

Reliable data to fight dengue vital

It is alarming that the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) is allegedly underreporting the number of dengue patients being treated at major hospitals in the capital. A comparison by Prothom Alo found that the DGHS reported only 316 dengue patients admitted to four hospitals on September 21, while hospital authorities put the number at 817—a discrepancy of 501 patients. At Mugda Medical College Hospital, for instance, the DGHS reported 49 admissions for dengue against 223 recorded by hospital authorities. Such a wide gap raises serious questions about the reliability of the country’s dengue surveillance system at a time when the outbreak is intensifying.

The DGHS does not receive data from every health facility, with many private hospitals and clinics, particularly those outside Dhaka, excluded from its reporting system. Patients treated by doctors in private chambers are also not counted. Given these gaps, it is unacceptable that the DGHS is failing to accurately compile data from the few hospitals it does currently cover. According to the DGHS, 63,627 dengue patients have been hospitalised and 190 have died this year as of September 21. The numbers are already alarming.

The DGHS does not receive data from every health facility, with many private hospitals and clinics, particularly those outside Dhaka, excluded from its reporting system. Patients treated by doctors in private chambers are also not counted. Given these gaps, it is unacceptable that the DGHS is failing to accurately compile data from the few hospitals it does currently cover. According to the DGHS, 63,627 dengue patients have been hospitalised and 190 have died this year as of September 21. The numbers are already alarming, and underreporting will make it much harder to assess the actual scale of the outbreak and for health authorities to respond appropriately.

Already, the government’s weak and largely reactive approach to dengue control has allowed the disease to become a year-round public health threat. Despite spending around Tk 825 crore on mosquito control in Dhaka over the past 11 years, the infection continues to spread, while most city corporations lack entomologists and the DGHS has failed to conduct its regular nationwide entomological surveys. Authorities also continue to rely on fragmented fogging, larviciding, and cleanliness drives instead of using a coordinated, science-based system to identify and eliminate breeding hotspots. Experts say that preventive measures must be backed by nationwide surveillance and a centralised mosquito-control strategy. The authorities must urgently investigate why such large discrepancies exist and ensure that the data submitted by hospitals are properly verified and updated before publication. Hospitals should also be required to submit timely information. At the same time, the health directorate should work towards establishing a comprehensive disease surveillance system that includes private hospitals and clinics across the country and records dengue cases treated outside hospitals. Without proper data, the government will continue to struggle. to bring the spread under control.

President for joint efforts to address challenges in apparel sector

Staff Correspondent

President Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir on Wednesday called upon all stakeholders, including BGMEA, BKMEA and BTMA, to work together to address the existing challenges and problems facing the country’s apparel sector.The President made the call when a delegation of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), led by its President Mohammad Hatem, met him at Bangabhaban. President’s Press Secretary Md Sarwar Alam briefed reporters after the meeting. During the meeting, Mirza Fakhru said coordinated initiatives are necessary to keep the country’s growing economy moving while ensuring that all stakeholders receive equitable benefits. He said the current government has adopted business-, industry- and economy-friendly policies to strengthen the national economy, create employment opportunities and provide businesses with opportunities to recover and grow. “Growing industries and businesses need necessary protection to remain sustainable,” the President said, stressing the importance of reducing bank lending rates to encourage investment in the country.He also urged industry owners to explore alternative energy sources, including solar power, to help address the ongoing energy crisis.Mirza Fakhru said the government is working to keep the country’s growing economy vibrant. He recalled with appreciation the contribution of knitwear manufacturers and exporters to earning foreign currency for the country and thanked them for their role. Referring to the restoration of democracy in the country, the President said any problem facing the country should be resolved through democratic processes and discussion in Parliament. The President’s military secretary, secretary and press secretary were present at the meeting.

PM proposes five urgent

rights and security; ensuring adequate and predictable humanitarian support for the Rohingyas and host communities; strengthening justice and accountability; and stepping up regional and international cooperation to combat the narco-economy, human trafficking, digital scams, illegal arms and other transboundary crimes.Elaborating his first proposal, Tarique Rahman called on international and regional stakeholders to establish a clear and credible roadmap for the early, safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable repatriation of the Rohingyas to Myanmar.He said the international community and other states must support stabilisation efforts and use their leverage to create conditions inside Myanmar conducive to return.On the second proposal, the Prime Minister called for an end to violence against civilians, including the Rohingyas, in Myanmar.“The fundamental rights and security of the Rohingyas must be guaranteed in their homeland to regain their confidence to return,” he said.Thirdly, Tarique Rahman urged the international community to ensure adequate and predictable humanitarian support for the Rohingyas and support for host communities in Bangladesh.“Their development aspirations should not be retarded by their generous act of hospitality,” he said.As his fourth proposal, the Prime Minister stressed that justice and accountability are indispensable for sustainable repatriation.

PM holds breakfast meeting

lenges, international cooperation, climate change, sustainable development and economic partnership in the context of the ongoing UNGA session. During the meeting, discussions focused on strength-

Amid narrowing choices, we need a credible economic strategy

Md. Neyamul Hossain

needed to reduce Bangladesh’s reliance on imported spot LNG.

Finally, consider the exchange rate. Higher returns on investments denominated in dollars, euros and yen draw capital towards reserve currencies. And yet, the taka has remained strong, at around 122.86 per US dollar, and gross reserves stand at more than \$36 billion, about \$31.5 billion under the IMF’s BPM6, covering 4.8 months’ worth of imports, financed by record remittances totalling \$35.6 billion. That represents a remarkable accomplishment. Unfortunately, that accomplishment occurred in a world that has just experienced significant change: namely, the Fed’s projection implies

Finally, consider the exchange rate. Higher returns on investments denominated in dollars, euros and yen draw capital towards reserve currencies. And yet, the taka has remained strong, at around 122.86 per US dollar, and gross reserves stand at more than \$36 billion, about \$31.5 billion under the IMF’s BPM6, covering 4.8 months’ worth of imports, financed by record remittances totalling \$35.6 billion. That represents a remarkable accomplishment. Unfortunately, that accomplishment occurred in a world that has just experienced significant change: namely, the Fed’s projection implies no interest rate cuts through 2027. Depreciation is not a viable option when input prices, financing costs and tariffs on garment exports (at over 25 percent) are all increasing.

Remittances provide double-edged benefits. On the one hand, higher oil revenues help fund jobs in the Gulf states employing many Bangladeshi workers, thereby supporting remittance flows. Tighter monetary conditions strengthen the dollar, widening the gap between official and curb rates and encouraging funds to move into informal channels. Monthly remittance flows have fallen below \$3 billion for three consecutive months. Maintaining formal remittance flow channels is reserve management policy, not welfare policy. Classified loans stand at close to Tk 6.07 lakh crore as of June, a new record, representing 32.78 percent of outstanding loans disbursed, with more than 72 percent of it in 10 banks.

no interest rate cuts through 2027. Depreciation is not a viable option when input prices, financing costs and tariffs on garment exports (at over 25 percent) are all increasing. Remittances provide double-edged benefits. On the one hand, higher oil revenues help fund jobs in the Gulf states employing many Bangladeshi workers, thereby supporting remittance flows. Tighter monetary conditions strengthen the dollar, widening the gap between official and curb rates and encouraging funds to move into informal channels. Monthly remittance flows have fallen below \$3 billion for three consecutive months. Maintaining formal remittance flow channels is reserve management policy, not welfare policy. Classified loans stand at close to Tk 6.07 lakh crore as of June, a new record, representing 32.78 percent of outstanding loans disbursed, with more than 72 percent of it in 10 banks. Twenty-one of 61 banks suffered from a capital shortfall of Tk 2.94 lakh crore as of March; the system-wide capital adequacy ratio fell to minus 3.17 percent against a 12.5 percent requirement.The banking sector’s problems are not separate

structures have disappeared, a warehouse still remains there.Several families have been living in the area for a long time. The residents claim that they and their ancestors have been living there for nearly a century and that they do not have permanent homesteads elsewhere.They are demanding rehabilitation before any eviction, saying that removing them without providing alternative housing would leave hundreds of families severely affected.

Malaysian entrepreneurs

offers modern logistics facilities essential for business and trade. He suggested that Bangladeshi entrepreneurs could explore investment opportunities in Klang, while Malaysian entrepreneurs could consider investing in Bangladesh’s ICT sector as Malaysia is shifting from labour-intensive industries towards technology-driven industries.DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed said Bangladesh and Malaysia enjoy longstanding friendly economic relations, but stronger cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries is needed to further expand bilateral trade and investment.He said Bangladesh offers promising investment opportunities for Malaysian entrepreneurs in energy infrastructure, digital financial services, telecommunications, semiconductors, halal food, healthcare, tourism and human resource development.He also sought Malaysian cooperation in increasing exports of Bangladesh’s products to ASEAN countries.Taskeen said Bangladesh’s healthcare sector also offers significant opportunities for Malaysian investors, noting that Bangladeshis spend around US\$4-6 billion annually abroad for medical treatment. He invited Malaysian healthcare entrepreneurs to establish world-class hospitals and healthcare facilities in Bangladesh.He also called for greater Malaysian cooperation in developing Bangladesh’s tourism industry and promoting the growth of the halal economy.Bangladesh High Commissioner to Malaysia Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury said Bangladesh is not only a major source of manpower but also an emerging investment destination with opportunities in various sectors.He identified the absence of a bilateral trade agreement as one of the major impediments to expanding trade and business between Bangladesh and Malaysia.Referring to recent discussions between the prime ministers of the two countries, he expressed hope that a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Bangladesh and Malaysia would be signed by December 2027, saying such an agreement would contribute to expanding bilateral trade, business and investment. He invited Malaysian entrepreneurs to invest in Bangladesh’s aviation, medical services, ICT and agro-processing sectors.The High Commissioner also highlighted Bangladesh’s large market for Malaysian halal products and sought Malaysia’s expertise in developing an effective halal ecosystem in Bangladesh.He further sought Malaysian cooperation in developing skilled human resources for Bangladesh’s semiconductor sector through training and capacity-building programmes.Speaking as the special guest, SME Corporation Malaysia Chairman Teng Chang Khim said Malaysia currently has around 1.3 million SMEs.He urged the DCCI and KCCCI to strengthen cooperation between SMEs of the two countries through greater interaction, business networking and expanded commercial opportunities.He also highlighted the contribution of Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia’s economy, particularly in infrastructure development, and expressed hope that the existing positive people-to-people relations would further contribute to expanding trade, business and investment ties.DCCI Senior Vice President Razeef H Chowdhury made a presentation on Bangladesh’s trade and investment opportunities. He emphasised expediting initiatives for signing an FTA, strengthening the halal economic partnership between the two countries and providing technical assistance to Bangladeshi SMEs to expand exports and establish links with global entrepreneurs.As part of efforts to strengthen bilateral trade and investment cooperation, the DCCI and KCCCI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the event.DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed and KCCCI President Jeffery Tan signed the MoU on

from current events happening elsewhere. A central bank overseeing an undercapitalised banking system cannot raise interest rates to protect its currency as every increase causes more loans to become classified and more banks to fall below thresholds. Our trilemma is smaller than what textbooks suggest because fragility has eliminated our ability to use interest rates as an economic tool. The August cut was justified on growth considerations. It is also what a central bank does when its banks cannot afford alternative options.

Fiscal policy also offers little room for manoeuvring. Interest payments on Bangladesh’s public debt consume Tk 21.10 of every Tk 100 targeted by the National Board of Revenue (NBR). To meet its FY2026-27 target, NBR forecasts annual revenue growth of 46 percent, far above recent growth of about 12 percent. Therefore, any budget shortfalls will need to

be funded by the same banks that are being asked to recapitalise themselves.

There are differences between the country’s situation today and those it faced in 2013 and again in 2022-23, specifically that today it faces some \$26 billion of external debt repayment obligations due by FY2029-30, an undercapitalised banking sector, and no IMF programme agreement since May to stabilise market expectations.The government should close negotiations with the IMF, not because the IMF’s judgement is superior but because its endorsement allows other parts of the external funding architecture to function properly.It should also publish gross reserves accurately and let the exchange rate adjust to reflect that burden, not through intervention, which converts a currency adjustment into a reserve crisis. In addition, the government should use hedging agreements (term contracts), storage and efficiency to manage risks related to energy consumption rather than relying on spot purchases, shift from universal subsidies towards targeted transfers, and formally price formal remittance channels so that they compete with informal alternatives. It should also accelerate loan recognition and conditionally recapitalise banks on the basis of governance reform. Capital invested into an unreformed board refinances original losses; until measured capital is restored, the policy rate stays hostage to the banks.The instruments available to Bangladesh are narrower than theory would suggest. Interest rates are limited by bank capital, forex markets are limited by reserve adequacy, and fiscal policy is limited by a revenue base of less than 7 percent of GDP. But what still exists is sequence and credibility: complete IMF programme negotiations, and stop issuing policy statements that contradict the following month’s decision. None of these actions requires resources the country doesn’t have; all they require is willingness to be believed.

behalf of their respective organisations.The forum also featured 40 B2B matchmaking sessions between members of the DCCI delegation and representatives of the Klang Chamber.Later, DCCI President Taskeen Ahmed paid a courtesy call on Malaysian Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture Tiong King Sing.DCCI Senior Vice President Razeef H Chowdhury, Vice President Md. Salem Sulaiman and Bangladesh’s Minister and Deputy High Commissioner to Malaysia Mosammat Shahana Monica were also present. During the meeting, Tiong King Sing said the number of Bangladeshi tourists travelling to Malaysia has been increasing every year.He said Malaysia is placing emphasis on promoting Muslim tourism and expressed hope that the number of Bangladeshi tourists would increase further, given Bangladesh’s large Muslim population.The Malaysian minister also expressed his country’s interest in providing training to develop skilled human resources and strengthen management capacity for establishing an effective Muslim tourism ecosystem in Bangladesh.He said the Malaysian government is also considering establishing advanced hospitals and medical centres in Bangladesh to provide world-class healthcare services. He proposed signing a MoU between Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) Malaysia and DCCI to promote the tourism industries of the two countries and strengthen mutual cooperation.

The Main Road of Barapukuria

Madhyapara, Saidpur, Dinajpur, Rangpur and Nilphamari, among various other areas. According to local people, vehicles often get stuck near the railway crossing, while the poor condition of the road creates a risk of accidents. The situation becomes more complicated, especially when heavy vehicles are moving, Mohammad Zahir Bania, a businessman at Barapukuria Bazar, said that a case has been going on for a long time with the Roads and Highways Department over ownership of approximately eight decimals of land in a section of the road. According to him, a case regarding the matter involving Dr. Swapan, a permanent resident of Majidpur village under Shihnagar Union, is currently pending before the High Court. Although the landowner is willing to provide the land, the problem is not being resolved because the Roads and Highways Department has not acquired or purchased the land through the government process. Ashraful Haque, a bus driver on the Parbatipur-Phulbari road, said, “It is very difficult to drive a vehicle on this road. When it rains, water accumulates in the potholes. There is a risk of damage if the vehicle falls into a pothole. The risk increases further at night.” Mohammad Harunur Rashid Mukul, proprietor of M/s James Traders at Barapukuria Bazar, said, “The condition of the road is so bad that even travelling by motorcycle is difficult. Parents also have to take risks when travelling with their children to educational institutions.” Local residents said that the Barapukuria Coal Mine and Thermal Power Plant are important industrial establishments of the country. A large number of people and heavy vehicles travel through the area every day. Therefore, if the road is not repaired quickly, there is a risk of major accidents. When asked about the repair of the road, Dinajpur Roads and Highways Department Executive Engineer Mohammad Asaduzzaman said that the repair work has become complicated due to a long-standing case over ownership of land in a section of the road. He further said, “The case is currently pending before the High Court. The landowner has been obstructing work by the Roads and Highways Department on that land. The RHD has approximately six feet of land. Attempts have also been made to sit locally to resolve the matter.” The Executive Engineer further said that although there is an allocation for the repair work, it has not yet been possible to invite a tender due to the land-related complication. The matter has also been informed to the concerned ministry. Meanwhile, a recent report revealed information about the same road in the Barapukuria railway crossing area being in a dilapidated condition and the work remaining stalled due to an ownership-related case with the Roads and Highways .

Govt to procure 1.55 lakh MTs fertilizer, 10,000 MTs lentil



Staff correspondent

The government today approved separate proposals to procure 10,000 metric tons of lentil and 155,000 metric tons of MOP and DAP fertiliser to meet the country's growing demand. The approvals came at the 46th meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) in this year. Under the first proposal, the committee recommended the purchase of 10,000 metric

tons of lentil in 50-kg sacks through the Open Tender Method (OTM) under the Ministry of Commerce. Joytun Auto Rice & Dal Mills Ltd of Phultala, Khulna, was recommended as the supplier for the procurement at a total cost of around Tk 76.89 crore, including VAT and taxes. The price of the lentil was fixed at Tk 76.89 per kg. The committee also recommended the import of four lots of fertiliser under government-to-government (G2G) arrangements. Under

the second item, 40,000 metric tons of MOP fertiliser will be imported from the Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC) under an agreement signed between CCC and the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC). The procurement cost for the third lot has been set at around Tk 189.67 crore, with the price fixed at US\$383.80 per metric ton. Another 40,000 metric tons of MOP fertiliser will be imported from Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC) under the fourth lot of the agreement at the same price of US\$383.80 per metric ton. The cost of the fourth lot will also be around Tk 189.67 crore. The committee recommended both proposals for approval. Under another state-level agreement between Russia's JSC Foreign Economic Corporation (Prodintorg) and BADC, the government will import 35,000 metric tons of MOP fertiliser under the seventh lot. The procurement cost has been fixed at around Tk 165.90 crore, with the price

◆ see page 7

Launch fare hike kept low considering public hardship: Rabiul

Staff correspondent

Road Transport and Bridges, Railways and Shipping Minister Sheikh Rabiul Alam has said the minimum launch fare was increased only slightly, keeping public hardship in mind. He made the remarks in response to a question while briefing reporters on the launch fare hike after a bilateral meeting at the Secretariat on Wednesday afternoon. The minister said launch fares had been raised following the increase in fuel prices, after bus fares were adjusted. He said, however, no decision has yet been taken to increase train fares. "There is considerable pressure from the Railways Ministry to raise fares; otherwise, losses will increase. However, we have not decided to raise rail fares. I have instructed officials to maintain the existing fares without increasing them," he said. He said the government would make every effort to keep rail fares unchanged. If fares have to be increased, the hike would

◆ see page 7

Govt issues gazette raising bus minibuses fares by Tk 0.17 per km

Staff correspondent

The government has issued a gazette notification on Wednesday increasing the fares of diesel-run buses and minibuses by Tk 0.17 per kilometre, with the revised rates taking effect from September 22, following a rise in diesel prices and transport operating costs. The Road Transport and Highways Division of the Road Transport and Bridges Ministry issued the gazette notification on Wednesday. According to the notification, the fare for buses operating in Dhaka and Chattogram metropolitan areas has been raised to Tk 2.70 per passenger per kilometre from Tk 2.53. For inter-district and long-distance bus and minibuses routes, the fare was increased to Tk 2.40 per kilometre from Tk 2.23. The fare for minibuses operating in Dhaka and Chattogram metropolitan areas,



as well as buses and minibuses operating under the jurisdiction of the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA) in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Narsingdi, Gazipur and Manikganj, has been raised to Tk 2.60 per kilometre from Tk 2.43. The minimum fare for buses in Dhaka and Chattogram metropolitan areas remains unchanged at Tk 10, while the minimum fare for minibuses remains Tk 8. The notification said fares would have to be proportionately

◆ see page 7

CCGP approves Tk 3,748cr road, infrastructure projects

Staff correspondent

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) on Wednesday approved two major procurement proposals for infrastructure development involving a combined cost of around Tk 3,748 crore. Under the first proposal, the committee recommended award

◆ see page 7



Seven traders fined in Nagarkanda, Faridpur for violating government directive on electricity conservation

Biplab Kumar Das, Staff Reporter

At the national level, there is a government mandate to keep all types of shopping malls, markets, and business establishments closed after 8 PM for the purpose of electricity conservation. A mobile court has fined 7 traders in Nagarkanda, Faridpur for keeping their shops open after the designated time in violation of the government directive. The monitoring operation

◆ see page 7



Pubali Bank Launches Tree Plantation and Digital Banking Booth in Pirojpur

G.M. Adol Pirojpur District Correspondent

With a commitment to building a greener, healthier and more sustainable future, Pubali Bank PLC has undertaken a daylong tree plantation programme and an initiative to expand modern digital banking services in Pirojpur under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme. The activities were held at different important institutions in Pirojpur on Wednesday (September 23, 2026). At 11:00 am, a tree plantation programme was inaugurated at Government Shaheed Suhrawardy College in Pirojpur by Pirojpur District Council Administrator Alomgir Hossain and Deputy General Manager and Head of Barishal Region of Pubali Bank PLC's Regional Office, Barishal, Mohammad Moshahidullah. Principal of Government Suhrawardy College Professor Sheikh Rafiqul Islam was also present at the programme. Meanwhile, at 3:00 pm on the same day, a digital banking booth of Pubali Bank PLC was inaugurated at C.O. Office Mor in Pirojpur sadar. The initiatives are part of Pubali Bank's efforts to promote environmental sustainability while making modern and convenient banking services more accessible to the people of Pirojpur.

Man Dies After Being Attacked Over Previous Enmity in Nabinagar

M Badal Khandaker, Brahmanbaria Correspondent

A 40-year-old man, who sustained critical injuries in an alleged attack stemming from a long-standing dispute, died while undergoing treatment in Debidwar of Cumilla on Tuesday night.

The deceased was identified as Md. Iqbal, a resident of Northpara area of Khagatuya village in Nabinagar upazila of Brahmanbaria. According to local sources, the incident took place at around 12:30am on Monday (September 21) in the Bhorer Bazar area of Khagatuya village. Iqbal was allegedly attacked by a group of people, leaving him critically injured. Locals said that Iqbal had been involved in a previous dispute with some people in the area, and the latest attack might have been linked to that enmity. However, the exact motive behind the incident has yet to be established.

Following the attack, Iqbal was initially taken to a hospital in Bancharampur for treatment. As his condition deteriorated, he was later shifted to Debidwar for better medical care. He died while receiving treatment there on Tuesday night. Several local residents alleged that Alam, Halim and Saddam, all from the same village, might have been involved in the attack. However, the allegations could not be independently verified, and no statement from the accused individuals was available at the time of filing this report. Confirming the incident, Morshedul Alam Chowdhury, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Nabinagar Police Station, said the body was sent to the Brahmanbaria District Morgue on Wednesday morning (September 23) for autopsy. The OC said the actual cause of death would be known after receiving the autopsy report. He added that legal proceedings in connection with the incident were underway. Following Iqbal's death, tension

◆ see page 7

CCGP appoints Indonesian firm to operate SPM at Cox's Bazar

Cox'sbazar correspondent

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) on Wednesday approved a proposal to award a Tk 1,946.22 crore contract to Indonesia's PT Pertamina Trans Kontinental for operating and maintaining Bangladesh's Single Point Mooring (SPM) facility at Maheshkhali in Cox's Bazar. The Energy and Mineral Resources Division placed the proposal before the committee. Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury presided over the meeting. The operation and maintenance (O&M) contract covers the SPM's offshore and onshore facilities, marine services and associated equipment. The Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) floated an international tender to appoint an operator for the SPM and its double pipeline system. The tender covered the SPM facilities at Kutubdia-Maheshkhali in Cox's Bazar and the pipeline facilities extending towards Anwara-North Patenga in Chattogram. According to the Bangladesh Public Procurement

◆ see page 7

Crore project stalled Mathbaria-Mirukhali death trap



S M Akash, Mathbaria, Pirojpur

Even after more than two years from the start date, an important renovation work in Mathbaria, Pirojpur has not been completed. Local residents and pedestrians are suffering. The Mathbaria-Mirukhali pass is now a death trap. According to the Upazila Engineer's Office, in June 2023, Bhandaria's contractor Ifiti TCL was given the responsibility of repairing the Mirukhali road and constructing a bridge. The total budget for the entire project, including the construction of the bridge, was set at around Tk 140 million (of which the budget for the main road repair was Tk 123.9 million). Although the contract stipulates that the work should be completed by

on it, the condition of the road is becoming more critical day by day.

Although the start of the renovation work after a long wait brought hope to local residents, there is now intense public anger as the contractor abruptly stopped work and cut off the project. Pirojpur LGED Senior Assistant Engineer Md. Ziarul Islam said that the contractor has been paid 12 million taka so far. However, after the recent political changes in the country, the company stopped the work claiming an outstanding bill of 3.5 crore taka. Although attempts were made to fill the potholes to make the road temporarily passable, it was not possible. As the contract period has expired, plans are underway to complete the unfinished work by inviting

◆ see page 7

কর্মজীবী মানুষের সুবিধার্থে

জালালাবাদ চক্ষু হাসপাতালে

এখন প্রতি **শুক্রবার** বিকালে রোগী দেখবেন

চক্ষু বিশেষজ্ঞ ও সার্জন

ড. আহম্মাদুল বারী

এম.বি.এস., এম.এস. (অপথালমোলোজী)
এম.পি.এইচ. (ক্লিনিক্যাল অপথালমোলোজী)
পিএইচডি (অপথালমোলোজী)
সিনিয়র কন্সাল্ট্যান্ট ও সার্জন,
জালালাবাদ চক্ষু হাসপাতাল এন্ড ফ্যাকো সেন্টার

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.

Seven Bangladeshis, Including Two Women Arrested While Preparing to Enter India Illegally Through Jafong Border

Naem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat Sylhet

Police have arrested seven Bangladeshi nationals, including two women, while they were preparing to illegally enter India through the Jafong border in Gowainghat, Sylhet. They were arrested around 11:00 am on Tuesday (September 22) from Naljuri Baraitola village under East Jafong Union of Gowainghat upazila. After a case was filed under the relevant laws, they were produced before a court on Wednesday (September 23) afternoon. The arrested individuals are Md. Saiful (21) of Bakultala village in Bagerhat; Md. Rabbi Shikder (17) of Bagmara village under Digalia police station in Khulna; Md. Kawsar (16) of Kaziganj Mogla village; Md. Omar Faruk (18) of Bakultala village in Bagerhat; Md. Parvez Hasan (21) of Nishanbaria village under Morrelganj police station; Shampa (24) of Bhambag village in Kalia upazila of Narail; and Munni (16) of Sutarpara village in Jatrabari, Dhaka. According to police and the victims, they initially came to the Jafong area through an unidentified broker after being lured with promises of high-paying jobs. The two women were allegedly promised domestic jobs

◆ see page 7

100kg of Cannabis Recovered from Private Car in Daudkandi

M A Khayer Emon, Cumilla Correspondent

Police have recovered 100 kilograms of cannabis (ganja) from an old private car in Daudkandi upazila of Cumilla district. The vehicle allegedly used to transport the contraband was also seized during the operation. However, the driver of the car managed to flee the scene after sensing the presence of police.

The operation was conducted at around 2:30pm on Wednesday (September 23) on the Dhaka-bound lane of the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway, approximately 100 yards west of the Meghna-Gomti Toll Plaza in Daudkandi. According to police, a team of Daudkandi Model Police Station was conducting a checkpoint on the highway under the leadership and direction of Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mohammad Sajedul Islam.

At one stage, police signalled a silver-coloured old private car bearing registration number Dhaka Metro-Ga-14-5736 to stop for checking. The driver initially stopped the vehicle but immediately got out and fled on foot, taking advantage of the situation. Police subsequently searched the vehicle and recovered 100kg of cannabis, which had allegedly been concealed inside the car using a special method. The police also seized the private car allegedly used for transporting the illegal drugs. SI (Unarmed) Md Monir Hossain, along with accompanying police personnel, conducted the search operation at the checkpoint, police said.

Authorities said legal proceedings are underway and a case is being prepared at Daudkandi Model Police Station in connection with the recovery. Police are also working to identify and arrest the escaped driver and determine the source and intended destination of the seized cannabis.

Editor : Md. Aminur Rahman (Sagir), Acting Editor : Md. Neyamul Hossain, Published by-Shariatpur printing press-234, Fakirapool Dhaka. office : Kha-82/11/A, 300 Feet Road, Takertech, Namapara, Khilkhet, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh. Phone : 02-47443834, Mobile : 01989577939, 01971021071, Email: neyamulbsky@gmail.com

‘Awami League will not illicit arms recovery, and drug eradication. In response to a question regarding law amendments and administrative reforms, he noted that long-accumulated problems cannot be eliminated overnight. However, work on drafting new laws and making necessary amendments to improve the situation is underway at full speed. At the same meeting, Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) Dr. Shahadat Hossain strongly demanded social security and permanent solutions to these problems. He said, "Permanent peace is not possible through evictions or forced enforcement of the law alone. Alongside maintaining law and order, social education, evaluation of economic realities, and the coordinated role of state institutions must be ensured." Presided over by Chittagong District Commissioner Mohammad Zahidul Islam Miah, the important view-exchange meeting was attended by top law enforcement officials of the district, representatives from various government departments, and local public representatives.

Govt to procure 1.55 lakh

set at US\$383.80 per metric ton.Prodintorg, Russia, was recommended as the supplier.The committee also approved the import of 40,000 metric tons of DAP fertiliser from Saudi Arabia's MA'ADEN under a state-level agreement with BADC.The fertiliser, under the fourth lot for 2026, will cost around Tk 437.37 crore, with the price fixed at US\$885 per metric ton.MA'ADEN was recommended as the supplier.All the procurement and import proposals were recommended for approval by the committee. The five approved proposals involve 10,000 metric tons of lentil and 155,000 metric tons of fertiliser, with a combined value of about Tk 1,059 crore.

Launch fare hike kept

be reasonable, he added. Regarding launch fares, Rabiul said vessel owners had demanded a 15% increase, citing higher fuel prices and operating costs.“Considering the interests of passengers, we have increased fares by 7.54%,” he said. The minimum launch fare has also been increased from Tk32 to Tk35.The minister said fare increases were undesirable but unavoidable following the rise in fuel prices amid the global situation.

“We have tried to keep the minimum fare increase as low as possible considering public hardship,” he said, adding that the government had not allowed anyone to act arbitrarily by exploiting the fare hike or the increase in fuel prices. Asked about CNG-run vehicles, he said there was no scope to increase their fares as CNG prices had not risen. “Necessary action will be taken if any instance of charging higher fares is reported,” he said.

Govt issues gazette raising

recalculated if the number of seats in a bus or minibus is reduced from the number approved by the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) to facilitate more comfortable travel.In such cases, the revised fare must be approved by the BRTA or the relevant Passenger and Goods Transport Committee.The revised fares will not apply to gas-run buses and minibuses.Transport operators have also been instructed to display fare charts prominently at visible locations inside every bus and minibus.The government recently raised the prices of all major petroleum fuels in line with international market prices.The prices of diesel, kerosene, octane and petrol were increased by Tk 20 per litre, with the new prices set at Tk 135, Tk 135, Tk 160 and Tk 155 respectively. The revised fuel prices took effect on Monday.Following a meeting with transport owners, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Shaikh Rabiul Alam announced the Tk 0.17 per kilometre fare hike on Tuesday.

Man Dies After Being

has reportedly gripped the area, with an uneasy situation prevailing among local residents. Police have continued their investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the attack, establish the actual motive behind the incident and identify those responsible. Further legal action will be taken based on the investigation and autopsy findings, police said.

CCGP appoints Indonesian

Authority, the tender sought O&M and marine services for the complete SPM installation, including all auxiliary and ancillary facilities both offshore and onshore, for a 64-month service period. he SPM is a major petroleum import and transportation facility designed to enable large mother vessels carrying crude oil and refined petroleum products to unload directly through a floating offshore mooring system. Under the system, tankers can moor at a floating buoy in the Bay of Bengal and transfer crude oil and high-speed diesel through separate submarine pipelines to the pumping station and tank farm at Maheshkhali. The products can then be transported to Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL) and other facilities in Chattogram.he project comprises a floating SPM, two parallel pipelines and storage facilities. The pipelines are designed to transport crude oil and diesel separately. Government project documents say the system was designed to reduce the time needed to unload 100,000 tonnes of crude oil from around eight to 10 days to about two days. Some 60,000–70,000 tonnes of diesel can be unloaded in about 28 hours.The SPM project was undertaken to overcome the limitations of unloading petroleum products from large vessels at the outer anchorage using smaller lighterage vessels. Large tankers cannot enter the Karnaphuli River due to draft restrictions, making the traditional lighterage system slower and more costly.According to BPC documents, the project comprises a floating mooring facility, a pumping station and tank farm at Maheshkhali, and a 220-kilometre pipeline network. The infrastructure also includes storage tanks for crude oil and diesel and a supervisory control and data acquisition system.The project was completed in March 2024, and trial operations demonstrated the transfer of crude oil and diesel through the pipeline system. The facility, however, remained without a regular O&M operator for an extended period.BPC subsequently invited international tenders to appoint an operator. The latest tender process attracted bids from PT Pertamina Trans Kontinental, China Petroleum Pipeline Engineering Company Limited and Hong Kong-based Hilong Marine Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited. PT Pertamina Trans Kontinental was evaluated as technically qualified and the lowest financial bidder, according to recent reporting based on BPC documents.The appointment of the operator is expected to enable the SPM to enter regular operation, allowing BPC to use the infrastructure for direct unloading and transportation of imported crude oil and diesel.The facility was built to reduce dependence on the existing lighterage system, shorten fuel unloading time and lower the cost of transporting imported petroleum products.Government estimates have previously put the potential annual savings from the SPM at several hundred crore taka, depending on the volume of crude oil and diesel handled. The CCGP's recommendation now clears the way for the government to proceed with the proposed O&M contract with PT Pertamina Trans Kontinental.

CCGP approves Tk

ing a contract worth Tk 118.33 crore for emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction of roads, bridges and culverts under the project titled “Emergency Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Various Roads, Bridges and Culverts under Sunamganj and Habiganj Road Divisions Damaged in the 2022 Flood”.The

project aims to rehabilitate and reconstruct road infrastructure damaged by the 2022 floods in Sunamganj and Habiganj.The committee also recommended approval of a major infrastructure package worth Tk 3,629.96 crore under the “Supporting Infrastructure Project for Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone” being implemented by Invest Bangladesh.The Prime Minister's Office placed the proposal.China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC) was recommended as the successful bidder for the package. The CCGP recommended approval of both procurement proposals.

Seven traders fined in

was conducted on Tuesday night in the main market of Nagarkanda upazila. The mobile court was led by Khairul Hasan, Assistant Commissioner (Land) and Executive Magistrate of Nagarkanda upazila. During the operation, the General Manager (GM) of the Upazila Rural Electricity, Engineer Sohel Rana Chowdhury, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Engineer Shariful Alam, and members of the law enforcement agencies were present. At the end of the operation, Executive Magistrate Khairul Hasan stated that this operation was aimed at enforcing the government's scheduled time for electricity conservation. In addition to imposing fines on 7 traders for violating the directive, other traders have also been alerted and cautioned. Such monitoring operations will continue regularly in the upazila to implement the government order.

Seven Bangladeshis, Including

in India with monthly salaries of Tk 50,000, while the five young men were promised jobs at different companies with monthly salaries of Tk 35,000. Later, a man named Mizan took them to the house of Abdul Mannan in Naljuri Baraitola village. They were staying there with the intention of crossing the border illegally and entering India. Acting on a tip-off, Assistant Sub-Inspector Mohammad Ali of the Tamabil Police Outpost under Gowainghat Police Station, along with accompanying officers, conducted an operation at the location. The seven individuals were arrested and taken into police custody. Following the legal process, they were subsequently produced before the court. Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Gowainghat Police Station, Md. Omar Faruk, confirmed the incident and said the seven individuals had been staying in Naljuri Baraitola village with the intention of illegally entering India through a broker after being lured with promises of high-paying jobs. He further said that police efforts are underway to identify and arrest the brokers involved in the incident.

Schoolgirl Dies After Being

Ishita would respond to treatment and return home safely to resume her normal life and attend school again. However, that hope did not come true. After fighting for her life for nearly a month, she died while undergoing treatment in the ICU on Wednesday. Road Safety Concerns Raised After the Tragedy Ishita's death has renewed concerns among local residents over the reckless and uncontrolled movement of auto-rickshaws on roads in Sitakunda. According to local residents, some vehicles are allegedly being driven recklessly and without following traffic rules, putting pedestrians and school-going children at risk. They have called for stronger monitoring and effective enforcement of traffic laws to ensure the safety of children and pedestrians on local roads. Demand for Investigation and Legal Action Local residents have demanded a proper investigation into the circumstances surrounding Ishita's death, identification of the auto-rickshaw involved in the accident and legal action against those found responsible. They have also urged the authorities concerned to take effective measures to control reckless and unregulated vehicle movement and ensure the safety of schoolchildren and pedestrians. The death of a child not only leaves a family devastated but also raises serious questions about road safety and the effective enforcement of traffic regulations. Local residents hope that a proper investigation will establish responsibility for the incident and that effective measures will be taken to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

Ten years of rigorous imprison

Rabbani, confirmed the matter regarding Ratañ Roy, stating, "We were able to prove the allegations against the accused in court one hundred percent. Justice has been established in this verdict, and the state is completely satisfied." At the time of the verdict announcement, the accused Miraj Sheikh was present in the courtroom. After the verdict was delivered, he was sent to Faridpur District Jail under strict police escort.

Smuggled Goods

market, which could harm local farmers and create downward pressure on onion prices. Considering the matter, special operations have been intensified along the border areas, the BGB said. The BGB further stated that intelligence activities and regular operations will continue to prevent smuggling and drug trafficking through the border.

Cabinet committee

agreement to import prilled urea fertiliser from Foreign Economic Corporation Prodintorg under the G2G arrangement during the 2026-27 fiscal. Both proposals were placed by the Ministry of Industries.

Bankers for successful

Bank PLC and Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) jointly performed duties as lead banks in organizing the meeting. Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank Muhammad Badiuzzaman Didar was present at the event as the chief guest, while Managing Director of RAKUB Kazi Abdur Rahman was present as guest of honor. Special guests present were Directors of Bangladesh Bank, Golam Mahmud, Nazim Uddin and Dr. Ismail Hossain and Director General of Bangladesh Sericulture Development Board, Toufiq Al Mahmud. he event was presided over by Nizam Uddin, General Manager of Rupali Bank PLC. The chief guest and the invited special guests discussed in detail the two refinancing funds announced by Bangladesh Bank and emphasized their role in the development of agriculture in the country, especially in North Bengal. Another panel discussion comprising senior bankers answered various questions from entrepreneurs and stakeholders, along with question-and-answer and two-way communication. Local representatives and branch managers of all scheduled banks operating in Rajshahi and a large number of agriculture and SME entrepreneurs were present at the meeting. The chief guest and the invited special guests discussed in detail the two refinancing funds announced by Bangladesh Bank.

Mathbaria-Mirukhali

new tenders through the administrative process. On the other hand, Shahidul Islam, a representative of the contracting company, said on the phone that they have not yet received all the dues for the work they have completed so far. They will resume work only when the outstanding dues are paid to the authorities. This important development project worth crores of taka is about to collapse due to this two-sided position of the contractor and the administration and the tension. The affected locals have strongly demanded that all administrative and financial complications be resolved immediately, the remaining work of the road be completed and the suffering of the people be

removed.

ADB lowers Bangladesh’s growth forecast to 4 % in FY2027

Staff correspondent

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has lowered its economic growth forecast for Bangladesh to 4.0% for fiscal year (FY) 2027 from 4.5% projected in its July outlook, while forecasting 3.7% growth for FY2026. According to the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) latest report, the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) September 2026, released on Wednesday, Economic activity slowed in the final quarter of FY2026 due to supply chain disruptions linked to the conflict in the Middle East, although the impact is expected to be limited.The improved growth outlook reflects stronger consumption and investment as political uncertainty eases following the general election in early 2026. Inflation eased to an estimated 8.7% in FY2026 from 10.0% in FY2025, but is forecast to rise to 9.0% in FY2027.Inflation is expected to remain elevated due to energy shortages, high production and transport costs, potential shipping disruptions, the delayed effects of El Niño on food prices, and gradually easing monetary conditions.The current account deficit is projected to widen to 0.6% of GDP in FY2027 from an estimated 0.3% in FY2026, as import growth outpaces exports. Remittance inflows are expected to remain resilient despite ongoing tensions in the Middle East.Strong remittances and higher foreign exchange reserves will help support external stability, although maintaining stability will depend on adequate financial inflows, exchange rate flexibility, and prudent macroeconomic management.The report notes that the services and agriculture sectors are expected to support growth in FY2027.However, industry and investment are likely to remain constrained by high borrowing costs, limited access to credit, energy shortages, weak external demand, and other structural challenges.Private consumption, supported by remittances, is expected to remain the main driver of growth, although high inflation will continue to reduce household purchasing power.The report projects significant downside risks.A prolonged conflict in the Middle East, higher oil prices, further disruptions to global shipping, tighter trade restrictions, weaker growth in major export markets, continued exchange rate pressures, additional stress in the banking sector, delays in fiscal reforms, lower-than-expected development spending, and climate-related shocks could weaken growth and keep inflation elevated. ADB Country Director Qingfeng Zhang said Bangladesh's economy is beginning to recover, but the recovery remains vulnerable to external shocks and domestic constraints.“This is an important moment to accelerate reforms in macroeconomic management, the financial sector, energy security, and the business environment. These reforms will be essential to unlock private investment, create quality jobs, and place Bangladesh on a stronger, more inclusive, and resilient growth path”. He mentioned that ADB stands ready to support Bangladesh in translating these reforms into tangible results for its people.

Govt targets to deliver 100pc textbooks to upazilas by Nov 30

Staff correspondent

The government has set a target to reach the revised textbooks to about four crore students across the country before the start of the 2027 academic year. To this end, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is taking all-out efforts to ensure the supply of 100 percent high-quality textbooks to every upazila by November 30 next. According to the Ministry of Education and the NCTB, the printing of textbooks for pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels is progressing in full swing at printing presses in Dhaka and various other locations across the country. A ‘zero-tolerance’ policy regarding quality has been adopted at every stage - from the printing press to the receiving of books at the field level and to ensure delivery within the stipulated timeframe. As part of the oversight proces, a total of 53 monitoring teams, comprising officials from the Ministry of Education, the NCTB, and multiple intelligence agencies, are working at the field level. Already, about 4,50,000 printed forma of the press and 27,000 substandard books have been cancelled and destroyed for failing to meet the quality. Ministry officials said action would be taken not only against printing agencies but also against the officials and teachers receiving the books at the field level if any irregularities or negligence are found. The government is determined to ensure that 100 percent high-quality and error-free textbooks reach the students on the very first day of the new academic year. Talking to BSS, NCTB Chairman Professor Mohammed Fakhru! Mawla said the government is taking a strict stance regarding the quality of textbooks this year. Due to failure to maintain quality standards, about 4,50,000 printed forma and 27,000 substandard printed books have already been rejected.The ministry and the NCTB are working tirelessly to ensure that high-quality, error-free textbooks reach the upazilas by November 30, he said.“While there may have been scopes for collusion between unscrupulous quarters at the printing presses and the field level in the past, this time the responsibility for directly verifying quality has been assigned to the concerned district and upazila education officers as well as the heads of institutions,” he said.Mawla said if any discrepancy regarding the quality of the books is detected after delivery, the receiving officials will also face disciplinary action. Update on textbook printing: According to the NCTB's production report dated September 22, a total of 30,71,98,101 copies of textbooks are scheduled to be printed for pre-primary, primary, Ebtedayi, secondary, Dakhil, and vocational/technical levels. This total includes textbooks for students from ethnic minorities and the visually impaired students. Printing operations began a month earlier this year compared to last year, and the work is underway in full swing at various presses across the country. A total of 42,66,253 copies (74.45%) out of 57,30,640 books required for the pre-primary level have already been printed. Besides, 2,80,78,996 copies (36.96%) out of 7,60,97,096 books for the primary level, and 1,52,64,400 copies (7%) out of 22,11,82,592 for the secondary level have been completed.An official from the NCTB's distribution wing said printing for the pre-primary level is nearing completion, while distribution has already commenced in several upazilas, including Bancharampur and Sarail. “Textbooks will be delivered to all upazilas across the country in phases, achieving 100 percent delivery by November 30. Only textbooks for the English version and specialized books for ethnic minorities will be dispatched to the district level,” he said. According to the NCTB, printing is currently in full swing at 91 presses nationwide, out of the 113 contracted by the government. To mitigate temporary power outages, generator backups have been made mandatory for large presses, and priority power supply is being ensured through coordination with local electricity departments. To ensure the GSM (paper

weight) and printing quality of the new books, laboratory tests are being conducted alongside inspections by Pre-Delivery Inspection (PDI) agencies. Recently, paper samples from nine presses underwent laboratory testing at the BCSIR and were found to meet quality standards. Three-tier monitoring & Intelligence surveillance: NCTB officials said to prevent any lack of transparency, irregularities, or artificial shortages in the textbook printing and supply chain, multiple intelligence agencies have been deployed alongside special teams led by a group of NCTB officials. They said a total of 53 monitoring teams from the NCTB and the Ministry of Education are working at the field level. Among those, 33 NCTB teams and 7 ministry teams are maintaining strict surveillance at printing presses. Additionally, 5 special teams, led by the NCTB Secretary and members, are taking immediate action against printing agencies based on real-time information from the field. Monitoring officials are stationed directly at the printing presses from 9:00 AM until late at night.Zero tolerance:The NCTB officials said to ensure the brightness (85%) and print quality of the paper for the new books, chemical and quality tests are being conducted through an appointed PDI agency, alongside NCTB's own supervision. Paper samples from nine printing presses, selected at random, have already undergone laboratory testing at the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), and all samples were found to meet quality standards. Education Minister Dr A N M Ehsanul Hoque Milon said textbooks made with substandard paper will not be tolerated at the upazila level.The government has set a reasonable price after verifying market rates so that no one can use low costs as an excuse to produce substandard books, he said. The education minister said no printing press or individual involved will be spared if they fail to supply quality books on schedule. NCTB member Professor Mohammad Abu Naser Tuku (Textbooks) said work is underway according to roadmap to ensure that textbooks reach the students on time. Clear instructions have been issued to press owners to complete the supply of the books by November 30, he said adding teams deployed in the field are stationed at the printing presses daily to oversee the work. “Our primary objective is to ensure that students receive the complete set of books for their new classes on the very first day of the year,” the NCTB member said.

Remittance inflow to Bangladesh expected to remain resilient: ADB

Staff correspondent

Remittance inflows are expected to remain resilient to Bangladesh despite ongoing tensions in the Middle East.Strong remittances and higher foreign exchange reserves will help support external stability, although maintaining stability will depend on adequate financial inflows, exchange rate flexibility and prudent macroeconomic management, according to the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) latest report, the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) September 2026, released today.The report notes that the services and agriculture sectors are expected to support growth in FY2027."Bangladesh's economy is beginning to recover, but the recovery remains vulnerable to external shocks and domestic constraints," said ADB Country Director Qingfeng Zhang. "This is an important moment to accelerate reforms in macroeconomic management, the financial sector, energy security, and the business environment. These reforms will be essential to unlock private investment, create quality jobs and place Bangladesh on a stronger, more inclusive and resilient growth path." he added.Zhang said the ADB also stands ready to support Bangladesh in translating these reforms into tangible results for its people. The report said Bangladesh's economy is projected to grow by 3.7% in fiscal year (FY) 2026 and 4.0% in FY2027, up from 3.5% in FY2025.Economic activity slowed in the final quarter of FY2026 due to supply chain disruptions linked to the conflict in the Middle East, although the impact is expected to be limited. The improved growth outlook reflects stronger consumption and investment as political uncertainty eases following the general election in early 2026. Inflation eased to an estimated 8.7% in FY2026 from 10.0% in FY2025, but is forecast to rise to 9.0% in FY2027. Inflation is expected to remain elevated due to energy shortages, high production and transport costs, potential shipping disruptions, the delayed effects of El Niño on food prices, and gradually easing monetary conditions.The current account deficit is projected to widen to 0.6% of GDP in FY2027 from an estimated 0.3% in FY2026, as import growth outpaces exports.The report said private consumption, supported by remittances, is expected to remain the main driver of growth, although high inflation will continue to reduce household purchasing power. It said a prolonged conflict in the Middle East, higher oil prices, further disruptions to global shipping, tighter trade restrictions, weaker growth in major export markets, continued exchange rate pressures, additional stress in the banking sector, delays in fiscal reforms, lower-than-expected development spending, and climate-related shocks could weaken growth and keep inflation elevated.ADB is a leading multilateral development bank supporting sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth across Asia and the Pacific. Working with its members and partners to solve complex challenges together, ADB harnesses innovative financial tools and strategic partnerships to transform lives, build quality infrastructure, and safeguard our planet. Founded in 1966, ADB is owned by 69 members-50 from the region.

PM’s first UNGA day reflects diplomatic economic priorities: Mahdi

Desk report

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has attended 10 scheduled programmes on his first day at the 81st United Nations General Assembly, covering Bangladesh's diplomatic, regional, humanitarian and economic interests, said his Adviser and Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Spokesperson Mahdi Amin on Tuesday.Briefing reporters at the Bangladesh Permanent Mission to the UN in New York, Mahdi said the day's engagements covered multilateral, regional and bilateral issues, the Rohingya crisis and development cooperation.He said the Prime Minister began the day by attending a breakfast hosted by UN Secretary-General António Guterres for heads of delegation and their spouses before joining the opening session of the UN General Assembly's high-level General Debate. At the regional level, Tarique Rahman held meetings with the prime minister of Bhutan and the vice-president of the Maldives, while he also held bilateral meetings with the prime minister of Haiti and Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir said the meetings focused on strengthening Bangladesh's relations and partnerships with the countries concerned, including cooperation in areas of common interest. He said the meeting with the Turkish President covered the two countries' comprehensive partnership, including defence, investment and cooperation at international and multilateral forums.



Trump signs US-Denmark-Greenland agreement to strengthen Arctic security

Entertainment Desk

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed an agreement with Denmark and Greenland designed to strengthen security in the Arctic and North Atlantic. The deal could allow the United States to expand its military presence in Greenland while reducing tensions caused by Trump's repeated calls for the island to become part of the United States.

The agreement was signed on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York, days after Trump announced plans to increase the U.S. military presence in Greenland while keeping the territory under Danish control. The arrangement would remain valid even if Greenland eventually becomes independent.

"This is tremendous for Europe and for the United States and for everybody," Trump said shortly before the signing. "And for Greenland, it's going to be incredible."

Trump has sought to acquire Greenland since at least 2019. During his second term, he has also threatened to take control of the semiautonomous territory from Denmark, a fellow NATO member. When asked Tuesday whether the United States had abandoned the idea of acquiring Greenland, Trump did not directly answer.

U.S. Military Has Maintained a Presence in Greenland for Decades

Representatives from the United States, Denmark and Greenland spent months negotiating the agreement in an effort to address U.S. security concerns about the resource-rich Arctic island.

Trump's interest in Greenland had created tensions within NATO. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen previously warned that a U.S. takeover could threaten the future of the Atlantic alliance.

The dispute also caused concern among Greenland's approximately 56,000 residents and strained relations between Washington, Copenhagen and their European Union partners. European countries responded by increasing security activities and financial assistance involving Greenland.

Economic interests and the island's natural resources have also influenced discussions about its future. Around two-thirds of Greenland lies within the Arctic Circle, where declining sea ice has created new potential shipping routes.

The United States has maintained a military presence in Greenland for decades. Since 1945, however, that presence has declined from thousands of troops stationed across 17 bases and installations to about 200 personnel at Pituffik Space Base in northwestern Greenland. The facility supports U.S. and NATO operations involving missile warnings, missile defense and space surveillance.

Speaking at the U.N. General Assembly before the agreement was signed, Trump said the United States would immediately begin developing a larger military presence in suitable locations, including the construction of two major bases.

Denmark's parliament approved legislation last year allowing U.S. military bases on Danish territory. The measure expanded on a 2023 agreement reached with the Biden administration that provided American forces with broad access to Danish air bases.

Trump has previously argued that the United States must "take Greenland" to prevent Russia or China from gaining control of the territory. Although he has said he would prefer to negotiate a deal, he has also stated that the United States would obtain Greenland "one way or the other."

Agreement Would Continue if Greenland Gains Independence

The agreement, released by the three governments fol-



lowing the signing, permits the United States to modernize and expand its activities at Pituffik Space Base. It also allows Washington to establish defense areas at Narsarsuaq in southern Greenland and Mestersvig in the east. The United States could establish additional defense areas and expand military facilities or operations elsewhere on the island. The agreement calls for contracts related to the construction, maintenance and removal of such facilities to be awarded to Greenlandic businesses whenever possible.

The accord also provides the U.S. military with broad access across Greenland, including underwater routes. The three parties said they share an interest in ensuring U.S. military access to Greenland to help defend NATO territory, Greenland and North America, including through Trump's planned "Golden Dome" missile defense system. Frederiksen said no specific decision had yet been made regarding that system.

Countries outside NATO would be prohibited from establishing manned or unmanned military facilities in Greenland or maintaining a permanent military presence there unless all signatories agree.

The agreement has no specified expiration date. If Greenland becomes independent, it would remain in NATO and assume the rights and responsibilities currently held by Denmark under the agreement.

Signatories Describe the Deal as a Positive Development

Frederiksen described the agreement as a long-term arrangement that benefits the United States, Greenland, Denmark and NATO as a whole.

"Mr. President, you have been very clear: You don't want adversaries to come too close," she said. "I fully agree."

Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen described the agreement as a "win-win-win" arrangement, emphasizing the shared security interests of Greenland and the United States.

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, who played a role in easing tensions during the height of the dispute in January, also welcomed the agreement. In a post on X, he said the deal, together with NATO's increasing involvement in Arctic security, would strengthen collective security and contribute to greater stability in the region.

However, some Greenlandic officials said the tensions had damaged trust.

Naaaja Nathanielsen, one of Greenland's two representatives in Denmark's parliament and a former government minister, told The Associated Press that the dispute had been extremely difficult for Greenland's population. She said many people had experienced fear and uncertainty about the possibility of losing their country and their livelihoods.

Still, Nathanielsen described the new agreement as a major positive development and said it represented the first binding international agreement Greenland had signed as a country. She said it was an important step toward greater self-government and a stronger role for Greenland in international discussions.

Frederiksen also expressed relief following the signing, saying that the Kingdom of Denmark was in a better position than it had been the previous day. She ended the post-signing news conference by joking that the participants would soon go out for a cold beer.

Other NATO members also welcomed the development. Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics said the announcement was positive, although many details remained to be resolved. Rinkevics added that he hoped the Greenland dispute would now be settled, saying that the prolonged disagreement between close allies had been uncomfortable.

Russian drone strikes kill 2 in Kyiv ahead of Zelenskyy's UN address

Entertainment Desk

Russian drones struck Kyiv in daylight Wednesday, killing two people and injuring 23, hours before Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was scheduled to address world leaders at the UN General Assembly.

The attacks triggered fires and damaged buildings in Kyiv and other parts of Ukraine, with thick black smoke rising over the capital, authorities said.

Zelenskyy was in New York seeking stronger international support for Ukraine's fight against Russia's invasion, which has continued for more than four years.

He met US President Donald Trump on Tuesday amid growing frustration over the lack of progress toward ending the war and escalating aerial attacks by both sides.

Zelenskyy has proposed measures to reduce tensions, including an end to Russian attacks on Ukraine's power infrastructure and arrangements to keep Ukrainian grain moving through the Black Sea.

Ukraine has continued striking Russian oil refineries, while Kyiv is also seeking additional US-made Patriot air defense systems to counter Russian ballistic missiles. Supplies of the systems are limited following the outbreak of the war in Iran.

In southeastern Zaporizhzhia, two men, aged 37 and 39, were injured when a Russian strike sparked a fire at a shopping mall. Emergency workers said the blaze covered about 6,000 square meters before being brought under control.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its forces struck Ukrainian military-industrial and energy facilities, logistics centers and sea vessels overnight.

NATO commander warns Putin becoming more willing to take risks

Entertainment Desk

Russian President Vladimir Putin is becoming increasingly willing to take risks as the war in Ukraine drags on and Moscow seeks to divide NATO allies, a senior NATO commander said Tuesday.

Air Chief Marshal Sir John Stringer, NATO's deputy supreme allied commander for Europe, told The Associated Press at a security conference in Estonia that Putin was becoming "increasingly cavalier, dangerous and risk accepting."

Stringer warned NATO members to respond carefully to a growing number of Russian-linked incidents, saying Putin could seek to provoke the alliance into an "overreaction."

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk has warned that Russia could deliberately target NATO countries with drones or missiles while claiming the attacks were accidental. French President Emmanuel Macron has also ordered preparations to protect critical infrastructure from potential drone and cyberattacks.

However, some European officials have urged caution. A British defense official said the UK does not assess that Putin is seeking a direct confrontation with NATO.

Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics also said there was no evidence of a Russian military buildup near his country's borders.

"The perspective of direct military attack is not correct," Rinkevics told reporters on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

US Ambassador to NATO Matthew Whitaker similarly said Putin "does not want a conflict with NATO," while noting that Russian-linked sabotage and other hybrid activities were more concerning.

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said NATO must remain prepared and strong, warning that any serious Russian action would draw a firm response.

European countries have faced repeated Russian drone incursions and other



covert activities since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. An AP review found more than 210 incidents by March 2026, including vandalism, propaganda, arson, sabotage and cyberattacks, up from 59 a year earlier.

Stringer said some drone incursions into NATO airspace could be accidental, particularly when Russian electronic warfare disrupts drones during attempts to counter Ukrainian attacks. But he said Moscow could deliberately escalate such activity.

Estonian Prime Minister Kristen Michal said the distinction between negligence and deliberate targeting can be difficult to establish. He and Stringer said the rise in covert Russian activity was largely linked to Western support for Ukraine.

Stringer said Putin was seeking to create divisions among NATO members because Russia's campaign in Ukraine was not progressing as Moscow had hoped.

Michal said Russia was increasing pressure across Europe in an effort to weaken Western support for Kyiv. He said a conventional Russian attack on Europe was currently unlikely because of NATO's deterrent and Russia's military commitments in Ukraine. Baltic leaders expect Russian attacks on infrastructure to increase as winter approaches and see little prospect of diplomatic progress before spring.

Michal said the Russian threat would remain until Putin changes his military objectives, arguing that continued support for Ukraine is the strongest means of deterrence.

Xi begins Washington state visit with rare planeside welcome from Trump

Entertainment Desk

Chinese President Xi Jinping begins a three-day state visit to Washington on Wednesday, with US President Donald Trump expected to give him an unusual planeside welcome at Joint Base Andrews.

Trump is expected to join an arrival ceremony with Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, at the military base outside Washington, rather than wait for the Chinese leader at the White House.

The gesture reflects the importance Trump is placing on Xi's first state visit to the United States in more than a decade. The visit will include a formal state dinner at the White House on Thursday, designed in part to reciprocate the elaborate reception Trump received during his visit to China in May.

The high-profile ceremonies come amid tensions between the two countries over trade, artificial intelligence, the US war with Iran and China's policy toward Taiwan.

Trump has repeatedly praised Xi as a "great leader" and described their relationship warmly, while saying he wants to maintain "strategic stability" between Washington and Beijing.



The planned welcome has drawn criticism from some US lawmakers. Republican Sen. Roger Wicker, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, criticized what he called the "lavish welcome" and urged Trump to raise issues including China's military expansion and its support for Iran.

Trump has made clear that he wants to impress Xi during the visit, recently highlighting preparations for a new helicopter landing pad at the White House.

The pageantry is expected to continue Thursday with a formal White House arrival ceremony and a military honor guard review, followed by a black-tie state dinner attended by business and technology leaders, including Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk.

The two presidents are also expected to hold closed-door discussions on trade, technology and other contentious issues, although expectations for major breakthroughs remain low.

On Friday, Xi and Peng are scheduled to have private tea with Trump and first lady Melania Trump before visiting the National Archives to view historic documents highlighting ties between the two countries.

Morocco votes in parliamentary election amid youth frustration

Entertainment Desk

Moroccans are voting for a new parliament Wednesday in an election marked by growing frustration among young people over unemployment, public services and the rising cost of living despite the country's economic growth.

Polling stations across Morocco are open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., with nearly 16 million registered voters eligible to elect members of the 395-seat House of Representatives.

The election is the first since deadly youth-led protests nearly a year ago and a mass attempt by migrants to cross the country's northern border into Spain's Ceuta, where dozens of people died.

The vote will determine the next prime minister and the composition of the government, which will operate alongside the powerful monarchy that retains broad authority over strategic affairs. Election results are expected Thursday.

The new government will oversee billions of dollars in investment as Morocco prepares to co-host the 2030 FIFA World Cup. It will also face pressure to address



concerns over jobs, wages, housing, healthcare and education.

Many young Moroccans remain skeptical that political participation can improve their lives, with some choosing street protests, considering emigration or staying away from the polls.

A total of 7,288 candidates from 27 political parties are contesting the election. Under the constitution, the king appoints the head of government from the party winning the most seats. As no party is expected to secure an outright majority, coalition talks are likely.

Some groups, including the far-left Democratic Path, have called for a boycott, saying the election lacks basic democratic conditions. The banned but tolerated Islamist association Al-Adl Wal Ihsane has also made similar claims.

Moroccans living abroad have the constitutional right to vote but cannot cast ballots by mail or at Moroccan consulates. They must travel to Morocco or authorize a registered family member or acquaintance to vote on their behalf.

The number of registered voters has fallen 9.7% since the 2021 election despite population growth, with analysts expecting low turnout.

In Casablanca and Rabat, voters formed small but steady lines at polling stations despite Wednesday being a working day.

Jamal Aamar, a 63-year-old retired banker voting for the Federation of the Democratic Left, said taking part in the election gives citizens a chance to make their voices heard.

"If you boycott, you will leave others an empty seat," he said.

Alcohol labels often omit health risks: study

Entertainment Desk

Alcohol companies are more than twice as likely to tell consumers to "drink responsibly" than to warn them about health risks, with current voluntary alcohol warnings largely hidden, uninformative and ineffective, an Australian study has found.

The study analyzed more than 6,000 alcohol labels across three major Australian retailers, examining the type and placement of voluntary health warnings and messages, according to a statement released Wednesday by the Public Health Association of Australia.

It found only 25 percent of products carried a voluntary health warning, with 99 percent of those advising specific groups, including minors, pregnant women and drivers, not to drink.

The findings, published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, showed that 65 percent of products carried responsible consumption messages without providing information about health harms, such as alcohol's links to at least seven types of cancer and liver disease.



Sri Lankan court sentences 15 men to life in prison over 2019 Easter bombings

Entertainment Desk

A Sri Lankan court on Tuesday sentenced 15 men to between 200 and 260 years in prison for helping plan and facilitate the 2019 Easter bombings that killed 267 people at churches and hotels.

Nine other defendants were acquitted after a trial lasting more than five years.

The April 21, 2019, attacks, inspired by the Islamic State group, targeted three churches and three hotels during Easter services and celebrations. Forty-two foreigners were among those killed and 574 people were injured. The three-judge High Court panel also ordered the convicts' property confiscated under the country's anti-terrorism law. The defendants can appeal to the Supreme Court.

Prosecutors said the men were involved in a coordinated plot targeting Christian worshippers and tourists. They presented a video recorded a day before the bombings showing masked attackers pledging allegiance to then-Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Authorities filed 23,270 charges in 2021 against 25 suspects accused of planning or inspiring the attacks. One died before the trial ended.

The bombings also triggered allegations of a wider conspiracy and criticism of security agencies for failing to act on repeated warnings. In July, a former police chief and a senior former Defense Ministry official were sentenced to death for failing to respond to foreign intelligence warnings. Sri Lanka has not carried out an execution since 1976.



Salman Khan slams trolling, inappropriate paparazzi shots

Entertainment Desk

Salman Khan used the latest episode of Bigg Boss 20 to speak out against online trolling, body-shaming and what he called inappropriate paparazzi photographs of female celebrities.

During the show's "Weekend Ka Vaar," Salman addressed trolls who criticized his former girlfriend Katrina Kaif over her post-partum weight following her appearance at a Ganapati Utsav in Mumbai last week.

"Why do you troll somebody who gets pregnant? Pregnant hone ke baad everyone puts on weight... Jab woh pictures mein wapaa aayegi toh woh fit aayengi... she wants to spend time with her family," Salman said.

A video clip of his comments quickly went viral, with social media users praising the actor and calling him "Pookie," a Gen Z term of affection for someone seen as standing up for a good cause.

"If green flag had a face," one user wrote, while another commented, "Green flag to ab Salman Khan lagne laga mujhe."

Salman also addressed criticism about his age, saying he knows people mock him for growing older. "Of course, I'm 60 years old, yaar," he said. "You cannot be Maine Pyar Kiya all the time... this age has become a topic suddenly. Log kehte hain woh budha ho gaya hai... what do you want to troll... mujhe pata hai mujhe kaun kaun troll karta hai... hum react nahin karte... humare fans club itne saare hain... humko kya farak padta hai... bolne do inko."

At one point, Salman removed his shirt and

hat, wiped off his makeup on camera and challenged trolls to criticize him. He then showed his physique, making it clear that he was not affected by the comments.

He also defended his brother Sohail Khan and others who have faced online ridicule.

"Pehle apne aap ko dekho, apne jism ko dekho uske baad karna yeh sab... apne maa baap ko dekho... uske baad troll karna... mazak udana Sohail ke upar, Varun ke upar it's not done," he said.

"Jitna trolling karna hai kar lo, phate hue joote bhi pehenta hoon," Salman added.

Salman criticized paparazzi for photographing actresses from behind and taking what he described as inappropriate shots.

"Paparazzi hip shots lete hain, taangon ke shots lete hain, aur agar peeche se shot mil jaaye toh woh bhi lete hain. None of these heroines, none of the girls like it," he said.

Referring to his niece, he added, "Meri apni niece chal rahi hoti hai, toh peeche se uska shot le rahe hain aur caption daalte hain 'Pehchaano ye kaun hai?'"

"I am saying all this to girls: agar aisa ho toh ghoom ke ek chamat maaro aur bolo, 'Apni maa-behen ka shot le lo.' Disgusting people! What is this mentality?" Salman said.

Salman and Katrina reportedly began dating in the mid-2000s after working together. Katrina later said in a 2011 interview with Cosmopolitan that Salman was her first serious relationship. Katrina has been married to Vicky Kaushal since 2021. The couple welcomed their first child, son Vihaan, last November.



Sporshia not afraid of bullying, she gives threat

Entertainment Desk

Behind the glittering lights of the entertainment world, there are many unknown stories and storms of criticism. Stars often face bitter experiences of being taunted, insulted and trolled on social media.

However, instead of taking on that negativity, popular actress of this generation, Orchita Sporshia responded in a completely different way.

Recently, Sporshia created a storm of discussion on social media with an explosive but mysterious status on her Facebook profile.

Expressing her anger and strong attitude, Sporshia wrote, "One day I will open my mouth, and that day I will also tell why I have been silent for so long.

Until then, keep bullying me as much as you can. I will only become stronger and shine brighter as before."

In other words, she has made it clear by sending a direct message to trolls and bullies that no matter how much negativity comes, it will not be able to suppress her; rather, she will transform it into strength and move forward on her path brighter. Why this emotional and strong message from Sporshia all of a sud-

den? That is the question that is currently going around in the entertainment community.

However, Sporshia has been a different kind of artiste from the beginning, who has always bravely handled the storms and criticisms of her personal and professional life.

Actress Sporshia started her acting career through television dramas. She quickly made a name for herself in the minds of the general audience with some popular 'Airtel' commercials and dramas like 'Impossible 5'.

After that, she proved her acting skills in numerous successful dramas and tele-fictions one after another. But instead of limiting herself to one place, she stepped onto the big screen. She showed her versatile talent by acting in films like 'Kathbiral', 'Abar Boshonto' or 'Nabab LLB'. Her fluent presence on the OTT platform has also been appreciated by the audience. This status of the actress while preparing for her next works is like a fairy tale of her confidence. Protesting bullying and responding through her work and coming back with a new look every time. All in all, Sporshia proved that her true identity will be the merit of her work, not discussion and criticism.

Concert pays tribute to Kabir Suman

Entertainment Desk

Kabir Suman is a popular singer in Bangladesh as well as West Bengal.

This time, a special concert has been organised in tribute to him. Kabir Suman will not be present at the concert.

However, the entire event will be held in tribute to him.

The concert, to be held on October 2 at Butternote Jazz Cafe in Banani, the capital,



has been titled 'Suddenly on the Street Office Zone', after the title of Kabir Suman's song.

Three of the country's singer-songwriters, Autumnal Moon, Rezaul Karim Limon and Nahid Hasan, will suddenly perform at a street concert in the office area.

These three artistes will perform their own songs as well as Kabir Suman's songs.

'Katrina Kaif was, is, will always be beautiful'

Entertainment Desk

What was supposed to be a regular outing turned out to be something else for Katrina Kaif recently, as trolls began commenting on the changes in her body after the birth of her son. While the actor has stayed mum, her fans and celebrities have since come to her defence.

Actor-politician Khushbu Sundar also defended her, pointing out the hypocrisy of how a man's bodily changes are treated versus a woman's.

In a long note she posted on her Instagram and X (formerly Twitter), Khushbu questioned why a woman's body is always 'treated like a public announcement'. She also questioned why women who cross a certain age are measured by their 'prime'.

"But where is this obsession when it comes to men?" she questioned.

Khushbu further wrote, "A man goes bald, he is 'distinguished.' A man develops a 40 inch waist, nobody asks what happened to his 'prime.' A man grows grey or completely white hair, suddenly he is 'salt-and-pepper handsome,' 'mature,' 'charismatic.' When a man ages, he is allowed to become more attractive with experience."

'I don't feel safe in Bangladesh,' Tanjin Tisha

Entertainment Desk

Popular small screen actress Tanjin Tisha has raised concerns about her personal safety in Bangladesh, saying she does not feel safe in the country and calling for greater attention to women's security.

Speaking to media at a recent event, Tisha said, "To be honest, I don't feel safe in Bangladesh."

The actress said there are security shortcomings in many parts of the country and that ordinary people often face situations they do not deserve.

She also said many such incidents appear unfair and that people do not always receive justice.

Tisha particularly stressed the need to strengthen security for women, saying their safety should receive greater attention in all circumstances. The actress also spoke about wearing gold jewellery.

She said she had wondered why women should keep their gold jewellery in their bags while travelling when they could simply wear it instead.

According to Tisha, more effective measures are needed to ensure women's safety.

Tisha began her career in showbiz through ramp modelling.



She gained recognition as a model after appearing in a TVC of 'Robi' directed by Amitabh Reza Chowdhury.

She later drew attention after appearing in music video for 'Chokheri Poloke', sung by Rizvi Wahid and Shubhomita, in 2012.

She also appeared in Imran Mahmudul's 'Bolte Bolte Cholve Cholve'. She subsequently established herself as a TV actress through a series of dramas.

On January 4, 2020, she starred opposite Apurba in web drama 'Bhalobasha Tui', released on CMV's YouTube channel, playing the role of a sales representative.



After 15-yr of exile, Anti-Assad music star Assala Nasri makes return to Syria

Entertainment Desk

After a decade and a half of exile, popular Syrian music star Assala Nasri has finally returned to the stage of her homeland.

Thousands of spectators flocked to attend her first comeback concert in the capital Damascus last Thursday night.

When mass protests against then-President Bashar al-Assad began in Syria in 2011, Assala openly sided with the peaceful protesters.

Faced with the Assad government's crackdown, she was expelled from the Syrian Artists Union and subjected to widespread propaganda in state-run media.

At one point, she was forced to leave the country and settled with her family in Cairo, Egypt.

When power changed hands in Syria after the fall of the Assad government in 2024, the new administration invited Assala to return home.

At Thursday night's concert, the new Minister of Culture, Mohammed Yassin Saleh, appeared and called Assala a 'daughter of Damascus.'

Standing on stage, 57-year-old Assala Nasri told the audience in an emotional voice, "I still can't believe I'm standing here among you.

I've dreamed of this day for years." She announced that half of the total proceeds from the concert's ticket sales would be donated to various charitable causes.

Assala's concert was surrounded by tight security because some conservative groups in the country demanded the event be canceled.

However, ignoring them, Assala Nasri gave a clear message on the concert stage that the country's revival after overcoming the wounds of a long war is possible only through art and culture.

Kazi Shuvo's solo album after 10 years

Entertainment Desk

Dhruba Music Station (DMS) has launched a new initiative to release digital solo albums by different artistes, seeking to revive the appeal of melody-driven music in an increasingly visual-oriented era.

As the first installment of the series, DMS is set to release "Keu Bujhlo Na", a nine-track solo digital album by popular vocalist Kazi Shuvo.

After a long hiatus, Kazi Shuvo is delighted to return with a solo album. Talking about the project, he said, "It brings me immense joy to release a solo album again after so many years. I'm deeply grateful to Dhruba



dada for taking this risk during such a challenging time for the audio industry.

Undoubtedly, this is an exceptional and commendable initiative, as it will further enrich the country's audio sector.

I hope the audience will not be disappointed."Dhruba Guha, musician and founder of DMS, said the initiative is part of the production house's broader effort to take Bangla music to listeners around the world.



'Abar Hothat Brishti' to hit cinemas in Oct

Entertainment Desk

The 1998 classic 'Hothat Brishti' is returning to the big screen in a new version, titled 'Abar Hothat Brishti', with newcomers Arian Sarowar and Radifa Narmin in the lead roles.

Directed by Kamruzzaman, the remake is scheduled to be released in cinemas across Bangladesh on October 2, according to the filmmaker.

The film has already received clearance from the Bangladesh Film Certification Board.

The original 'Hothat Brishti', directed by Indian filmmaker Basu Chatterjee, first reached Bangladeshi audiences through a World Television Premiere on Channel i during Eid-ul-Azha in 1998.

It was subsequently released in cinemas and became a major success.

The Bangladesh-India joint production starred Ferdous Ahmed and Priyanka Trivedi in lead roles.

'Gitanjali' in hands of Apu Biswas

Entertainment Desk

Dhallywood actress Apu Biswas was recently seen in a different mood. She was holding the English version of Rabindranath Tagore's famous poetry book 'Gitanjali'.

After the release of the picture, fans have been interested in the actress's new look and the book in her hand.

It is learned that the picture is part of a recent photoshoot of Apu Biswas. In the photoshoot, she can be seen holding the English version of 'Gitanjali'.

The actress's appearance in front of the camera with the book in her hand was a bit different. As a result, discussions about the picture have started on social media.

Apu recently went to Nepal for the shooting of a movie. She participated in the shooting of the movie in various beautiful locations of the country.

The actress returned home after the shooting. She appeared in



a new photoshoot, fresh from her shooting experience in Nepal.

However, the actress did not give any details about why she was holding the English version of 'Gitanjali'.

Apart from acting, Apu Biswas is seen presenting herself in new ways in different photoshoots.



Rani Mukherjee loses her mother

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood actress Rani Mukherjee's family is in deep mourning after the death of her mother, former singer Krishna Mukherjee.

She breathed her last at age of 75 in Mumbai on Tuesday afternoon.

The news was confirmed in an official statement by the production company 'Yash Raj Films'.

Rani's family has requested for their privacy during this difficult time and prayers for the peace of Krishna's soul.

Krishna was not only the mother of a star child, she was also a renowned playback singer in Bengali and Hindi film industries. She has lent her voice to popular films like 'Momer Alo', 'Haiwan', 'Teesri Chokh' and 'Tomar Rakte Amar Sohaag'.

Krishna was the wife of late Ram Mukherjee, a famous producer-director and one of the founders of Filmalaya Studios.

Krishna was also sister of National Film Award-winning Bengali actress Debashree Roy.



World Cup 'not enough' as Spain begin next chapter

Sports Desk

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente will not allow the World Cup winners to rest on their laurels as they get back into action this week for the first time since their triumph. La Roja may have conquered Europe in 2024 and then the world this summer, but when they face England in the Nations League on Saturday, they will be seeking to improve. De la Fuente said in the aftermath of the World Cup final victory over Argentina in New Jersey in July, he was already looking to the future. The 65-year-old signed a contract extension, keeping him with the team until 2032, earlier this week. "In the heat of the moment, two or three minutes later, a player came up to me and said, 'What do we still have to win?' Well, the match against England on September 26th," said De la Fuente. "This team never stops. The World Cup isn't enough -- we have to be better. What we've achieved isn't enough to win the next match." Spain's next major target will be the 2028 European championships, where they have a chance to emulate the La Roja side that won Euro 2008, World Cup 2010 and Euro 2012. De la Fuente admitted that repeating that feat would be tricky. "In life it's very hard to win, and many more (teams) lose than win," he said. "Repeating past successes in terms of titles... we're going to try to be in a position to compete to win. "Now we're the team to beat. That's an added motivation." - New faces - Thomas Tuchel's England, who lost to Spain

Asian Games a stepping stone toward Olympic: Liton

Sports Desk

Bangladesh's T20 captain Liton Das sets his sight on making a giant stride to the country's longer-team ambition of playing 2028 Los Angeles Olympic through a strong showing in the upcoming Asian Games. Liton said Bangladesh's immediate target at the Asian Games is to reach the final, while a good campaign could help the team move closer to its bigger goal. Cricket's presence at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics would offer only a limited number of places with six teams expected to compete, making qualification a challenging prospect for Bangladesh. Bangladesh will begin its Asian Games campaign directly in the quarterfinals on September 29, when it will face a team advancing from the first round.



"Who wouldn't want to play the Olympics" Liton said here yesterday. "First of all, the events we are going for, if we play this event well, I think we will reach the ultimate place there." Liton stressed the importance of taking the tournament one match at a time. "The focus is on how we can play this event well and how we can reach the final. If you play the final, you will have a chance to win gold. Before that, you have to reach the final," he said. India and Pakistan are among the teams participating in the Asian Games with strong squads, but Liton said Bangladesh would focus primarily on its own performance. "Of course, there will be one goal here since we are going to play a tournament -- to play the final and do something good in the final," he said. Liton also highlighted the significance of the Asian Games for the players, given the rarity of competing in a multi-sport event of this scale. "Our players are very eager to play in this tournament. This tournament does not come every time," he said. "Every player is very excited and everyone is trying to fulfill that big dream." Bangladesh have also played two practice matches ahead of the tournament. Liton said the matches gave them a good preparation after a lengthy gap since the team's last T20 international series.



MLS coach axed for telling female ref 'It's a man's game'

Sports Desk

Columbus Crew sacked Argentine reserve team coach Federico Higuain for telling a female referee "Don't forget this is a man's game" while refusing to release her from a handshake, the Major League Soccer club said Tuesday. Higuain, the brother of former Argentina and Real Madrid forward Gonzalo Higuain, had already received a red card and a two-match suspension for the incident before the team dismissed him. "We determined it's in the best interest of our Club, players and support staff to dismiss Federico Higuain from his responsibilities," said Columbus Crew general manager Issa Tall. "After conversations this week and further assessing the past month, our Club's standards of what's expected from a leader for one of our teams have not been met." Higuain during follow-up talks with the club was "unwilling to reflect or take accountability for his actions, nor did he offer a public apology," the Athletic reported, citing anonymous club sources. The incident occurred during a game in MLS's developmental MLS NEXT Pro league. According to the referees' union, Higuain "committed two deliberate acts of physical abuse and sexism against a female official -- squeezing her hand and refusing to let go after being told to stop three times. "This physical intimidation was compounded by a demeaning, sexist remark to the official: 'Don't forget, this is a man's game,'" said the Professional Soccer Referees Association. The union criticized the league's initial two-game suspension as falling "drastically short," and called for at least a six-game suspension. "Women make every level of this game better. They should not have to endure intimidation or degrading comments to prove it," it said in a statement. "Our female officials have proven their excellence on the world stage. They deserve the same respect, dignity, and safe working environment as every other official."



Schoolgirl Yu, 13, fastest again in bid for third Asian Games gold

Sports Desk

China's 13-year-old swimmer Yu Zidi went fastest in the heats as she closes in on a hat-trick of Asian Games golds on Wednesday -- and her team-mates say her stunning success is no longer a surprise. Yu has already won two golds in Tokyo in Games-record times and will go for a third title in the women's 400m individual medley after posting the fastest time in qualifying with 4min 39.43sec. The schoolgirl has been the talk of swimming since becoming the youngest medallist in world championships history last year with bronze for China's relay team aged just 12. She is shaping up to be a major medal threat at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics. Team-mate Zhang Yufei, a multiple Olympic gold medallist and world champion who was named the women's MVP of the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou, said nothing Yu does is shocking any more. "Everyone is thinking, 'Wow, what will her next result be? What will she do in her next competition?'," said Zhang, now 28. "Expectations have become bigger than surprise. I hope she can withstand that pressure." Yu controlled her 400m IM heat from start to finish and topped qualifying 0.36sec ahead of Japan's Mio Narita. Yu has already won the 200m butterfly and 200m IM events this week. Zhang, who won the 10th Asian Games gold of her career this week with China's 4x100m freestyle relay team, said she was "quite shocked" when Yu first burst onto the scene. "I only see her at the domestic trials and major international competitions each year," said Zhang. "But every time I see her compete, I can see that she has improved again, and that makes me very happy." Yu's success at the Asian Games has caused a sensation back home in China. Her back story, such as being spotted by chance by a swimming coach at a water park, and her struggle with interviews, has gone viral. Zhang believes Yu has the potential to become the standard-bearer of Chinese swimming. "I hope this young girl can continue to maintain this momentum and give Chinese swimming hope," she said. "We also want to see just how far she can go in the future."

'New one' Klopp promises fresh approach as Germany reign begins



Sports Desk

Germany coach Jurgen Klopp has promised to bring a "new approach" to the country's flagging fortunes, as the four-time world champions begin their latest tilt at a maiden Nations League title. On Monday, just days out from his side's opening match away against the Netherlands in Amsterdam on Thursday, Klopp recorded a video appealing to Germany fans at home and abroad. Speaking English, the former Liverpool manager introduced himself as "the new one" in charge and thanked fans who "support us from all over the world". The "new one" quip was a tip of the hat to the "normal one" quote from his Liverpool unveiling which became intimately entwined with his nine-year Anfield stint. Now back in the dugout for the first time since leaving Merseyside in 2024, Klopp has promised a "new approach" as he hopes to return the fallen giants to the summit of the game. "We will try everything to make our new approach visible. I expect more immediately," Klopp said Thursday. "It might get a bit wild, but I'll take that; it just has to be lively." After the trip to Amsterdam, Klopp will make his Germany home debut in Augsburg on September 27 against Greece, before hosting Serbia four days later and then concluding his opening taste of international football in Thessaloniki the following Sunday. - "Walk through fire for him" - Klopp's consistent success at Mainz, Borussia Dortmund and Liverpool have given him a degree of standing shared by nobody else in modern German football. Plenty of high-profile coaches have taken the Germany job, but few have been given so much control or so much scope to shake up the status quo. His first step -- naming a 44-man squad including 16 uncapped players which will be split into two match-day groups, while leav-

ing out fan favourite Deniz Undav -- showed a willingness to think differently. Freiburg right-back Philipp Treu is one of those new call-ups. Not previously on the radar for German selection, the 25-year-old has never played under Klopp but summed up the attitude of many of those players who have been transformed by the coach over the years. "You feel like you'd walk through fire for him," Treu said Tuesday, adding Klopp "is an incredible guy".

Another newcomer, Eintracht Frankfurt striker Younes Ebnoutalib, was courted by African champions and 2022 World Cup semi-finalists Morocco. The Frankfurt-born forward opened up on his decision to choose Germany, while summing up Klopp's appeal. "When Klopp calls, you have to go. He's one of the best coaches in the world and he brings a really positive energy," he said. - "Everything will be better" - Semi-final regulars at major tournaments for more than a decade, Germany have won just one knockout game at the World Cup or Euros since 2016. Klopp's task of breathing life into Germany's flagging fortunes is a mammoth one, but the 59-year-old is no stranger to resuscitating fallen giants. Dortmund had only just beaten bankruptcy when Klopp took over. Inside five years, Klopp's Dortmund had won two league titles and played in a Champions League final. At Liverpool, Klopp took a side who had made the Champions League just once in the past five seasons to three finals, winning one. And most important of all, he brought the league title back to Anfield for the first time in the Premier League era. With a fractured media made up of former players eager to criticise the German FA (DFB), Klopp has set about uniting the country towards a common cause. At his squad announcement, Klopp handed out sponsor hats in German flag colours with the message "one of 83 million". Klopp has also contacted members of the DFB All-Stars -- former players with at least one cap -- asking for support, saying "we are all the national team". Former player turned influential commentator Lothar Matthaeus was clearly won over by Klopp's charm offensive, writing in his Sky Germany column that "everything will be better" with Klopp in the main job. "That wasn't always the case in recent years, but trust is important," the former Ballon d'Or winner wrote.



MLS coach axed for telling female ref 'It's a man's game'

Sports Desk

Columbus Crew sacked Argentine reserve team coach Federico Higuain for telling a female referee "Don't forget this is a man's game" while refusing to release her from a handshake, the Major League Soccer club said Tuesday. Higuain, the brother of former Argentina and Real Madrid forward Gonzalo Higuain, had already received a red card and a two-match suspension for the incident before the team dismissed him. "We determined it's in the best interest of our Club, players and support staff to dismiss Federico Higuain from his responsibilities," said Columbus Crew general manager Issa Tall. "After conversations this week and further assessing the past month.

Milne returns to New Zealand squad for India T20 series

Sports Desk

New Zealand speedster Adam Milne will return to the Black Cap's T20 squad for next month's home series against India after more than a year out of international cricket, coach Rob Walter said Wednesday. India's tour of New Zealand will include five T20s, five ODIs and two Test matches, with the opening T20 set for Christchurch on October 22. Thirteen of the 16-strong squad were part of the New Zealand side that finished runners-up to India at the T20 World Cup in March. "We've got a near full-strength squad that covers all bases and I'm excited to see how we compete against the current T20 world champions," Black Caps coach Walter said.

Italy hope for new dawn under Mancini

Sports Desk

After months of soul-searching, controversy and debate, Italy are ready to let football do the talking again as Roberto Mancini kickstarts his second spell in charge. On Friday, the Azzurri begin their UEFA Nations League campaign against Belgium at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome. It will be Italy's first competitive match since a play-off defeat to Bosnia and Herzegovina in March sealed a humbling third consecutive failure to reach the World Cup. The four-time world champions have been through something of a revolution since that grim night in Zenica. Mancini, the architect of Italy's last major triumph at Euro 2020, is back as head coach, bringing a refreshed squad featuring plenty of young and untested players. "We have to take the national team back to where it deserves to be," Mancini said on Monday. "I'm here to win and I'm sure we'll enjoy some great moments." Off the pitch, Claudio Ranieri and Gianfranco Zola have assumed roles as technical director and youth projects coordinator, respectively, while Milan-Cortina Olympics boss Giovanni Malago was elected as the new Italian Football Federation (FIGC) president in June. This raft of changes came following widespread calls for root-and-branch reform of the Italian game in the wake of a qualifying calamity that ensured an entire generation has grown up without seeing their country at a World Cup. But the road to get there was far from smooth. Heads rolled after the defeat in Bosnia, with coach Gennaro Gattuso, delegation head Gianluigi Buffon and FIGC president Gabriele Gravina leaving. When Malago became FIGC president, his first major move was to appoint AC Milan legend Paolo Maldini as technical director to oversee the hunt for a new coach. - "Love of my life" - After being turned away by Brazil boss Carlo Ancelotti, Maldini set his sights on Pep Guardiola. "We went to meet him in Barcelona, we had lunch together, we talked for an entire day. He was very tempted," Maldini told Corriere della Sera. "He came very close to accepting. He even started writing



line-ups down on sheets of paper." Maldini insisted that "money was never an issue" and Guardiola's refusal came down to "exhaustion" after a decade-long spell with Manchester City ended this summer. The next name on Maldini's list was his former team-mate Andrea Pirlo. However, Pirlo pulled out of the running when controversy erupted over his role as a global ambassador for a Russian betting company, something he insisted was "exclusively commercial and sporting in nature". The Pirlo saga led to Maldini and his advisor Leonardo sensationally quitting after just 16 days in post. Maldini subsequently explained that "the conditions of trust no longer existed" with Malago, who was left back at square one. Mancini soon emerged as the chosen one and was appointed in July in what proved to be a divisive move. While the 61-year-old's track record speaks for itself, his decision to step down as Italy coach in August 2023 and take a lucrative job with Saudi Arabia angered many Italians. When Mancini's return was confirmed, Rome-based newspaper Corriere dello Sport published an open letter accusing him of a "betrayal" and saying "apologies are not enough", while Sky Sport pundit Paolo Condo said his decision to "abandon the national team for a lavish payday" should have been a "road of no return". Mancini immediately addressed these criticisms at his presentation. "I'm very sorry. The Italy shirt was always very important to me. It was like losing the love of my life," he said. Mancini's first squad underlined that a new era was underway, with nine new faces included in an intriguing 34-man selection. Youngsters like Alessandro Romano and Eddy Koudou were called, as well as players from outside Italy like Sporting Lisbon midfielder Issa Doumbia, Brentford's Michael Kayode and Nurnberg striker Mohamed Ali Zoma. "I think it's right to have young players so we can get to know them directly, because that's the most important thing to have a very strong squad in the future," Mancini said. "We have to be quick to understand who could be the players that could be with us for the next four years." After hosting Belgium on Friday, Italy face Turkey twice, either side of a trip to Zinedine Zidane's France.



Shops Sealed in Brahmanbaria Stadium Market, Traders Fume



M Badal Khandaker, District Correspondent, Brahmanbaria.

Affected traders have raised serious allegations that shops in the Niaz Muhammad Stadium Market in Brahmanbaria were closed and sealed without any prior notice, despite a stay order and a directive to maintain status quo from the High Court. They say this unilateral action by the district administration and the District Sports Association has left them facing extreme uncertainty and financial loss.

Rent and Security Deposit Hike Decision: Traders have been paying rent regularly after getting shop allotments in 2007 by paying the fixed price. Initially the monthly rent was Tk 300, later it was increased to Tk 700 and finally to Tk 1,000. However, on August 24 last, the District Sports Association and the district administration suddenly

issued a notice asking for the monthly rent to be increased from Tk 1,000 to Tk 12,000 from July 2026 and an additional Tk 2,75,000 (total Tk 5 lakh) to be deposited as security money.

High Court Stay Order and Traders' Anger: The traders said it is inhumane to increase the rent 12 times in one go by treating them as ordinary tenants instead of recognizing them as 'owners'. When a writ petition (Writ Petition No: 13687/2026) was filed in the Honorable High Court Division against this decision, a Division Bench of the High Court issued a stay

order on the rent hike notice and an order to maintain status quo on September 21. It has been alleged that the administration came and sealed their shops even before the court's information and lawyer's certificate could reach them.

Statement of the Deputy Commissioner: When asked via mobile message about sealing the shops ignoring the High Court order, the Deputy Commissioner of Brahmanbaria and President of the District Sports Association, Md. Abu Sayeed, said, "We have not received any directive from the court. But we heard that they have filed a writ claiming ownership and that they had allegedly bought the shops. We did not sell to anyone. However, we have not received any verdict from the honorable court." The traders have strongly demanded that the closed shops be reopened immediately, upholding the court's order.

Two arrested with firearm, ammunition in Dinajpur

Dinajpur Correspondent

Police arrested two people with a locally made one-shooter gun and four rounds of live ammunition in the district town last night.

Additional Superintendent of Police of Dinajpur Sadar Circle Md Abdul Halim confirmed the information to this afternoon. He said police stopped an unregistered motorcycle at a traffic police checkpoint near Dinajpur Sadar Hospital intersection on Tuesday night and searched its two riders and recovered a locally made pipe gun (one-shooter) and four rounds of live ammunition from a red plastic bag carried by them. The arrested persons



were identified as Harunur Rashid, 55, of Dafaipara area and Md Ratan Mia, 23, of Shashitala area in the town. Harunur is a pickup driver, while Ratan works at a pickup garage. Police said the two were travelling from Lily More towards Balubari on an unregistered motorcycle around 11.00pm when Traffic Sergeant Rupak Kumar, who was on duty at the hospital intersection, stopped them for questioning. Following the search, the two suspects, along with the recovered firearm and ammunition, were handed over to Kotwali Police Station around 12.30 am on Tuesday night. Kotwali Police Station Officer-in-Charge Inspector Md Nurun Nabi said the two were sent to the district jail through the Dinajpur Sadar Senior Judicial Magistrate Court at 5.00 pm yesterday. Police said Harunur Rashid has a previous robbery case against him with Kotwali Police Station.

BGB seizes Indian goods worth over Tk 1.53 crore in Feni

Feni Correspondent

The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) seized Indian goods worth over Tk 1.53 crore during separate anti-smuggling drives along the Feni border early yesterday.

According to a BGB press release, the drives were conducted in border areas of Fulgazi and Chhagalnaiya upazilas as part of regular operations to prevent drug trafficking and smuggling. The seized goods included various types of Indian sarees, three-piece outfits and cover vans, the release said.

Commanding Officer of BGB-4 Feni Battalion Lieutenant Colonel MM Zillur Rahman, said the paramilitary force remains vigilant and active in preventing drug trafficking, smuggling and illegal border crossings, ensuring overall border security and combating all kinds of border-related crimes.

Police Launch Tough Crackdown on Drugs and Smuggling in Gowainghat, Drugs Worth Over Tk 6 Million Seized

Naeem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat Sylhet

Police have been conducting continuous drives against drugs, smuggling and other criminal activities in the border-area upazila of Gowainghat in Sylhet. During an 81-day period from July 3 to September 22, police arrested 253 people in connection with various crimes. During the same period, 28 drug cases were filed and a large quantity of narcotics worth more than Tk 6 million was recovered, according to police.

The drives were conducted under the overall direction of Gowainghat Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md. Omar Faruk. Of those arrested, 32 were arrested in drug cases, 23 in smuggling cases, 61 under GR warrants, 13 under GR conviction warrants, 40 under CR warrants, 11 under CR conviction warrants and 64 in regular cases. In addition, nine people were arrested under Section 151 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

According to police sources, 32 people were arrested in 28 drug cases, and 160 litres of locally produced liquor, 2,575 bottles of Indian Eskuf cough syrup, 167 bottles and 42 cans of various types of Indian liquor, 1,680 yaba tablets and 61.5 packets of cannabis were recovered from their possession. Police said the estimated value of the seized narcotics is more than Tk 6 million.

Meanwhile, the Gowainghat police have been giving special attention to preventing smuggling due to the area's location along the international border. During this period, 23 people were arrested in 17 smuggling cases. A large quantity of Indian contraband and various vehicles allegedly used for smuggling were also seized.

The seized goods included 312,500 sticks of Indian Nasir cigarettes, estimated to be worth Tk 520,200; 1,900 kilograms of Indian cumin worth approximately Tk 950,000; 9,872



pieces of chocolates and other products from various Indian brands; and 220 bottles of Indian olive oil, Dabur Amla hair oil and various cosmetic products.

In addition, Indian iPhones, other mobile phones and baggage items were seized. Police also seized an old unregistered CNG-run auto-rickshaw, a pickup, a DI pickup, engine-powered wooden and bark boats, and motorcycles of various brands allegedly used in smuggling.

Police claim that the continuous drives have created pressure on those involved in drug trafficking and smuggling. At the same time, allegations have emerged of misinformation and propaganda against police officials through social media and other platforms.

According to police, a vested interest group is deliberately spreading such misinformation because of the ongoing crackdown on criminal activities. Police said they would continue their operations without being distracted by such propaganda.

Gowainghat Police Station OC Md. Omar Faruk said, "The police are working tirelessly to make Gowainghat upazila free from drugs, smuggling and all forms of crime. I urge the general public not to pay heed to any misinformation or misleading reports and to cooperate with the police in preventing crime."

He further said the police's zero-tolerance policy and strict operations against border-related crimes would continue in the future to ensure the safety and security of the people.

One more arrested in Khulna Azmul murder case

Khulna Correspondent

The Special Response Battalion (SRB) arrested another alleged accused in the murder case of Aymam Md Azmul Hossain, a first-year English department student of North Western University in Khulna, while three other accused have given confessional statements before a court under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

The newly arrested accused is Sheikh Asif Hossain, while former Khulna University student and Bangladesh Krishi Bank cash officer at its Town Noapara Branch in Fakirhat, Hasnat Habib Rifat, Tarek alias Rubel, owner of a juice shop near Khwaja Hall of Khulna University, and former KU student Pratap Sarker have given confessional statements.

Rifat gave his statement before a metropolitan magistrate on Tuesday night, while Tarek and Pratap gave their statements yesterday. Police said the three accused admitted to torturing Azmul but did not disclose details about his fall from the rooftop. Investigators, however, said they have found evidence suggesting that Azmul fell from the rooftop after being subjected to torture.

SRB-6 Commander Nistar Ahmed said Asif was arrested around 2:30am yesterday from Bhatipara Golchattar area under Kashiani Police Station in Gopalganj in a joint operation conducted by SRB-6, its Special Company and Bhatipara Camp.



Any attempt to disrupt peace in Rajshahi metropolis will be strictly resisted: Riton

Rajshahi Correspondent

Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) Administrator and General Secretary of Rajshahi City unit of BNP, Mahfuzur Rahman Riton, has warned that any attempt to disrupt the peace in Rajshahi metropolis will be strictly resisted.

He gave the warning while speaking as the chief guest at a rally, organized by the Rajshahi City unit of BNP at Batar Mor in the city this afternoon, in protest against the attempt to destabilize the country through planned terrorism.

Speaking as the chief guest, RCC Administrator Mahfuzur Rahman Riton said among the 31-point outline announced by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, many points including the Family Card and Farmer Card have already been implemented.

Just when the country is moving forward under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the fascist and fundamentalist evil forces have engaged in various conspiracies. The RCC Administrator further said Rajshahi is an education city, a city of

peace. Any attempt to disrupt the peace of Rajshahi metropolis will be strictly resisted, he added.

Addressing a Chhatra Shibir leader, Mahfuzur Rahman Riton said, "Chhatra Dal is a place of our emotion. Refrain from making any kind of indecent or unethical remarks about Chhatra Dal. Do not dare to stay in Rajshahi after making unethical remarks about Chhatra Dal."

The main speaker at the rally was the Rajshahi City unit BNP President Mamun Or Rashid. The meeting was presided over by the Senior Vice President of Metropolitan BNP, Nazrul Huda.

Present at the rally were Metropolitan BNP Vice Presidents Aslam Sarker, Waliul Haque Rana, Advocate Ali Ashraf Masum, Shafiqul Islam Shafiq, Muktar Hossain and Joynal Abedin Shibli, Organizing Secretary Rabiul Alam Milu and Presidents and General Secretaries of various thana BNPs. Earlier, leaders and activists of BNP and associate organizations from 30 wards of Rajshahi metropolis joined the rally in processions.

3 businesses fined Tk 20,000 in Lalmonirhat

Rangpur Correspondent

A mobile court jointly initiated by the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection (DNCRP) and Special Response Battalion (SRB)-13 has fined three business establishments Tk 20,000 in Lalmonirhat district.

The DNCRP and Crime Prevention Specialised Company of SRB-13 from Rangpur conducted the court in the Mostafi Bazar area of Sadar upazila in Lalmonirhat and fined the business establishments on Tuesday afternoon, an SRB-13 press release said.

In the mobile court, Bhai-Bhai Bakery was fined Tk 5,000 for producing food products illegally, Sohel Fertilizer was fined Tk 5,000 for selling products at inflated prices; and Janata Beej Foundation was fined Tk 10,000 for failing to use proper product packaging.

In addition, intelligence activities and operations of SRB-13 and DNCRP will continue in order to implement a zero-tolerance policy against offenses such as illegal hoarding, selling products at excessive prices and food adulteration.



Two-Day Training for Marginalized Women Held in Domar and Dimla, Nilphamari

Mohinul Islam Sujan, Crime Reporter

A two-day training program was held in Domar and Dimla, Nilphamari, aimed at enhancing the capacity of marginalized women to engage in conflict-sensitive democratic dialogue at the grassroots level and conduct advocacy. Organized by the 'Agrojatra' project—which seeks to strengthen the economic, social, and political participation of marginalized women living in climate-vulnerable areas of Bangladesh—the training concluded on Tuesday (September 22) at the Khalisha Chapani Union Parishad hall room.

The training was implemented by 'Pallishree' with the support of BMZ and NETZ Bangladesh. Mokim Chowdhury, Unit Manager of the Pallishree Agrojatra project, served as the trainer, while Advocacy Facilitator Ayesha Siddika Asha was present as the co-trainer. Prior to this, the same two-day training program had been conducted on September 14 and 15 at the Panga Matukpur Union Parishad in Domar Upazila.

Munshiganj Correspondent

There is no shortage of fertilizer and seeds in the district and stern action will be taken against anyone attempting to create an artificial crisis or hoard fertilizer, said Deputy Commissioner Syeda Nurmahal Ashrafi yesterday.

"There is no reason to worry about fertilizer," she said, urging dealers to ensure sales at government-fixed prices and within the stipulated time.

The DC said adequate fertilizer has been allocated for Munshiganj ahead of the potato cultivation season and sufficient stocks are currently available in the district.

She made the remarks at a meeting with fertilizer and seed dealers and other stakeholders held at the conference room of the district administration here. Deputy Commissioner Syeda Nurmahal Ashrafi presided over the meeting. Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Deputy Director Dr Md Habibur Rahman, Additional Superintendent of Police (Finance and Administration) Md Billal Hossain, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Md Mahmudur Rahman Khondkar, District Fisheries Officer Md Golam Mehedi Hasan, District Livestock Officer Md Jalil and fertilizer and seed dealers were present at the meeting. She warned that dealers selling fertilizer above the government-fixed price or marketing adulterated fertilizer would face legal and punitive action, including cancellation of their dealership.



ership.

Anyone attempting to create an artificial shortage or hoard fertilizer would also be dealt with strictly, she said.

The dealers were instructed to sell fertilizer only from designated locations and provide cash memos to buyers with every sale. DAE Deputy Director Dr Md Habibur Rahman said there was also no reason for farmers to worry about fertilizer during the potato and paddy cultivation seasons.

He said the required fertilizer for the district up to October had already arrived, adding that a plan was in place to supply fertilizer to farmers according to their demand, on time and at fair prices. He said monitoring teams were supervising the distribution and marketing of fertilizer and seeds.