

Jorarganj Buddhist High School stands beside the Muhuri Project Road in Jorarganj, roughly 10 kilometres from Mirsarai Sadar.

Like many educational institutions in Bangladesh, the school had to cope with two interconnected problems: unreliable electricity during periods of power shortages and increasing electricity consumption as its infrastructure expanded.

The school now operates across three concrete buildings,

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Traditional boat race held in Bhanga, Faridpur

Biplab Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

After almost 12 years, a traditional boat race of rural Bengal has been held in the Kumar River in Bhanga, Faridpur. On Friday (18 September) afternoon, thousands of men and women gathered on both banks of the river to watch this boat race organised near Bhanga Bazar. The entire area became festive due to the long-awaited traditional event.

Under the patronage of Member of Parliament Shahidul Islam Khan Babul from Faridpur-4 constituency, 25 boats from various parts of the country participated in the race. Extensive preparations were made two days prior to the competition. Members of the police and law enforcement agencies, along with fire service personnel, were on duty to maintain law and order.

The holding of the boat race after 12 years brought extra excitement and enthusiasm among the locals. From the afternoon, spectators began to gather on both banks of the river, on bridges, in nearby tall buildings, and at various loca

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Upazila Administration Conducts Cleanliness Drive at Guliakhali Sea Beach

Md. Omar Faruk | Special Correspondent

A cleanliness drive and tree plantation programme were held at Guliakhali Sea Beach, one of the scenic tourist destinations in Sitakunda upazila of Chattogram, under the initiative of the Sitakunda Upazila Administration.

The programme was inaugurated at around 12:00 noon on Saturday (September 19) by Sitakunda Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Md. Fakhru Islam. During the cleanliness drive, scattered garbage, plastic, polythene and other waste materials from different areas of Guliakhali Sea Beach were removed. The initiative also focused on raising public awareness about protecting the natural beauty and environment of the tourist destination. As part of the pro-

gramme, saplings of various species were planted in different areas of the beach. Local residents, tourists and all concerned were urged to play a responsible role in keeping the tourist spot clean and environmentally friendly. Emphasis was also placed on disposing of waste at designated places and reducing the use of plastic and

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Three sons attempt to beat their own father to death over ancestral property dispute in Shahbazpur village

M Badal Khandaker (District Representative)

In Chandu Mia Para, Shahbazpur village, Sarail Upazila, three sons, Afsar Rashid, Tutul Rashid, and Tanvir Rashid, severely beat and injured their own father, Janu Mia, over a dispute regarding ancestral property.

It is to be noted that the injured Janu Mia is the biological father of Afsar Rashid, Tutul Rashid, and Tanvir Rashid. For a long time, they have been pressuring their father Janu Mia to transfer all his personal property to the names of his three sons and have beaten and injured

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জালালাবাদ চক্ষু হাসপাতালে

এখন প্রতি **শুক্রবার** বিকালে রোগী দেখবেন

চক্ষু বিশেষজ্ঞ ও সার্জন

ডা. আহম্মাদুল বারী

এম.বি.এস, এম.এস (অপথালমোলোজী)
এমপিএইচ (ক্লিনিক্যাল অপথালমোলোজী)
পিএইচডি (অপথালমোলোজী)
সিনিয়র কন্সাল্ট্যান্ট ও সার্জন,
জালালাবাদ চক্ষু হাসপাতাল এন্ড ফ্যাকালি সেন্টার

সন্ধ্যা ৬টা থেকে রাত ৯টা

০১৭০২-৫৫৮৭৫৯
০১৯২০-১২৫৪৯৫

ওয়াপদা গেট, অক্সিজেন, চট্টগ্রাম

Humanitarian Eye Doctor

Free treatment is provided to helpless and extremely poor eye patients.
Jalalabad Eye Hospital, Chattogram.

PM to highlight renewed

posed by sea-level rise. At the climate-related meetings, the premier is expected to articulate the concerns of climate-vulnerable countries, focusing particularly on climate finance, adaptation, technology transfer, loss and damage, and climate justice.

His UNGA address will also underline Bangladesh's priorities concerning global peace and security, sustainable development and economic cooperation while advocating greater empowerment of youth and women and equitable access to modern technology.Reform of the multilateral system will be another element of the speech as Bangladesh seeks a more effective and inclusive international architecture capable of responding to contemporary global challenges.The Prime Minister will also participate in a high-level meeting on tackling the global inequality crisis and a Bangladesh-hosted side event on maternal and newborn health and midwifery.

Siam said the United Nations programme would receive priority during the Prime Minister's visit, while his schedule of bilateral and other engagements would remain "an evolving process".

As per the schedule, the foreign secretary said that, on the side-lines of the UNGA, the premier is scheduled to hold bilateral meetings with the Crown Prince of Kuwait and the prime ministers of Croatia, Bhutan, Thailand, Pakistan and Haiti.The talks are expected to cover political and economic relations, trade and investment, development cooperation, the Rohingya issue and other issues of mutual interest, Siam said.

The Prime Minister is also scheduled to meet the UN Secretary-General, the President of the European Council, the President of the World Bank Group, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar, and the UN high commissioners for refugees and human rights.He is also expected to meet the President of the International Peace Institute.As part of the government's economic diplomacy, the premier will hold meetings with senior representatives of Meta, Wall Street and several other business organisations. The Prime Minister will leave Dhaka for New York tomorrow and is scheduled to return home after completing his engagements on September 25.

Opratim killed in bid to

Opratim's mobile phone was recovered from the house of prime suspect Saiful Islam Tuhin, which helped investigators piece together the alleged sequence of events.According to police, CCTV footage showed Tuhin accompanying Opratim to an isolated, hilly area in Sananda around 3:15pm on September 18.Following the recovery of Opratim's body on Saturday, police took Tuhin into custody after identifying him from the CCTV footage.During interrogation, Tuhin told police that he took the schoolboy to the area intending to snatch his mobile phone, the SP said.He said based on information provided by Tuhin, police later took Mozammel Hossain Fahad into custody. During interrogation, Fahad disclosed the involvement of his friend Md Kamrul Hasan, following which police also took Kamrul into custody.Anisuzzaman said they later recovered Opratim's mobile phone from Tuhin's house based on information provided by him.According to the preliminary investigation, an attempt was made to snatch Opratim's mobile phone between 5:00pm and 6:00pm on September 18 in the Sananda area.“When Opratim resisted, a scuffle broke out. At one stage, Tuhin first struck Opratim on the head with a bamboo stick, followed by Fahad and Kamrul,” the SP said, adding that he died from the blows.After Opratim’s death, Tuhin took his mobile phone and left the scene with Fahad and Kamrul, he said.

Details about Farhad were withheld as he is a minor.Siam, 19, has also been detained, and police are examining the information and evidence gathered regarding his alleged involvement.A murder case was filed against the arrested suspects, police said.They are also investigating whether anyone else was involved in the killing and said a police report will be submitted to the court after completion of the investigation.Opratim, the only son of Dr Nahida Begum, an associate professor of the Department of Bangla at Cumilla University, and KM Firoz Shahriar, was found dead in a jungle in the Sananda area on Saturday. He was buried at the family graveyard in Kotbari on Sunday.

Bumper jute harvest, higher

season. At the start of last season, new jute was sold for Tk 2,600 to Tk 2,800 per maund. This year, farmers initially received Tk 3,500 to Tk 3,600, with prices rising further in recent weeks.

The higher prices have come as a welcome relief for farmers, particularly after they faced difficulties with jute retting last year due to inadequate rainfall.

This year, however, sufficient rainfall has ensured an adequate supply of water for retting, allowing farmers to complete the process without major difficulties.

According to the Sharsha Department of Agricultural Extension office, jute production has also been good this year. The area under jute cultivation increased to 5,503 hectares from 5,000 hectares last year, an increase of 503 hectares.Farmers said favourable weather and good yields have helped them earn more despite higher production costs.Labour wages have also increased notably. Workers who were hired for around Tk 400 last year now demand higher wages for harvesting, retting and stripping jute fibre.As a result, production costs have increased by around Tk 200 to Tk 300 per maund compared to last year.

Farmer Abdul Alim said he was happy with both the yield and the market price.“The jute yield has been very good this year, and I am also getting a good price. Compared to last year, I am earning Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,200 more per maund,” he said.Jute trader Bablu Rahman said he buys jute directly from local farmers and sends it to major trading centres, including Kushtia, Faridpur, Khulna and Bogura.

Sharsha Upazila Agriculture Officer Dipok Kumar Saha said farmers are benefiting this year from favourable weather, good yields and satisfactory market prices.

He said government support, including the free distribution of quality jute seeds and regular agricultural advice, has also contributed to the farmers' success.

“With favourable weather, better production and good prices, jute farmers in Sharsha are happy this year,” he said. For Sharsha's jute farmers, the season has brought not only a good harvest but also the prospect of better earnings from a traditional crop that remains an important source of livelihood in the region.

How Jorarganj Buddhist High

with around 45 rooms, including classrooms, teachers' facilities and administrative offices.

Its electricity demand is substantial. The institution uses approximately 150 fans and 120 lights, in addition to computers, an air conditioner and other electrical equipment.

With almost 2,000 students attending classes, even a short power interruption can affect the classroom environment. The school's response was to reduce its dependence on conventional electricity.

The investment: Tk 24 lakh

Three years ago, the school installed a 12-kilowatt solar power system through a private company based in Dhaka.

The total cost was Tk 24 lakh, paid from the school's own funds.

At first glance, the investment appeared substantial for an educational institution.

But the subsequent reduction in electricity expenditure has

changed the calculation.

If the school previously paid an average of Tk 25,000–30,000 a month, the annual electricity expenditure was roughly Tk 3–3.6 lakh.

At the current rate of less than Tk 5,000 a month, the annual bill is now below approximately Tk 60,000, based on the school's figures.

That represents a substantial reduction in recurring electricity expenditure.

The school's officials, however, point out that the actual financial benefit also depends on factors such as sunlight availability, maintenance and the system's operating life.

What happens inside the classrooms?

A recent visit to the school provides a practical picture of the change.

By 8am, the campus is crowded with students. Classes continue throughout the day, while electric fans operate inside classrooms even during periods of intense heat.

Computers used for administrative work also receive power from the solar system.

For students, the benefit is perhaps most visible on hot days.

“We used to suffer because of load-shedding,” said Class 10 science student Tahsin Karim Tritiya. “But now the fans keep running because of solar power, so we can attend classes comfortably even in hot weather.”

‘We wanted to solve two problems at once’

Founder and Head Teacher Tushar Kanti Barua says the project was not launched simply as an environmental initiative. The school was trying to address a practical problem.

«“Power outages used to disrupt classes, while our electricity bills were increasing day by day. We decided to install solar power to ensure a comfortable learning environment for students and reduce the school's expenses,” he said.»

According to Barua, the system supplies most of the school's required electricity for much of the year, except during periods of severe weather.

He acknowledges that the initial investment was large, but argues that the long-term benefits have justified the expenditure.

The institution behind the initiative

The school itself has a history of expansion.

In 1988, Barua established an educational institution called JB Shishu Kanan on one acre of family-owned land near Jorarganj Bazar.

Four years later, in 1992, it became a full-fledged high school following requests from parents and the growing demand for education in the area.

The institution now employs 58 teachers and 10 other staff members.

Its growing student population has required continuous expansion of its physical infrastructure and consequently, greater electricity consumption.

That makes the decision to shift part of its energy demand to solar particularly significant.

Could other schools follow?

Assistant Head Teacher Subhash Sarker believes the experience could be replicated elsewhere.

“Since installing solar power, it would be fair to say that we no longer face significant problems with electricity,” he said.

According to Sarker, the ability to keep fans running during extreme heat has improved the classroom environment for both teachers and students.

“This could be a model worth following for other educational institutions,” he said.

But replication would require schools to consider several factors before making a similar investment: available rooftop space, solar exposure, equipment quality, maintenance costs, electricity demand and the institution's financial capacity.

In other words, solar power may offer significant savings, but the economics will not necessarily be identical for every school.

Officials see an example in Jorarganj

Mirsarai Upazila Nirbahi Officer Somaiya Akter described the initiative as an environmentally friendly and cost-effective approach.

“The government is also encouraging the use of renewable energy in various ways,” she said. “By bringing the entire school under solar power, Jorarganj Buddhist High School has set an exemplary precedent.”

Her comments highlight a broader question: whether schools and other public serving institutions can reduce operating costs while simultaneously increasing their use of renewable energy. Solar power and academic performance

The school's recent achievements are not limited to energy savings.

According to the school authorities, Jorarganj Buddhist High School achieved the top SSC examination result among schools in Mirsarai upazila this year.

The combination of academic performance and investment in renewable energy has drawn attention locally. Yet the school's solar project offers a lesson beyond its own campus.

The experience suggests that renewable energy can serve an immediate educational purpose: keeping classrooms operational and comfortable while reducing recurring electricity costs.

A 24lakh question with a longterm answer

The most important question surrounding the project is simple: Was the Tk 24 lakh investment worthwhile?

The school's experience so far suggests that the answer depends on looking beyond the initial price tag.

The institution has reduced its monthly electricity expenditure dramatically while gaining greater resilience against power interruptions.

There are still variables,maintenance, equipment lifespan, weather conditions and future electricity prices that will determine the system's ultimate financial return.

But three years into the project, one thing is already evident. At a school where nearly 2,000 students study every day, sunlight is no longer simply part of the weather.

It has become part of the school's infrastructure.

Opratim murder trial to be

of the Lalmai hills near Cumilla University.

The Home Minister said the government has taken swift legal action after uncovering heinous crimes, including arresting those responsible and initiating necessary legal proceedings.

“We have been able to uncover heinous crimes within the shortest possible time and take necessary legal measures since the present government assumed office,” he said.

He said cases that require more time would be assessed based on the progress of investigations.Regarding statistics on missing children published by Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), the minister said the government was taking the issue seriously and examining the available data.Identifying social degradation as a major factor behind crime, he said cybercrimes were often linked to drugs, gambling and pornography. To address the problem and restore social discipline, the government is placing greater emphasis on cultural activities, sports and moral education at the primary and secondary school levels so that young people can develop with clear goals, he said.He also called on conscious citizens from all sections of society to perform their responsibilities from their respective positions.Criticising recent incidents of crude bomb explosions and arson attacks on parked buses in different parts of the capital at night, he said suspects involved in the crude bomb attacks had been arrested along with motorcycles and were being interrogated.

Those involved in incidents near the High Court gate and in Jatrabari had also been brought to justice, while CCTV footage was being analysed to identify others involved, he said.

The minister said neither the government nor the people were intimidated by such activities, adding that the people had already rejected them.On the opposition's recent long marches, Salahuddin said every political party has the right to engage in

constructive criticism and programmes under democratic practices.He said the recent long marches in Chattogram and the northern region were held peacefully, with law enforcement agencies extending necessary cooperation.The minister said the ultimate decision in politics would come through public opinion, while the government's primary responsibility was to maintain peace and order, end the culture of impunity and ensure speedy justice for crimes.Speaking about the electricity and fuel crisis, he attributed the situation mainly to rising global oil prices and past neglect of domestic gas exploration. He said although accumulated problems from the previous period had created a temporary crisis in the power and energy sector, the present government was focusing on extracting the country's own resources.

The government has planned to drill 150 new gas wells by 2030-31 to ensure uninterrupted gas supplies to the industrial sector, he said.As part of the plan, 12 million cubic feet of gas per day has already been added to the national grid from Well No. 28 of the Titas Gas Field.Salahuddin expressed optimism that Bangladesh would soon become self-sufficient in gas through the use of its own natural resources and find a lasting solution to the power and energy crisis.Responding to a question about the recent incident in Tejgaon, the minister said 23 people were detained on intelligence information after they allegedly held a secret meeting at a mosque following Friday prayers.

After forensic examination of their mobile phones and preliminary interrogation, 11 people against whom no evidence was found were released into the custody of their guardians, he said.According to information obtained about the others, they were allegedly attempting to form a new extremist organisation called ‘Itiihadul Ummah’, he said.

Reiterating the government's zero-tolerance policy against any form of extremism, the minister said cases had been filed against those involved and they had been placed on remand, while investigations were continuing in accordance with the law.

Stone hearted Father

wife Fatema Begum went abroad to Saudi Arabia three days ago. On Friday night, Sarafat Ali went to sleep in his house with his three children. Later, at around 1:00 AM, he reportedly drank pesticide along with his three children. After drinking poison, Sarafat Ali informed one of his aunts living in Mymensingh over mobile phone and asked her not to hold any grudge. Upon learning about it, his aunt informed Rahmat Ali, Sarafat Ali's younger brother who was at home. Later, Rahmat Ali and other family members quickly went to Sarafat Ali's house, broke down the door and rescued the four.

KU launches four-day

Education (OBE) curriculum."Teachers have to adapt themselves to these changes and become actively involved in the quality education process,” he said.He stressed the need for both young and senior teachers to remain regularly updated on curriculum and teaching-learning methods.

The VC also urged newly appointed teachers to take greater interest in research to enrich their knowledge and professional capabilities.IQAC Director Prof Dr Md Mostafizur Rahman chaired the inaugural session, while its Additional Director Prof Dr SM Touhidur Rahman delivered the welcome address. Additional Director Prof Dr Md Wasilul Islam moderated the programme.

Following the inaugural session, Prof Dr Rezaul Karim conducted a session as a resource person on "Professional Knowledge and Understanding of Teaching-Learning in Higher Education."

The training has been organised to help lecturers gain basic knowledge and necessary skills regarding university teaching-learning methods and administrative activities.

Newly appointed lecturers from different disciplines of Khulna University are participating in the four-day training programme.

Upazila Administration Conducts

polythene.Cleaners from Sitakunda Municipality and BNCC cadet members of Sitakunda Degree College participated in the cleanliness campaign.

Among those present were Assistant Commissioner (Land) of Sitakunda Md. Fazle Rabbi, Secondary Education Officer Ismat Ara, Upazila Fisheries Officer Md. Motasin Billah, Agriculture Extension Officer Md. Ishtiaq, Convener of Sitakunda Upazila BNP Dr. Kamal Kadar, President of the Teachers' Association Md. Mobarak Ali Master, Administrative Officer of Muradpur Union Parishad Nirmal Chandra Das, along with officials from various departments of the Upazila Administration and leaders of political and social organisations.

BGFCL targets 106.5

domestic gas, equivalent to around 18 percent of total gas supply.The company is conducting seismic surveys to identify new structures for exploration and development. A 3D seismic survey is underway across 1,450 square kilometres, covering 875 sq km in and around Habiganj and 575 sq km across the Bakhrabad, Narsingdi and Meghna fields. Another 632 sq km is being surveyed using 2D and 3D seismic methods northwest of Titas and northeast of Narsingdi.Under a project to drill four appraisal-cum-development wells in the Titas and Kamta fields, drilling of Titas-28 began on December 15, 2025, and was completed on June 19, 2026.

Chinese company CNPC Chuanqing Drilling Engineering Company Ltd (CCDC) carried out the drilling under an integrated contract signed with BGFCL on April 10, 2025.

The well was drilled to a measured depth of 3,601 metres and a true vertical depth of 3,471 metres. Completion, including drill-stem and production testing, has also been completed. BGFCL is also drilling the Titas-31 and Titas-29 deep exploration wells to increase gas production.

Three sons attempt to beat their

him several times. At that time, the injured Janu Mia sought legal help and had Afsar Rashid sent to jail. A few days ago, Afsar Rashid was released on bail from jail after giving a bond.

On September 19, in the afternoon, Afsar Rashid, Tutul Rashid, and Tanvir Rashid again pressured their biological father Janu Mia to transfer the property. When the injured Janu Mia refused to transfer the property, an argument started between them. At that point, the three sons became agitated, brought a ramda (sharp weapon) from the house, and hacked their father Janu Mia indiscriminately, severely injuring him. The injured Janu Mia then collapsed to the ground and blood flowed continuously from his nose and mouth. At that time, locals rescued the injured Janu Mia and sent him to B-Brahmanbaria Hospital, but as his condition was critical, the B-Brahmanbaria hospital authorities referred him to Dhaka. The locals and the concerned authorities are drawing the attention of the administration to bring the three sons under the law and ensure proper justice.

Bishapara village in Dinajpur now known as ‘Dairy Village’

Staff correspondent

Bishapara village under Boaldar union of Hakimpur upazila in Dinajpur has emerged as a ‘Dairy Village’ with 68 small and large farms raising indigenous and crossbred cows, creating new opportunities for dairy farming and livelihoods in the

area.The farms currently have 287 cows, including 96 heifers, 74 crossbred cows and 117 indigenous cows. Of them, 96 cows produce around 695 kilograms of milk daily on average. Located about four kilometres south of Hakimpur upazila headquarters, Bishapara has gained the reputation of a dairy village over the past decade as almost every household has become involved in cattle rearing and milk production.With support from the private development organisation MBSK, which works in collaboration with the Department of Livestock Services, local farmers have received assistance in cattle rearing and dairy farming. The village was officially declared a ‘Dairy Village’ by the Hakimpur Upazila Livestock Office on January 1, 2017.

MBSK livestock officer Md Habibur Rahman told BSS that the number of cattle in the village has increased from 265 last year to 287 this year, with 22 new cows added during the period.

He said the organisation has been working extensively to make poor men and women of the village self-reliant through cattle rearing and milk production. As a result, many families are now earning a living by selling milk, while their children are also pursuing higher education.During a recent visit to Bishapara, BSS talked to retired Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) member and farmer Md Rafiqul Islam, 52.

He said he bought a Friesian cow about five years ago and now has nine cows at his farm, five of which are currently producing milk. The other four are pregnant.

Rafiqul said he has already sold four cows and six bulls from his farm for around Taka 27 lakh. He also has five calves, while the nine cows currently at his farm are worth an estimated Taka 25 lakh. “In the initial stage, we faced difficulties in selling milk. Now Bishapara is widely known for supplying pure milk, and wholesalers from Bogura come to our homes every day to collect milk at a fair price,” he said.

He said milk is sold at Taka 60 per litre, with buyers making cash payments. With the help of NGO officials, farmers have also established links with several yoghurt manufacturers in Bogura, enabling them to sell milk at reasonable prices.Rafiqul said around 700 to 800 litres of milk are collected daily from the village by Maloy Ghosh and Ramchandra of Bogura.Another farmer, Saheda Begum, 40, wife of Haresh Ali, said they started their dairy farm eight years ago by taking a Taka 1 lakh low-interest loan from an NGO and selling six trees. With Taka 1.8 lakh, they bought two foreign-breed heifers.

“By rearing those cows, we now have eight cows on our farm. Five of them produce 55 to 60 kilograms of milk daily, while the other three are pregnant and will give birth soon,” she said. Saheda said they have sold nine cattle for Taka 25 lakh over the past few years. They used the money to arrange marriages for their two daughters and purchase one bigha of land, where they cultivate grass as feed for the cattle.Hakimpur Upazila Livestock Officer Dr Md Montasir Mamun told BSS that regular courtyard meetings are organised with farmers in Bishapara to promote modern methods of cattle rearing and care.

He said medical teams are also formed to provide treatment and veterinary services whenever any disease outbreak occurs.

“As a result, Bishapara, known as a ‘Dairy Village’, has now earned a reputation as a model village for milk production,” he added.

Sr. Chinese communist party leader keen to visit Bangladesh: envoy

Staff correspondent

The minister of the Communist Party of China Central Committee's International Department has expressed interest in visiting Bangladesh by the end of this year. Outgoing Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen disclosed this during his farewell call on State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today, said a foreign ministry's press release here.

The ambassador said the IDCPC minister has close connections with Bangladesh, as his father had served as China's ambassador to the country and presented his credentials to the then-president Shaheed Ziaur Rahman.During the meeting, Kobir appreciated Yao's role in strengthening Bangladesh-China relations and acknowledged his contribution to the successful visit of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to China.The state minister said that during Yao's tenure, bilateral relations had been elevated to the Shared Community level, while several mechanisms, including a state minister-level 2+2 dialogue, were set to commence. Yao said it had been a great honour to serve in Bangladesh for three years and nine months and reaffirmed that China would continue supporting the country's development journey.He also congratulated Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman on his election as President of the United Nations General Assembly, describing it as a proud moment for Bangladesh.Kobir expressed confidence that Bangladesh-China relations would continue to deepen.He thanked the ambassador for his service, wished him success in his new assignment and expressed hope that their paths would cross again.

Report against Hasina, others in Meghna-Gomti Bridge toll scam case on Dec 10

Staff correspondent

A court here today set December 10 for filing a probe report in a case against 17 individuals, including ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, for allegedly causing a loss of Taka 309 crore to the government through irregularities and abuse of power in awarding a contract to collect toll on the Meghna-Gomti Bridge. Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge Shahjahan Kabir passed the order as the investigating agency, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), failed to submit the report today.The ACC on October 12, 2025, filed the case against 17, including ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.The other accused in the case are Amir Hossain Amu, Tofail Ahmed, Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Obaidul Quader, Anisul Huq, MA Mannan, MAN Siddique, Md Faruq Jalil, Mohammad Shafiqul Karim, Md Firoz Iqbal, Ibne Alam Hasan, Md Aftab Hossain Khan, Md Abdus Salam, Munir Uz Zaman Chowdhury, Selina Chowdhury and Ikram Iqbal.According to the case documents, Computer Network Systems Ltd (CNS) was given the contract through a single-source tender, bypassing competitive bidding, in 2016. CNS was given a five-year contract with a service charge of 17.75 per cent of total toll revenue. As a result, it received more than Taka 489 crore in bills-much higher than comparable contracts.

World's latest medical technologies to be brought to Bangladesh: Minister

Staff correspondent

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain on Sunday said the government will bring the latest medical technologies from around the world to Bangladesh to provide advanced treatment.He said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has also instructed the authorities to ensure world-class healthcare facilities at hospitals across the country.



Russia wraps up wartime parliamentary election with Kremlin dominance assured

International Desk

Russia's first wartime parliamentary election was due to conclude Sunday, with the absence of genuine opposition to President Vladimir Putin's policies making it all but certain that the Kremlin will retain its dominance.

The final day of voting came as Ukrainian forces launched more than 1,000 drones at Russia overnight, including hundreds targeting Moscow.

The three-day election began Friday, with authorities encouraging online voting in an effort to boost turnout among the country's 111 million eligible voters.

For the first time, the election included residents of four Ukrainian regions that Moscow illegally annexed after the war began but does not fully control. Voting is also taking place in Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula that Russia illegally annexed in 2014.

Authorities in Kyiv condemned the voting in the Russian-held areas as illegal and urged foreign governments not to recognize the results. The European Union on Friday described the move as a "blatant violation of international law."

Kremlin expected to retain control

The Kremlin wants the parliamentary election — the first since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 — to demonstrate popular support for the war and lend legitimacy to its actions. It has sought to minimize political risks by suppressing dissent.

A massive state media campaign and tight control over the election, combined with the absence of genuine opposition, are expected to help the Kremlin maintain its grip on Russian politics amid rising economic costs and increasingly frequent Ukrainian drone attacks deep inside Russia.

Voters cast two separate ballots, with half of the State Duma's 450 seats filled through party-list voting. The remaining seats are contested in single-member constituencies, where voters choose individual candidates.

Preliminary results are expected within hours after voting ends in western Russia.

United Russia, the main Kremlin-backed party, is widely expected to retain its overwhelming control of the lower house, the State Duma. Several smaller parties forming the "systemic opposition," which generally vote in line with Putin's views on key issues, are also expected to retain their presence.

Opposition sidelined as observers report violations

The liberal Yabloko party, the only registered political entity to openly criticize the war, was removed from the party-list ballot by Russia's Supreme Court last month and has only a few dozen candidates contesting single-member constituencies.

Several anti-war politicians were also imprisoned or forced to flee the country ahead of the campaign.

Yabloko and the Communist Party, which has criticized some aspects of government policy while avoiding direct criticism of Putin, said many of their election observers were denied access to polling stations.

Russia did not invite observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), while the Russian Foreign Ministry accused the body of applying "double standards" in its criticism of Russia.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Pere Joan Pons said



the decision breached Russia's commitments as a member state of the organization.

Yabloko said one of its observers lost consciousness while being detained by police at a polling station in St. Petersburg on Saturday after election officials accused him of trying to "disrupt the elections" and called the police.

The parties reported several violations, including sealed ballot boxes being opened, polling station doors not being secured overnight and officials refusing to issue paper ballots. The allegations could not be independently verified.

At a polling station in the Russian-held part of the Donetsk region, voters cast their ballots while an armed Russian soldier stood nearby and watched.

Electronic voting problems reported in Moscow

Ella Pamfilova, head of Russia's Central Election Commission, said Sunday that Moscow's electronic voting system had been targeted by cyberattacks.

SotaVision, an independent Russian news outlet, reported Sunday that voters had complained of glitches in electronic registration systems at polling stations across

Moscow.

The outlet said some voters were not issued paper ballots and were instead instructed to vote through electronic terminals.

Leonid Volkov, a close associate of the late Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, suggested that the reported failure of the system used to issue paper ballots in Moscow may have been deliberate to push voters toward electronic voting.

"Demand a paper ballot!" he wrote on X on Sunday.

Yabloko leader Nikolai Rybakov, who had urged supporters to spoil their party-list ballots, cast his vote in St. Petersburg on Sunday. His ballot was covered in bright green writing saying "For freedom," "For peace" and "Yabloko."

Russian opposition abroad stages protests

Russia's exiled opposition, including Yulia Navalnaya, widow of late opposition leader Alexei Navalny, called on anti-war Russians to cast their ballots at noon Sunday.

Thousands of Russians living in Armenia took part in the voting. Russian citizens lined up outside the Russian Embassy in Yerevan on Sunday to join the "Noon for a Peaceful Russia" anti-war demonstration. Some held posters criticizing the war and Putin.

In Germany, Russian voters cast their ballots at the Russian Embassy in Berlin, while Andrei Pivovarov, a Russian dissident and former head of the Open Russia group, addressed protesters gathered outside the embassy.

Ukraine launches more than 1,000 drones at Russia

The final day of the election unfolded against the backdrop of a major wave of Ukrainian drone attacks.

Russia's Defense Ministry said Sunday that its forces had shot down a total of 1,110 Ukrainian drones across Russia, as well as over Crimea and the Black Sea.

Two people were killed and 20 others wounded across the wider Moscow region, local Gov. Andrei Vorobyov said.

The election follows a summer of Ukrainian long-range drone strikes targeting oil refineries, triggering a widespread fuel crisis.

Warehouses belonging to online retailers Wildberries and Ozon were also attacked. The strikes have added to Russia's economic difficulties and brought the war closer to millions of people.

Egyptian president, CIA chief discuss regional issues

International Desk

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi held talks with visiting U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director John Ratcliffe on Sunday to discuss regional developments in Iran, Gaza and Sudan, the Egyptian presidency said in a statement.

During the meeting, Sisi reaffirmed Egypt's support for efforts toward "a comprehensive agreement that resolves the Iranian crisis," saying it would help restore regional security and stability and ensure freedom of international navigation, according to the statement.

On Gaza, Sisi called for the full implementation of the second phase of the U.S.-proposed plan to consolidate the ceasefire, ensuring protection of civilians and adequate, unhindered humanitarian aid access to the enclave.

The Egyptian leader also urged efforts to create conditions to resume the political process toward "a fair and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian issue" based on international resolutions and the two-state solution.

Regarding Sudan, Sisi reiterated Egypt's support for the country's unity, stability and national institutions, calling Sudan's sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity "non-negotiable principles."

The two sides also discussed developments in Somalia and the Horn of Africa, with Sisi reaffirming Egypt's support for Somalia's security and stability and rejecting any infringement on its sovereignty or territorial integrity.

Ratcliffe, for his part, praised Egypt's "pivotal role" in reaching the Gaza ceasefire agreement and its continued efforts to support the peace process and promote regional stability.

The CIA chief stressed continued bilateral coordination on regional security issues, including Sudan, Somalia, the Horn of Africa and international maritime security, according to the statement.

The meeting also addressed cooperation between the CIA and Egypt's General Intelligence Service in security, intelligence, counterterrorism, and efforts to combat organized and transnational crime.



Saudi Arabia issues first alert since escalation, and other Mideast developments

International Desk

Saudi Arabia warned of a "hostile aerial threat" and issued a string of emergency alerts across the kingdom overnight, including the first alert in its capital since an escalation in fighting with Iran-backed rebels in neighboring Yemen.

Meanwhile, the head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said Tehran has sent Washington its conditions for ending the war via Qatar, a key mediator. Israeli strikes killed three people in Gaza. And Israel's military said it struck Hezbollah targets across several areas in southern Lebanon.

Here is the latest news from the Middle East on Saturday. Full coverage is available here.

Explosion heard in Saudi capital after alerts

At least one explosion was heard in Riyadh after the first alert for the Saudi capital since the latest escalation in fighting with Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels. Residents near the airport said they saw a plume of smoke later in the morning.

No casualties or damage were reported. Saudi authorities did not comment and didn't say what prompted the alerts, but they previously reported intercepting Houthi missiles and drones.

The Houthis later claimed without providing evidence they targeted "sensitive sites" in Riyadh and facilities of the Saudi oil giant Aramco in the Red Sea port of Yanbu, causing "massive fires." Neither Saudi authorities nor Aramco, the world's largest oil company, immediately responded to a request for comment.

Houthi military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree claimed they attacked with cruise and ballistic missiles as well as drones.

Iran awaits US response to its conditions for ending the war

The head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Mohsen Rezaei, told Al Jazeera in an interview that Iran is waiting for President Donald Trump's response after Tehran conveyed its conditions for ending the war via Qatar.

It was not clear when the conditions were shared. Rezaei said they include ending the war on all fronts, releasing assets seized from Iran and ending the U.S. naval blockade of Iranian ports. Earlier U.S.-Iran negotiations fell apart.

He also said Iran wants the fighting involving Yemen and Saudi Arabia to end.

Iran executes man accused of spying for Israel

Iran's state TV said a man identified as Hossein Pedram was executed after being convicted on charges of spying for Israel's intelligence agency Mossad.

The report said Pedram shared classified information on "sensitive military sites" in Iran's Isfahan province. It didn't say how he accessed the information. He was reportedly arrested after those sites, which included missile bases, were targeted in last year's 12-day air war by the U.S. and Israel.

A recent surge of executions in Iran prompted an international outcry by rights groups.

US military says oil is flowing through the Strait of Hormuz

The head of U.S. Central Command said the military has supported the transit of 1 billion barrels of oil through the Strait of Hormuz over the past two months and claimed that Iran has "exported zero barrels" because of a U.S. blockade.

Adm. Brad Cooper said the strait's primary transit lanes have been cleared of mines, and the volume of oil, natural gas and cargo transiting over the past two weeks is the highest it has been in six months — or shortly after the war began with U.S. and Israeli strikes.

But monitors say shipping traffic remains well below prewar levels. Iran continues to attack ships as it asserts control over the waterway through which about one-fifth of the world's traded oil and natural gas passed before the war.

Israeli strikes kill 3 men in Gaza

Gaza's Health Ministry and Shifa Hospital officials said one man was killed in the Shijaiyah neighborhood of Gaza City.

US strike kills four on suspected drug-smuggling boat in Caribbean

International Desk

The U.S. military killed four people Saturday in a strike on a suspected drug-smuggling boat in the Caribbean Sea, as the Trump administration continues its monthslong campaign against alleged traffickers in Latin America. The latest attack brings the death toll from U.S. boat strikes to at least 231 in 69 operations since targeting "narcoterrorists" almost a year ago.

U.S. Southern Command said it targeted known smuggling routes, though the military provided no evidence the vessel carried drugs, releasing only a video on X showing a moving boat followed by a flash. The administration is seeking deals to extend land operations across Latin America.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras agreed to joint military operations, though Guatemala denied reaching such a deal.

Ecuador launched similar joint missions in March.

Another man, identified as the son of the ministry's director general, was killed as he walked in the Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza.

The Israeli military said it struck "several military operatives" and that it would provide more details later.

Later, officials at Shifa Hospital said an Israeli strike on a civilian vehicle in Gaza City killed one person and wounded at least four others. "The body was completely charred," managing director Rami Mhanna said.

Israel's military said it "struck a Hamas military operative."

The heaviest fighting between Israel and Hamas has subsided since a ceasefire last October, but Israeli fire has killed more than 13,780 Palestinians in Gaza since then, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Israel launches airstrikes in southern Lebanon

Israel's military said it struck targets of the Hezbollah militant group across several areas in southern Lebanon.

The strikes took place after two soldiers were wounded when their vehicle drove over a Hezbollah explosive device in an area of southern Lebanon occupied by Israeli troops, the military said.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported three Israeli airstrikes on the southern town of Nabatiyeh al-Fawqa. It said the third strike almost hit paramedics heading to the area. It said no one was hurt.

Pakistani, Iranian foreign ministers talk shipping safety

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar discussed uninterrupted energy supplies and safe passage for commercial ships during a telephone call with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Dar cited the potential effects of disruptions on developing countries and global supply chains.

Rising energy prices have increased pressure on Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government. An Islamist party has threatened to march on the capital, Islamabad, unless the government lowers fuel prices.

Iran race managers charged for allowing women to run without headscarves

Iran's state TV said the Tehran prosecutor's office filed charges against race organizers after women participated without covering their hair because "legal and Islamic Sharia" wasn't observed.

The country's ruling theocracy requires women to wear scarves that cover their hair and loose-fitting clothes that hide their bodies.

Footage circulated online shows women running the 10-kilometer (6-mile) race without the hair covering. Habib Sotoudehnejad, head of Tehran's sports department, said about 5% of participants violated race rules. The race was run separately for men and women.

Blast at Syrian arms depot kills 11

Syria's Defense Ministry held a funeral for 11 soldiers killed a day earlier during an explosion in the village of Ayash in the eastern province of Deir el-Zour.

The ministry did not give a reason for the blast that also wounded several other military personnel. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the blast occurred in an arms depot at a military post.

Kids return to school in war-devastated Gaza

The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees said more than 280,000 children in Gaza are attending school in tents and heavily damaged classrooms. At one school in Nuseirat, some classrooms have no desks, leaving children to sit on blankets on the floor. Still, some families said a return to school brings back a familiar sense of routine that was upended by war.

UNRWA education program chief Tawfiq al-Hourani said the agency three years ago operated 182 fully equipped schools. He said 95% of them have since been lost.



intercepted and shot down 1,100 Ukrainian drones across the nation, over the Black Sea, and above the annexed Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea.

The voting marked Russia's first wartime parliamentary election, an exercise virtually devoid of opposition to President Vladimir Putin's policies and structured to solidify the Kremlin's rule. Balloting was also conducted in Crimea, annexed by Russia in 2014, as well as in four Ukrainian regions annexed after the war began that Moscow still does not fully control. Kyiv has condemned the voting in these territories as illegal.



Five militants killed, 23 hostages freed in Pakistan operation

International Desk

Pakistani security forces killed five militants and rescued 23 hostages during an operation in the southwestern Balochistan province, the military said Sunday.

The militants had set up an illegal checkpoint near Kalat overnight into Saturday, stopping vehicles to abduct people for ransom, extort money and seize vehicles, according to a military statement.

The military identified the militants as members of what it called "Fitna al-Hindustan", a term used by the Pakistani government for the outlawed Baloch Liberation Army and other separatist groups operating in Balochistan. Pakistan alleges the groups receive support from India, a claim New Delhi has denied.

Security forces recovered six trucks, three buses and two cars, along with weapons, ammunition and explosives. Neither the security forces nor the rescued hostages suffered casualties, the military said.

Troops were conducting searches in the surrounding areas for any remaining militants, it added.

The operation came more than a week after Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti ruled out negotiations with insurgents and said security operations would continue until militancy was eliminated from the province.

Militants in Balochistan frequently use illegal checkpoints to abduct people for ransom. Last month, 18 police officers were killed after being abducted, according to reports.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised the security forces for the latest operation and said counterterrorism operations would continue until what he described as foreign-sponsored terrorism was eliminated.

Balochistan has faced a long-running insurgency involving several separatist groups, including the BLA, which demand independence from Pakistan's central government. The groups have mainly targeted security forces and people from Punjab travelling to the province for business or work.

Despite Pakistani authorities' claims that the insurgency has been contained, violence has continued in the province.



Rubaiyat Hossain's 'The Difficult Bride' captures millions of hearts at TIFF



Entertainment Desk

After making history by being nominated in the "Oriji" section of the 83rd Venice International Film Festival, National Film Award-winning director Rubaiyat Hossain's full-length film "The Difficult Bride" has been selected for the prestigious Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in Canada. The movie, which represents Bangladesh in the Centerpiece section of the 51st Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), has garnered favorable reviews. On September 16, the movie was shown in the afternoon at TIFF Lightbox, attracting viewers from around the world. Viewers talked about its themes of women's liberation, beauty standards, and social expectations after the filming. The psychological horror thriller had its second showing on the evening of September 17. Today, September 19, at Scotiabank Theater, there will be another showing. John, an American who saw the movie at TIFF, characterized it as a horror movie that also explores more profound emotional concerns. Instead of depending solely on conventional horror

clichés, he appreciated the movie's utilization of supernatural elements to symbolize inner concerns and psychological problems. According to Canadian viewer J, the film's depiction of a woman's quest for independence was its best feature. She complimented the last scene, in which the protagonist defies social constraints, and described the main character as being imprisoned in a "golden cage." Suzanne Smith, another Canadian viewer, commended the film's examination of beauty standards, social class disparities in Bangladesh, and the constraints around women's appearances, while Maya, another Canadian viewer, liked its contemporary depiction of women. Mehedi, a Canadian filmmaker, emphasized the film's message about embracing one's appearance and physique. He claimed that one of the most significant aspects of the movie was its examination of feminism and self-acceptance. Regarding the Toronto showing, Rubaiyat stated that the crowd response had been positive and that all three of the movie's shows had sold out. "Hundreds of films are screened here. It resembles a convention or conference in many ways. Every year, the audience looks forward to this festival," she remarked. In response to inquiries regarding the movie's usage of animals like snails, earthworms, snakes, and lizards, Rubaiyat stated that they weren't intended to be overt symbols but rather to elicit an emotional and bodily response from the audience. "I wanted the audience to experience something in their own bodies after watching the movie," she stated. The movie will go to the Chicago International Film Festival and the BFI London Film Festival after TIFF.

Kareena Kapoor says Daayra challenges stereotypes of women cops

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood actor Kareena Kapoor says her police character in Meghna Gulzar's upcoming film 'Daayra' challenges the usual stereotypes associated with women police officers. Kapoor, who is returning to the big screen after a two-year break with 'Daayra', plays DCP Ajooni Kohli in the police procedural drama, which also stars Prithviraj Sukumaran. Women police officers in films are often portrayed through a familiar stereotype — with masculine mannerisms, a tough walk and an image of someone who carries a gun and takes part in action scenes. Kapoor said 'Daayra' takes a different approach to the portrayal of a female police officer. "There is this stereotypical format kind of a version that we have that she is butch, she slightly has that particular walk, she's slightly manly, gun uptake action karti hai (she picks up a gun to do action)," Kapoor said in response to an NDTV question about how portrayals of police officers have changed over time.



Sheeran calls Gaza situation 'catastrophic and unjustifiable' at concert

Entertainment Desk

Ed Sheeran opened a solo concert and addressed the Gaza war before a nearly full stadium Saturday, saying the situation there is "catastrophic and unjustifiable" while stressing that his concerts should promote unity and humanity. Sheeran's remarks came after a turbulent week surrounding his tour. Rapper Macklemore, originally scheduled as his US opener, was dropped after saying "Free Palestine" during a September 5 New Jersey concert. Sheeran said he was not responsible for the decision. Several supporting acts later withdrew. Danish band Lukas Graham, Irish singer Aaron Rowe and Finneas, Billie Eilish's brother and collaborator, pulled out. Irish

folk band Beoga continues joining Sheeran for several songs. Sheeran said the October 7, 2023 attacks in Israel were horrific and described Gaza's situation as catastrophic. He said he did not want to become an activist musician but had been drawn into a debate over free speech and the conflict. Pro-Palestinian protesters gathered outside Saturday's show, while some fans said concerts should remain separate from politics. Macklemore said he would donate \$1 million for Palestinian relief and urged Robert Kraft to match it. Kraft's spokesperson said Kraft and Sheeran agreed to donate \$2 million each, without specifying recipients. Sheeran said everyone, regardless of views, is welcome at his concerts.

Hania Aamir takes stand against body shaming

Entertainment Desk

Hania Aamir has spoken out against the growing trend of women being trolled over their bodies, appearances and age, calling out creators who disguise misogyny as commentary. The actor took to Instagram to share a lengthy note aimed at the culture of turning women's appearances and personal lives into online content. "In 2026, using women's bodies, faces, appearances, age and personal lives as a punchline is ridiculous," she wrote, arguing that labelling such remarks as an opinion or a joke did not excuse them. "And 'it's my take' is not a free pass. Neither is calling it humour." She drew a clear distinction between criticism and cruelty. "You can have a take. You can be critical. You can be funny," she wrote, "but there is a very clear line between commentary and turning a woman's existence into content." She also pointed to the influence wielded by public figures and content creators, warning that their words could shape how audiences viewed such behaviour.



"Words have consequences beyond the moment they are said. Especially when they come from people with large platforms," she wrote. "You are not speaking into a void. You are shaping what other people think is normal, funny and acceptable." Aamir extended that responsibility to audiences as well, arguing that likes, views and shares could end up rewarding the very content people claimed to oppose. "We cannot keep demanding better from society while simultaneously rewarding the very behaviour we claim to be against," she said. Her central message was direct: "Women are not public property. Their bodies are not public commentary. Their faces are not public discourse. And honestly, we should have evolved past

this by now." She closed by urging people to stop engaging with such content altogether. "Stop giving this kind of content your attention. Stop giving it reach. Stop making a spectacle out of women and calling it entertainment," she wrote, before adding, "We can do better than this."



Zubeen Garg 1st death anniv

Entertainment Desk

Hundreds of fans, family members and artistes gathered at Zubeen Khetra in Sonapur on Saturday to commemorate the first death anniversary of Assamese music icon Zubeen Garg, as tributes continued to pour in for the singer whose work left a lasting mark on Assam's cultural landscape. The temporary memorial site known as Zubeen Khetra — the place where the last rites of the singer were performed on the outskirts of Guwahati — witnessed fans singing Garg's songs and paying homage to the artiste. A three-day commemorative programme, organised by the Assam government's Cultural Affairs Department, began on Thursday and concluded on Saturday. Garg died on September 19 last year during a sea outing in Singapore, a day before he was scheduled to perform at the North East Festival. His death triggered widespread mourning across Assam, alongside demands for an investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death.

IIFA 2027 in Abu Dhabi Performers revealed

Entertainment Desk

The 27th edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Weekend & Awards is set to take place at the Etihad Arena on Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, on January 22-23, 2027, with ticket sales now open worldwide through the venue's official platform. The upcoming two-day event marks IIFA's fourth showcase in the emirate, organised in partnership with the Department of Culture and Tourism — Abu Dhabi and Miral. The two-day extravaganza will blend high-octane stage performances, music showcases and the prestigious awards ceremony honoring the best of Indian cinema. The main IIFA Awards 2027 will be anchored by industry heavyweight Karan Johar and rising star Varun Dhawan, while the IIFA Digital Awards will see accomplished actors Pankaj Tripathi and Ali Fazal taking the reins as hosts for the first time.



Oishee 'Soldiers' on towards new dimension

Entertainment Desk

Jannatul Ferdous Oishee has already made a name for herself in the entertainment industry through modelling and acting. She began her journey in showbiz through a beauty pageant and went on to make her film debut with "Mission Extreme". Her most recent release was "Noor". She is now working with Shakib Khan for the first time in "Soldier", which is set to resume shooting soon after a break. In a recent conversation with The Daily Star, Oishee spoke about the film, working with Shakib and what she hopes it



will bring to her career. Tap here to add The Daily Star as a trusted source google-preferred-source-badger "We have completed a significant portion.

Ityadi spotlights Jamalpur's heritage in latest episode



Entertainment Desk

The popular magazine show Ityadi has once again stepped outside the studio to explore Bangladesh's rich history, heritage and cultural roots. The latest episode was shot in Jamalpur district. A song-and-dance part presenting the district is also included in the program. The duet features vocals by Shithi Saha and Mizan Mahmud Rajib. Ujjal Sinha composed and orchestrated the song, which was written by Moniruzzaman Palash. It was choreographed by SK Zahid. The performance features local

Bengali and Garo dancers. The episode features two musical performances. One song is performed by Pantha Kanai and other one is performed by Tosiba Begum. Four audience members were chosen using a Jamalpur-based quiz. The chosen competitors sang passages from four classic songs by four well-known Jamalpur cultural icons in the second section. An uplifting human-interest report on the challenges of Ferdous Hasan Bappi and Osnai Khatun, a couple who overcome physical impairments and became self-reliant through their own hard work, will also be included in this episode. The charming Chinese city of Suzhou will be highlighted in the foreign report segment, showcasing its exceptional fusion of modern technology and ancient tradition. The new episode of Ityadi will be aired on Bangladesh Television on Friday (September 25) at 8 pm, following the Bangla news bulletin. Regular segments such as Kashem TV's journalist-grandson interaction and satirical sketches on social and contemporary issues also return in this episode. The show has been written, directed and hosted by Hanif Sanket.



Lady Gaga reportedly welcomes first child

Entertainment Desk

The 40-year-old pop megastar Lady Gaga and 42-year-old entrepreneur Michael Polansky have welcomed their first child. According to documents obtained by TMZ, Lady Gaga welcomed her first child Rose Bean Polansky, who was delivered by Dr Robert Katz on June 9 at 11.19pm at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre in Los Angeles. An insider told People that Rose may have been inspired by Edith Piaf's song La Vie En Rose, which Gaga covered in the 2018 romantic musical film, A Star Is Born, while Bean could have been a nod to singer-and-activist Carl Bean, who inspired her 2011. It comes days after a separate source told the publication that she and Michael "beam when they talk about being parents". The insider added that "Michael seems lighter, happier", and that the couple "both took time off of work this summer to be with [the] baby".



Bangladesh women fall to India again, now face Pakistan for Asian Games bronze

Sports Desk

Ten days ago it was Dubai. Yesterday it was Japan. Same opponent, same result. Bangladesh's women lost to India in the Asian Games cricket semi-final on Sunday, going down by 114 runs after being bowled out for 81 while chasing India's 195 for 4. It is the same story that played out at the Women's Asia Cup on September 10, just with a bigger margin this time. The loss ends Bangladesh's shot at gold. Nigar Sultana's side will instead play Pakistan for bronze on Tuesday. Shafali Verma was the difference again. She made 64 off 40 balls in the Asia Cup meeting to set up India's total there; this time she went past that entirely, fin-

ishing 100 not out off 49 balls as India posted 196 for 4 in their 20 overs — more than half the total from her bat alone. Bangladesh's chase was worse than the one in Dubai. There, they at least batted out their overs, reaching 109 for 7 before losing by 40 runs. This time the innings did not survive 16 overs — all out for 81 in 15.4 overs, with more than four overs still unused. Pakistan's tournament ended the same way earlier in the day. Fatima Sana's side put up 177 for 4 in the first semi-final, but Sri Lanka ran it down with two wickets and 14 balls in hand, winning by 8 wickets. Sri Lanka now face India in the gold-medal match on Tuesday — the same day Bangladesh and Pakistan meet for bronze.



Iran 'put hearts on the court' to win Asian Games basketball bronze

Sports Desk

Iran withstood a late fightback to beat China 79-70 and win Asian Games men's basketball bronze on Sunday, an achievement that left their players "speechless" after months of war back home. China led 31-29 at half-time in Nagoya, but Iran took charge in the third quarter to lead 55-46 going into the fourth and held on to spark wild celebrations and an emotional place on the podium. "To be honest with you I'm just speechless," said 202cm (6ft 8in) power forward Arsalan Kazemi, who in 2013 was the first Iranian to be drafted in the NBA by the Washington Wizards, but never made a regular season appearance. "The pressure that we had on us is just out of this world," he added. "Not a lot of athletes can say that, with the way that it has been since almost six months ago, what we have been through, what our families have been through. "I just congratulate the people of Iran because they deserve much better. "And I think my teammates and I put our hearts out on the court yesterday just to get this win and make them happy." Teammate Arman Zangeneh said the squad had been through a lot but it was worth it. "If you get the medal at the Asian Games you don't need to go to the army any more, so it's huge for some players," said the 203cm tall forward. "We had a very tough two months. We went to the Philippines to play the qualifiers, then immediately we came here. "It was really difficult. And living in a container, with the food and everything, it was hard, very hard. "At the end, we got to the point that we go home with a medal, and it means a lot."



Summer Sports Competition begins in Rajshahi

Sports Desk

The 53rd Summer Sports Competition has been inaugurated in Rajshahi amid a festive atmosphere. The competition was inaugurated this morning at the Rajshahi District Muktiyoddha Smriti Stadium with the playing of the national anthem. Later, an impressive display was performed with the participation of students from various educational institutions. The inaugural ceremony, organized by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Rajshahi Region, was attended by Shafiqul Haque Milon, Member of Parliament for Rajshahi-3, as the chief guest. The program was presided over by Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Yusuf Ali. Special guests were Zila Parishad Administrator Ershad Ali Isha, Member of Parliament for Rajshahi-6 Abu Sayeed Chand, DIG of Rajshahi Range Police Ashik Sayeed, Deputy Commissioner Kazi Shahidul Islam, and Chairman of Rajshahi Education Board Professor Shamim Ara Chowdhury. In addition, local public representatives, sports organizers, teachers and students from various educational institutions, and local dignitaries were present at the inaugural ceremony.

BCB hikes domestic match fees, plans six-team competition

Sports Desk

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has approved revised match fees for players participating in domestic competitions while agreeing in principle to introduce a six-team competition structure covering three formats. Under the revised structure, players in men's four-day cricket will receive Tk 1.50 lakh per match, while the match fee for one-day and T20 cricket has been set at Tk 1 lakh and Tk 80,000 respectively. The match fee for the National Cricket League (NCL) 2nd XI has been fixed at Tk 15,000. For women's domestic cricket, players will receive Tk 40,000 per match in three-day cricket, Tk 30,000 in one-day cricket and Tk 20,000 in T20 cricket. The decisions were approved yesterday at a virtual meeting of the BCB Board of Directors, following proposals from the Working Committee. The Board also approved a revision of the daily allowance for the Bangladesh Under-19 team, increasing it from Tk 10,000 to Tk 20,000. Meanwhile, the BCB agreed in principle to introduce a six-team domestic competition covering three formats - First Class four-day, List A One-Day and List A T20 - under a single competition framework.

Japan triathlete Hojo wins first gold of Asian Games

Sports Desk

Japan's Takumi Hojo got host nation Japan off to a perfect start when he won the first gold medal of the Asian Games on Sunday in the men's individual triathlon. Hojo finished the 750m swim, 20km bike ride and 5,000m run in Gamagori city in 52min 56sec, nine seconds clear of China's Zhang Xirui who took silver with Kazakhstan's Arlan Zhanabay a further six seconds behind in third. "As it's our first gold medal, it's given the Japanese team a real boost," said the 30-year-old Hojo, whose win will qualify him for the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles. "I was really fired-up. Even the rain held off, and I was in top form right up until I stood on the starting line," added Hojo, who also won the Asian Games test triathlon a year ago on the same course. "(I knew) it'd be tough, but (I thought) I'll push myself, and if it works, I think it'll be a good race." Silver medalist Zhang was neck and neck with Hojo most of the way during the final 5,000m run, but in the end had to settle for silver. "I am very happy, although disappointed to be behind Japan," said Zhang. "It is an honour for China." Youngster Zhanabay was delighted to win a medal. "I'm very satisfied with the result. Of course, I would like to win, but we have what we have," he said. "I'm very proud because I'm only 20 and it's my first medal at the Asian Games."



Joty steps down as Bangladesh T20 captain to focus on batting

Sports Desk

In a bid to focus on her bating, Nigar Sultana Joty has decided to step down as captain of Bangladesh's women's T20 team after the Asian Games, ending a four-year spell in charge of the side. The wicketkeeper-batter has informed the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) of her decision, saying she wants to devote more attention to her batting and overall game. "I feel like I have a lot more to give to the country or the team as a batter and a cricketer. So, I want to pay a little attention to that, that's why I made this decision," Joty said after Bangladesh's 114-run defeat to India in the Asian Games semifinal yesterday at Nagoya, Japan. Joty took over the T20 captaincy in 2022 and has led Bangladesh in 81 matches, winning 32 and losing 48. During her tenure, Bangladesh won its first ever match in a T20 World Cup when they defeated Scotland in the 2024 edition of the tournament. Her batting form has been mixed in recent

months. At the 2026 T20 World Cup, she scored 36 against Pakistan, an unbeaten 32 against South Africa, 27 against Australia and 32 against India. She also made 36 against Pakistan in another key match during the tournament. At the 2026 Asia Cup, however, Joty scored just 56 runs in four matches--10 against Indonesia, 4 against Sri Lanka, 23 against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and 19 against India in the semifinal. Bangladesh had earlier gone unbeaten in the global qualifying tournament for the 2026 T20 World Cup and secured victories over the Netherlands and Pakistan in the main tournament. The team subsequently endured a home defeat to Sri Lanka, failed to achieve the expected results in a tri-nation series involving Scotland and the Netherlands, and exited the Asia Cup in the semifinals. Apart from focusing on her batting and wicket-keeping, Joty, however, continues to lead Bangladesh in the ODI format.



Raphinha treble fires perfect Barca to win at Sevilla

Sports Desk

Raphinha scored a superb hat-trick to earn Barcelona a 3-1 win at Sevilla on Saturday in La Liga and preserve their 100 percent record. Hansi Flick's side moved six points clear of Jose Mourinho's Real Madrid, who visit Atletico Madrid in a derby clash on Sunday. The Spanish champions were given the biggest test of their season to date but overcame Sevilla at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan thanks to Raphinha's treble. The Brazil international has started the season in sensational form, playing out of position as a central striker. La Liga's top goalscorer, Raphinha reached 12 goals in seven league appearances with a second consecutive hat-trick, and scored twice more in the Champions League. "We know the quality of Raphinha and we're very happy about him, he gives us a lot," Flick told reporters. "Yesterday the team gives him the last pass and he made it happen for us, so it's good. "After these numbers in these eight games, he's very happy to play as a number nine." Barcelona sporting director Deco said the former Leeds winger had agreed to extend his stay at the club until 2030 ahead of the game, and Raphinha celebrated in style. "He's very good and can adapt to any position up front. We give him the balls and he scores the goals," Barca midfielder Fermin Lopez told Movistar. Flick handed Croatian goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic his debut in goal with Joan Garcia out injured. Hosts Sevilla, fifth, started strongly, making Barca uncomfortable, and took the lead through Youssef Fofana in the 19th minute. Felix Correia escaped Eric Garcia and crossed for Fofana to nod home at the near post. Teenage star Lamine Yamal almost pulled Barca level but Sevilla goalkeeper Odysseas Vlachodimos managed to push his curling effort against the post and out. It was no surprise when the Catalans did equalise that it was Raphinha who was the man to score. He cleverly shifted his body weight to escape a defender and slipped the ball home with a low finish. - Relentless Raphinha -



Yamal sent another shot over and after Sevilla fans whistled him, goaded them to keep doing so. Although the 19-year-old did not score himself, he did create Raphinha's next two goals, after the break. Flick said his team improved in the second half and gave the ball away left. "It was a difficult game, especially in the first half... we also gave away the ball too easily a lot, that's not usually our level and our standard, and in the second half it was like that," said Flick. Early in the second period Yamal crossed and Raphinha headed home to put Barca in front. Arguably his best finish was yet to come, with Yamal sending Raphinha through, for the Brazilian to dink the ball over the goalkeeper. Barca missed several chances to extend their lead, with Anthony Gordon getting his feet wrong and a Dani Olmo free-kick beaten away. Nevertheless Barca claimed an eighth win from eight games across all competitions this season, as they continue setting the pace in the Spanish top flight. Sevilla fell to a second defeat of the season but left with their confidence intact after challenging Barca. "We knew we were facing a tremendous opponent, one of the teams playing the best football in the world," Sevilla captain Gabriel Suazo told Movistar. "We lacked energy in the second half but we competed until the end. We leave with our heads held high, having shown a good attitude." Elsewhere Celta Vigo thrashed Racing Santander 5-0, Athletic Bilbao and Alaves drew 0-0 and Osasuna were held 1-1 by Rayo Vallecano.

Lost 'Football Frenzy' returns to Ctg

Chattogram Correspondent

Lost 'Football Frenzy' has returned to Chattogram with great enthusiasm. Whenever the ball nears the goalpost, thousands of voices erupt from the stands in a collective roar, hoping for a goal. Some spectators clap, while others rise from their seats. Chants calling out one school's name rise from one end of the stands, met with an equally spirited response from the other. Amid the fierce battle for the ball between young footballers on the field, waves of excitement and joy sweep across the entire stadium in Chattogram. This was the scene at the final match of the "Shaheed Zia and Begum Khaleda Zia Memorial Inter-School Football Tournament," held at Chattogram District Stadium. Featuring teams from 48 secondary schools across the city, the tournament kept the stadium area buzzing with excitement for 35 days. On the day of the final, the stands were packed to capacity with thousands of people of all ages--team members, classmates, teachers, and guardians alike. Students from various schools turned out in impressive numbers, with the majority coming from the two finalists: Patenga's Mahmudunnabi Chowdhury High School and Railway Station Colony High School. Even amid a light, drizzling autumn rain, waves of unbridled enthusiasm from the children and teenagers filled the air. Watching from the sidelines was Barrister Mir Mohammad Helal Uddin, State Minister for Land and Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs, who attended as chief guest and chief patron of the organizing committee. He was accompanied by two Members of Parliament and senior leaders from the BNP, Jubo Dal, and Chhatra Dal. Comparing this unprecedented scene to the football frenzy of the 1980s, Niaz Mohammad Khan--convener of the tournament organizing committee and a former councilor--told, "After many long years, we are witnessing such vibrant enthusiasm among school students at Chattogram District Stadium. Seeing this brings back memories of Chattogram in the '80s and '90s." Back then, children would rush to the field with their books and notebooks right after school, playing football from afternoon until dusk, setting up goalposts with nothing more than two bricks in a vacant lot, he added. "Football was an integral part of children's and teenagers' lives. Schools had their own teams, and inter-school competitions generated great excitement. The game fostered friendship, healthy competition, discipline and teamwork, keeping young people from going astray. "It feels as though those lost days have returned," he said. Under the slogan "Sports as a Profession, Security for the Family," the 'Notun Kuri Sports' initiative--led by Tarique Rahman--has ushered in a new chapter in the country's sporting arena.



Building on that momentum, the Chattogram city unit of BNP organized this tournament, bringing together schools from the port city. Speaking to BSS about the tournament, chief patron Barrister Mir Mohammad Helal Uddin, also State Minister for Land and Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs, said, "In the past, our youth were led astray in various ways; playing fields were illegally occupied or reduced in size, effectively stifling the sporting environment. As a result, school students became involved in crimes, including drug abuse, and juvenile gangs emerged." He said the Honorable Prime Minister Tarique Rahman is committed to redirecting the emerging generation from detrimental influences. The administration is dedicated to promoting athletic engagement among young people in conjunction with their academic pursuits, thereby cultivating them into internationally competitive, patriotic, and proficient citizens. This objective underlies the organization of such competitions. Through these initiatives, young people will be safeguarded from negative influences and will develop into accomplished and respectable individuals, he added. It is mentionable that Finance and Planning Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury formally opened this championship on August 14, bringing together approximately 1,000 student athletes from 48 secondary educational institutions throughout Chattogram city. During the extended tournament period, the most remarkable element was the attendance and engagement of spectators. Each day, throughout morning and afternoon fixtures, the stadium environment was characterized by vibrant energy, with students, educators, and parents from competing schools actively participating. As athletes from opposing teams competed for ball control during play, the enthusiasm demonstrated by their peers in the viewing areas proved equally compelling. Cheers accompanied every offensive maneuver, vocal reactions intensified whenever scoring possibilities materialized, and the collective mood shifted dramatically upon each goal being achieved. Although 60 to 65 schools expressed interest in participating, 48 were selected for the tournament. A total of 103 matches were played over the course of the month-long event. In the third-place play-off preceding the final, BEPZA Public School and College defeated Kadam Mobarak City Corporation High School 2-0 to secure third place. In the final, Bangladesh Railway Station Colony High School emerged as champions by defeating Maizpara Mahmudunnabi Chowdhury High School 1-0. Ershad Ullah, Convener of the Chattogram city BNP and Member of Parliament for the Chattogram-8 constituency, told BSS, "The spontaneous joy and enthusiasm displayed by the young footballers, their teachers, and their guardians over the past month is truly a source of pride." He remarked that "this generation is returning to sports" and that the excitement surrounding the tournament has resonated throughout Chattogram.



Allegation of land grab, residential house attack and robbery of fish cages in Kalapara for more than 5 centuries



Kalapara (Patuakhali)Correspondent

A person named Abdul Berek Hawladar (82) held a press conference on the charges of attacking a house and looting a fish enclosure in Kalapara of Patuakhali for 65 years. A press conference was held at Kalapara Reporters Unity office on Saturday afternoon.

In a written speech at the press conference, Abdul Berek Howladar said that he is a landless farmer of Betkata Char village of Mahipur police station. He received Settlement Case No. 327K/1954-55 from the then Government of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) of which Miss. Case No. 161K/1966-67 was received from the petitioner at No. 38 JL Sonapara Mauza and Kismet No. 1 Khas Khatian No. 2834 of Kalapara Upazila. Acceptance of 7.01 acres of land with an annual rent of Tk 22.50/- in the year 327K/1954-55 on the basis of Khas Zamin Kaemi Bandobasth. However, his opponents Shahidul Islam (40), Forkan (40), Faruk, Neshar Uddin (35) of Maherpara village, Rahim Howladar of Betkata village, Md. Sona Mia, Md. Rubel Howladar (26), Bellal (30), Nayan (27) and Shahidul Islam (30) of Monsati village attacked him in 2012 claiming the land of Boulatli Mouza, he filed a criminal case in Patuakhali Speedy Trial Tribunal Court.

‘Technical education must be expanded to build skilled workforce’

Chattogram Correspondent

Abu Sufian, Member of Parliament for the Chattogram-9 constituency, stated that technical education must be expanded to build a skilled and job-oriented workforce essential for the country's development and economic progress.

“In yesterday's world, formal education alone is insufficient; therefore, students must be equipped with modern technology, creativity, and practical skills,” he said.

He made these remarks yesterday while addressing the ‘SSC Result Celebration and Science Fair-2026’ event as the chief guest at the UCEP Char-Chaktai Technical School at South Bakalia.

Presided over by Engineer Masud Alam, Regional Manager of UCEP Chattogram, the event featured a presentation by the school's headmaster, Jahura Khanam, who highlighted recent activities and the students' achievements. Later, the chief guest handed over crests to students who achieved GPA-5 in the SSC examinations.

Later, Abu Sufian visited various stalls at the science fair.



Human Chain Held at Balipara Market

G.M. Adol, Pirojpur District Correspondent

A human chain was held at Balipara Hat in Zianagar Upazila of Pirojpur district protesting an alleged unusual increase in the lease fees for market stalls(hat bazar bhiti).According to local traders, the lease fee for a market stall, which was previously fixed at Tk 260, has now been increased to Tk 6,000 for the same stall. The sharp increase has reportedly put small traders in a difficult situation, with many fearing that they may have to shut down their businesses because they cannot afford the increased lease fee. Affected small traders and local residents organized the human chain at Balipara Market demanding a reduction in the lease fees.At the human chain, the traders said they are low-income small business owners and that the sudden and substantial increase in lease fees has made it almost impossible for them to continue their businesses. They said the increased cost could force them to close their long-standing businesses, creating financial hardship for their families.The traders appealed to the District Commissioner to consider their financial circumstances and livelihoods and either restore the lease fee to the previous rate of Tk 260 or reduce it to an affordable level.They urged the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to resolve the issue and protect the livelihoods of small traders at Balipara Market.

On Sunday, it was found that the learned assistant judge of Kalapara filed two civil cases regarding this land in 2007 and 2014. In that case, the learned court ruled in his favor on February 28, 2018. However, the defendant filed a civil appeal against that judgment in Patuakhali District Judge Court 46/18Filed suit no. 47/18. When the order of the lower court was quashed in the appeal proceedings, he filed Civil Revision No. 3047/19 and 3048/19 in the High Court against that order. The Hon'ble High Court on 5 September 2024 directed that the order of the lower court to maintain status quo should be extended till the rule is disposed of.

Enraged by the order in that case, his opponents demanded an advance payment of Tk 20 lakh and 1.53 acres of land from him. When he refused to pay the contribution, his house was vandalized and looted on June 30. Later he filed case No. 564/26 and 625/2026 in Kalapara learned Judicial Magistrate Court. When the learned court ordered the investigation of the case at the OC Mohipur police station, the OC case SI Md. Zakir Hossain and another ordered the police to investigate. The investigating officer contacted the opponent and tried to cover up his true story in exchange of a large sum of money and so far no legal action has been taken so they entered his house on September 11, armed with native weapons including sticks, khondas, spades and iron rods, vandalized his living room, cut the fence of the fish enclosure and seized fish worth about 3 lakh rupees. Currently, he is living an inhumane life with his family. Opponent Shahidul Islam said that all the allegations against us are false. He has one and a half acre land card. But he claims 07 acres of land. The first card is ours. He was allowed to survey. But they are claiming land by making fake papers. SI Zakir Hossain of Mohipur police station said, he claimed 07.01 acres of property by showing the card of 53 years. Due to which the investigation report is delayed.



Reception Held for Meritorious Students at Zafar Imam Adarsha High School

A.N.M.Nurul Amin. Chagallniya, Feni

A reception ceremony honoring meritorious students was held at the auditorium of Zafar Imam Adarsha High School in Chagalnaiya upazila.

The event was presided over by the school's current President, Neyamat Ullah Arif Chowdhury. Former President of the school, Alhaj Kazi Kefayetullah, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

Among the Special Guests were Kamrul Islam Kamrul, Chairman of the Kamrul Foundation; Kefayet Ullah Chowdhury, former donation member and representative of Universal Medical Service; Abul Hossain (popularly known as Adam Master), former Headmaster of Dargahat Government Primary School; and Nurul Alam Chowdhury, a land donor member of the school.

The program was also attended by former school committee members Belayet Hossain, Journalist Nurul Amin, Joshim Uddin (Irani), and Imam Uddin, alongside present member Arshad Ullah Mojumder. Local political figures including BNP leaders Ayyub Khan and S.M. Saiful Islam were also present. School Headmaster Mozaherul Hoque, teachers Maulana Mizanur Rahman and Maulana Mostafigur Rahman, along with the rest of the teaching staff, guardians, and local dignitaries attended the function.

During the ceremony, top-performing students were presented with crests and cash rewards, while all successful students received prizes. The guest speakers congratulated the students on their academic achievements and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence in the future.

ACC conducts surprise raid at Bandarban DPHE office

Bandarban Correspondent

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday conducted a surprise operation at the Bandarban District Public Health Engineering Department (DPHE) following allegations of corruption, irregularities, substandard work and embezzlement of public funds in various development projects.

A special enforcement team of the ACC carried out the operation in the afternoon and examined records related to projects implemented by the Bandarban District DPHE during the 2025-26 fiscal year.

During the raid, ACC officials scrutinised project files, tender documents, muster rolls and other relevant office records to verify the allegations.

The team later visited Bakichhara Para in Kuhalong Union under Bandarban Sadar Upazila, where it inspected several projects implemented by the DPHE and assessed the quality of work at the sites.



Awareness programme, cleanliness drive held to prevent dengue in Rajshahi

Rajshahi Correspondent

Under the initiative of the ‘Blood Care Foundation’ anawareness program, rally, and a cleanliness drive to prevent dengue were held inRajshahi.

With the slogan ‘Keep the surroundings clean, prevent dengue’, the month-long program was inaugurated yesterday from Shah Makhdum College in the city. Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP) Commissioner Mohammad Faizul Kabir was present as the chief guest at the event. In his speech as chief guest, the Police Commissioner said there is no alternative to personal awareness and keeping one's own premises clean to prevent the spread of dengue. The breeding grounds of Aedes mosquitoes must be destroyed by regularly cleaning stagnant water around homes, educational institutions, and workplaces. He called on every citizen to play a responsible role from their own position, instead of relying only on government initiatives for dengue prevention. At the same time, he praised the young generation and voluntary organizations for such public welfare activities. The event was attended by the founder of Blood Care Foundation, Engineer Junaid Ahmed, Youth Forum President Riad Khan Ratul and General Secretary Shrabonti Akter along with top leaders, active members of the organization, teachers and students of Shah Makhdum College, and distinguished people from various walks of life. As part of the program, garbage accumulated in and around the Shah Makhdum Collegepremises was cleaned, and awareness messages regarding dengue prevention were delivered to general students and locals.

Mymensingh's 'Clean Sunday' draws wide response, 14 entities awarded

Mymensingh Correspondent

The Clean Sunday campaign launched by thedistrict administration with the slogan "Where I am, there is cleanliness" has received a wide response, with students, teachers and guardians of educational institutions joining hands to promote cleanliness and awareness.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md Saifur Rahman awarded 14 selected best-performing educational institutions at a programme titled "DC Award for Cleanliness" held at the DC's conference room here this afternoon.

Mymensingh Agricultural University College received the first award as the best clean educational institution. The other award-winning institutions are Nabarun Bidyaniketan in Muktagacha,Phulbaria Khademul Islam Kamil Madrasa, Apollo Institute of Computer in Bhaluka, Amirabari Gujiam Secondary School in Trishal, Chandhara Haji Abdul Majid High School in Phulpur, Tarakanda Haji Helal Uddin Girls' High School, Sunflower Model School in Haluaghat, Dhobaura Bindubashini Girls' High School, Pachar High School in Gauripur, Charnikhola Primary School in Ishwarganj, Fazlur Rahman High School in Gafargaon, Kandipara Askar Ali High School in South Gafargaon and Ghoshpala Fazil Madrasa in Nandail.

The respective Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) and heads of the institutions received the awards along with necessary materials for carrying out cleanliness activities.

Phulbaria UNO Shahidul Islam Sohag also received a "DDC Award" in recognition of his special contribution to successfully implementing "Clean Sunday" and overall cleanliness activities at educational institutions through leadership, initiative and coordination.

Besides, Muktagachha UNO Krishna Chandra was awarded a crest by the DC in recognition of his overall administrative activities in the district.

Speaking at the programme, DC Md Saifur Rahman said the "Clean Sunday" campaign was launched on July 22 through a web portal titled "allreport.bd/cleanmymensingh".

"So far, a total of 47,000 cleanliness activities have been carried out across the district," he said.

"We want to make the initiative sustainable through our web portal. For this, teachers, students and guardians must be involved. Then it can become a role model for the entire country," the DC added.



Colorful Program Marks 'International Snakebite Awareness Day' in Feni

Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter

Emphasizing that a snakebite is not a supernatural occurrence but a medical emergency requiring immediate treatment, 'International Snakebite Awareness Day 2026' was observed in Feni with a message to build public awareness. To mark the occasion, the Civil Surgeon's Office organized a colorful rally and a discussion meeting on September 19. The event was led by Feni Civil Surgeon Dr. Md. Arifuzzaman. In the morning, an awareness rally originated from the premises of the Civil Surgeon's Office and paraded through the main thoroughfares of the town. Following the rally, an important discussion meeting took place at the office auditorium.

Speaking as the chief guest, Civil Surgeon Dr. Md. Arifuzzaman said, "When bitten by a snake, priceless time must not be wasted by going to ojas (traditional healers) or seeking exorcisms. Bringing the victim to the nearest government hospital as quickly as possible is the only way to save a life. Necessary medical care and anti-venom are available at every government hospital." He laid special emphasis on proper first aid to prevent snakebite casualties in rural areas and on dispelling various superstitions prevalent among the public. Officials and employees at all levels from the Feni Civil Surgeon's Office spontaneously participated in the rally and discussion meeting. Speakers pledged to continue spreading this awareness message at the field level.

Convicted Drug Offender Arrested in Amtali

Amtali (Barguna) Correspondent

Amtali Police have arrested Ohiduzzaman, alias Ujjal—a long-time fugitive convicted in a drug-related case—in Amtali, Barguna. He was apprehended in the Siddirganj Police Station area of Narayanganj with the assistance of RAB (Rapid Action Battalion).

The arrested individual, Ohiduzzaman (alias Ujjal), is the son of Razzak Khan from the Chaora Kalibari area of Amtali Upazila.

Police stated that he had previously been convicted by the court in a case filed under the Narcotics Control Act. Md. Yakub Hossain, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Amtali Police Station, stated that regular operations are being conducted as part of a "zero-tolerance" policy against drugs. These operations aim to recover narcotics, arrest those involved in drug trafficking, and bring convicted drug offenders who have been evading the law to justice. Following this initiative, authorities tracked Ohiduzzaman's location and launched an operation to arrest him. He was subsequently arrested on September 18, 2026, in the Siddirganj Police Station area of Narayanganj with RAB's assistance.

After his arrest and the completion of necessary legal formalities, he was produced before the court.

Police confirmed that the ongoing drive to eradicate the drug menace will continue. Operations are being intensified not only to take legal action against those involved in drug trading, supply, consumption, and related crimes but also to apprehend convicted fugitives wanted in various cases.

DPHE takes initiative to install 6,000 toilets & deep tube wells in Barishal

Barishal Correspondent

Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) has taken initiative in 10 upazilas and city corporation area of the district to ensure access to safe drinking water and hygienic sanitation facilities.

Under the nationwide Safe Water Supply Project, the plan has been taken to install deep tube wells in every union of the district. Besides, 6,000 hygienic toilets will be constructed for extremely poor families under the Rural Sanitation Project.

Officials concerned said here yesterday that implementation of the projects would increase the access to safe drinking water in remote areas and improve sanitation facilities for the low-income families. According to the DPHE, eight deep tube wells are planned to be installed in each union of the district. The locations will be selected considering the groundwater level, local requirements and people's needs. The DPHE Barishal office said a beneficiary would have to pay taka 7,000 for a conventional tube well and Taka 10,000 for a submersible system. The government will spend around taka 85,000 to install a deep tube well, while the cost of a submersible deep tube well could exceed Taka 200,000. Safe drinking water remains a challenge in various villages and remote unions of Barishal.

During the dry season, groundwater levels fall in many areas, making it difficult to obtain sufficient water from conventional tube wells. In some riverine and char areas, salinity and contamination of water sources also make access to safe water difficult. Safe water supply is also an important issue in Barishal city. Surface water treatment plants have been constructed at Rupatali and Beltala to meet the city's water demand. Of the two, the Rupatali-1 plant has recently reopened.

Meanwhile, there are concerns over the government's capacity to test water quality. Regular water-quality testing has reportedly been disrupted for a long time due to a shortage of necessary equipment at the regional laboratory of the



Department of Environment. Sanitation also remains a major challenge for Barishal. According to national statistics, Barishal division lags behind other divisions in the use of safe and hygienic toilets. As the region is crisscrossed by rivers and prone to disasters, many rural latrines become submerged during the monsoon and tidal surges. This can cause human waste to mix with water, increasing environmental and public health risks. Against this backdrop, plans have been taken to construct hygienic toilets for around 6,000 extremely poor families in the district under the Rural Sanitation Project. The estimated cost of each toilet is around Taka 65,000, of which the beneficiary family will have to pay Taka 5,000 as a service charge. Local DPHE Executive Engineer Imran Torofdar told BSS that priority would be given to areas facing water shortages and poor families that still lack access to hygienic sanitation facilities. He added that deep tube wells would be installed according to local needs in every union of the district, while hygienic toilets would be constructed for extremely poor families under the project.