

Mahmud presented the keynote paper, highlighting the current trends in digital finance and fintech, the use of technology in Bangladesh's financial sector, the rapid expansion of digital banking and the potential for technology-driven innovation in the future banking system. A panel discussion followed the keynote presentation, with participation from Dhaka Bank PLC Managing Director Osman Ershad Foyez, Bangladesh Bank Executive Director Md Ashraful Alam, BIMB Senior Faculty Md Ashraful Alam (on deputa- tion), Bangladesh Bank Executive Director (ICT) Debduddul Ray, and Nagad Administrator and Bangladesh Bank Executive Director Md Motasim Billah. The session was moderated by BBTa Executive Director Md Obayed Ullah Chowdhury.

The speakers

♦ see page 2

## End the black market in child adoption

Most countries have some legal mechanism for determining who may raise another person’s child. Bangladesh, however, has a legal vacuum in this area, with no civil statute clearly governing adoption. This coupled with the fact that many childless couples look for alternative options through unsupervised digital platforms have helped create fertile ground for a black market in children. A recent report by Prothom Alo found 39 such public groups on Facebook and scrutinised 288 posts. However, the child trade extends well beyond social media. A woman broker admitted that she and her associates find pregnant women in hospitals who do not want to keep their babies, and then have a network look after them until they give birth. A newborn boy costs Tk 300,000; a girl Tk 200,000.

Not every seller is a seller. Some mothers are desperate, abandoned by husbands and unable to feed another mouth. Some are members of scam rings. One man from Kushtia, for example, lost Tk 10,000 to a “mother” who showed him a baby on a video call, took his advance by mobile money, and vanished along with her group. Law enforcement currently remains too lax to stop such scams and irregularities. In Bangladesh, the penal code punishes selling or buying a child for immoral or illegal purposes. The new law on human trafficking counts adoption in bad faith as exploitation. Yet police say they have received no complaint specifically about child-selling. Nobody complains, of course, when the buyer and the seller are willing parties. Nobody tracks where these children end up: in loving homes, in domestic servitude, or in worse places.

Meta, which owns Facebook, cannot be let off the hook for the digital scams underway. Its own rules forbid content that facilitates the sale of children or illegal adoption, yet the groups Prothom Alo found are public and searchable. Meta profits from the attention that such groups attract. Bangladesh’s regulators should therefore demand that Meta remove the groups, act on report findings promptly, and cooperate with investigations. At the same time, law enforcement agencies must crack down on the black market where the price of a child is set by just a few clicks and a mobile-money transfer. The government must bring the whole situation under control, making sure that the criminals, once targeted, do not simply retreat into encrypted apps to continue the trade through another platform. Bangladesh should also consider a civil legal framework for child adoption for people of all faiths, with proper court oversight, screening of adopters, and a national registry that follows each child. Many childless couples badly want a family and they need proper and safe options. The authorities should help open a lawful, supervised route for them. That will shelter many vulnerable children and also shrink the market that now preys on the desperation of people.

## Govt committed to safe

Nations through the development of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities,” he added.Referring to measures to ease population pressure in urban areas, The Prime Minister said, “Improving faster, affordable and safe connectivity between Dhaka and other cities and the rest of the country, while increasing civic amenities in rural areas, can be an effective alternative to reduce pressure on urban areas.”In this connection, he said the government has already taken and started implementing various measures to this end. “Moving beyond development centred on the capital and a few major cities, the government has taken multifaceted initiatives to bring every region of the country into the mainstream of national development,” he said.

“The government’s goal is not centralised urbanisation, but decentralised, balanced urban and regional development,” he added.The Prime Minister said the government has already undertaken plans for spatial planning across the country under the supervision of the Ministry of Housing and Public Works and for developing secondary townships around Dhaka.Describing the environmental protection as an important consideration in developing liveable housing, the Prime Minister said planned housing is being developed in divisional, district and upazila towns through the National Housing Authority and development authorities, giving due importance to nature and the environment.

“Recent global political and economic developments have created both challenges and opportunities for Bangladesh,” he said, adding, “Even amid the changing situation, the government is continuing sincere efforts to implement various measures quickly and transparently to address urban challenges”The Prime Minister said addressing the housing crisis in the country’s urban and city areas would be difficult for the government alone.

“In this regard, the coordinated participation of private entrepreneurs in the housing sector and other relevant stakeholders can play an effective and important role in addressing the situation,” he said.

Tarique Rahman said efforts are underway to promote block-based housing, establish parks and playgrounds in designated areas, and develop industrial zones in designated areas as part of initiatives to ensure citizens’ fundamental rights.

“I believe that if the government can gradually implement all the plans it has undertaken, ‘safe housing for all’ will become a reality for the citizens of the country, InshaAllah,” he said. The theme of this year’s World Habitat Day is “Universal Housing, Sustainable Urbanisation”. At the beginning of the programme, verses from the Holy Quran and other religious scriptures were recited. A documentary marking the World Habitat Day 2026 was screened and the Prime Minister unveiled a commemorative publication.Before entering the venue, Tarique planted a golden champa sapling on the premises of the conference centre.

Besides, a three day housing fair has been organised at the lobby of the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre marking the day.Later, a discussion on the theme of the day was organised with Housing and Public Works Minister Zakaria Taher in the chair. Secretary of the ministry Md. Obaidur Rahman delivered the welcome address on the occasion. Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo, Housing and Public Works State Minister Ahammad Sohul Monzoor and UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh Carol Flore-Smrecznik addressed the programme as special guests.

## PM joins discussion marking

universities.Of the 100 awardees, 10 are from the primary level, 20 from the secondary level, 25 from colleges, 20 from general universities, 10 from medical colleges, three from agricultural universities, three from engineering universities, four from science and technology and other specialised universities, and five under the prime minister’s special quota.World Teachers’ Day is observed globally every year on October 5 to highlight the importance of teachers’ dignity, rights and professional development and ensuring quality education.

## Amtali Town Protection

to the lack of necessary repairs over such a long period, the condition of various sections of the embankment is becoming increasingly precarious. Shyamal Chandra Dey, a resident living near the embankment in Ward No. 4 of Amtali Municipality, said, “I have been living here with my family for a long time. If the embankment’s concrete blocks were repaired, we could live much more safely. Otherwise, even a

The theme for World Teachers’ Day 2026 is “Standing with teachers: 60 years of protecting the profession, advancing its status and shaping our futures.” It has been six decades since UNESCO and the ILO adopted the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers in 1966, and this year’s teachers’ day theme provides an opportunity to reflect on the challenges facing teachers and the teaching profession—an issue that resonates particularly in Bangladesh. Since its independence, the country has struggled to define and enhance the role of teachers in building an education system that is equitable, inclusive, and of acceptable quality.

Ensuring enough teachers with the required skills and motivation has become a global challenge with burgeoning educational expectations and demands since the launch of the Education for All movement in the 1990s. Unesco estimates that at least 44 million teachers worldwide must be added to the 94 million current teachers to meet the requirements of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) by 2030. The global teacher crisis prompted the convening of the first World Summit on Teachers in Chile in August 2025, which highlighted how a lack of trained teachers disproportionately impacted low-income countries, especially the rural, remote, and marginalised communities.

The core recommendations of the summit included: i) preserving dignity in teachers’ work conditions with governments guaranteeing job security, fair and competitive salaries, realistic workloads, and support for teacher well-being; ii) sustainable financing by prioritising education in national budgets and establishing legal minimum allocations, backed by coordinated international donor support; iii) professionalisation and training by strengthening initial teacher preparation, continuous professional development, and specialised digital and AI competencies; iv) social dialogue within countries by teachers and their unions directly participating in national policy design and decision-making processes; and formally recognising teacher-student relationship as part of common cultural and human heritage; and v) strong accountability through tracking progress transparently via national monitoring mechanisms, etc.To apply the general guideline for improving teacher performance and status as reflected in

minor tidal surge causes water to flood our courtyards.”

Amir Hossain Talukdar, a local sawmill owner, said, “I have been in this business for a long time, but my sawmill is currently at risk. Previously, there was a 10-to-15-foot stretch of land in front of the mill before the slope of the embankment blocks began; however, repeated damage to the blocks caused by floods and tidal waters has eroded that space entirely. I live in constant fear that my business establishment might be swallowed by the river at any moment.”

Locals are demanding the immediate identification of vulnerable sections of the Amtali town protection embankment, followed by urgent repairs and the implementation of sustainable protective measures. They have also called for long-term development and regular maintenance of the embankment, taking future natural disasters into account.

Regarding this matter, Md. Abdul Hannan Pradhan, Executive Engineer (Civil) of the Barguna Water Development Board, said, “I have informed my subordinates about the issue. They will visit the site to inspect the situation. If the embankment is found to be at risk, appropriate measures will be taken.” Locals are increasingly concerned about the current state of the Amtali town protection embankment due to prolonged neglect and successive natural disasters. They fear that without prompt and effective action, the municipality’s residential areas and vital infrastructure could face severe risks during future tidal surges and cyclones.

## Nobel medicine prize

laboratories around the world to reveal the brain’s mysteries”. Nobel medicine prize goes to 3 scientists for work on optogenetics

Photo: U.S. scientist Karl Deisseroth, a professor of bioengineering and psychiatry at Stanford University, displays his trophy for the Life Sciences category during the Japan Prize presentation ceremony in Tokyo on April 13, 2023. (AP Photo/Eugene Hoshiko, File)

Last year’s prize went to three immune system researchers. Following medicine, physics will be announced Tuesday, chemistry Wednesday, literature Thursday, peace Friday, and the economic sciences prize on October 12.

## Govt committed to ensuring

on social media.She also said there are opportunities for cooperation between the United Kingdom’s Office of Communications, or Ofcom, and Bangladesh’s Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in this regard.The meeting also discussed various issues of mutual interest, including addressing the challenges posed by social media, ensuring the accuracy of information and promoting responsible media practices.

## 306 new dengue patients

showed that Khulna district recorded the highest number of dengue cases.So far, 5,655 patients have been identified in the district, while 2,944 dengue patients have been reported at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

## Saplings Planted, Sports

criminals, will ensure the security of the residents of Jangal Salimpur.” He said that the situation surrounding Jangal Salimpur has changed significantly compared to the past, and normalcy is gradually returning to the area.

The District Commissioner also spoke with teachers and students of Alinagar Primary School and Alinagar High School. The headteacher raised various institutional problems, including difficulties related to the payment of salaries and allowances of teachers and staff.

In response, the District Commissioner announced that arrangements would be made by the district administration to provide one month’s salary to the teachers and staff as an initial measure. He said discussions would subsequently be held with the concerned ministry to ensure salaries and allowances for the following months.

He further said that the government would also be consulted regarding the future management of the institution. If necessary, a proposal may be placed for taking the institution under government management.

Emphasising the importance of students as the future of society, the District Commissioner said students must be developed into skilled and capable human resources. He assured that steps would be taken to resolve the problems raised by teachers and students.

He also instructed District Education Officer Md. Abdul Aziz to take necessary measures in this regard.

Development Activities in Jangal Salimpur

## World Teachers’ Day

# Teachers must be the pivot of change in our education system

## Md. Neyamul Hossain

the Santiago Consensus, countries must adapt these broad principles to their specific circumstances. In Bangladesh, two consultation committees appointed under the interim government to recommend reforms in primary and secondary education devoted a chapter on teachers in their two reports.There, a lack of a clearly defined framework for teachers’ responsibility, effort, and performance standards at both primary and secondary levels was found. Not enough teachers are on the payroll or deployed to maintain a reasonable class size in schools. Shortage of subject teachers for core subjects is a particularly serious shortcoming in secondary schools. Teaching personnel management, including recruitment, placement, transfer, and promotion, is a source of inefficiency, corruption and huge discontent among teachers. Pre-service professional preparation, in-service professional support, and a culture of mentoring new school teachers are largely absent or ineffective. A reliable career path for teachers is virtually non-existent.

In secondary schools, only government teachers (3 percent of the total) are placed at the government salary level of grade 10 (out of 20 civil service grades). The MPO-listed teachers (97 percent of secondary teachers) receive the basic salary and about a quarter of the benefits paid to government teachers. Non-MPO teachers, paid from the school’s own funds, receive substantially less. Meanwhile, government primary school teachers are employed at grade 13, which is traditionally classified as a third-class government job. Majority of primary-level institutions and teachers are non-government, with no salary regulations.In fact, Bangladesh school teachers’ salary is the lowest in South Asia. The average teacher salary is 50 percent higher in India and 30 percent in Pakistan. Besides, teachers’ professional organisations, often linked with political parties, mostly bargain for material gains with little discussion on system performance.Both consultation committees recommended ways to strengthen teachers’ role, performance and status, including early and medium-term actions, essentially within the existing structure of teaching personnel man-

Speaking about the development of Jangal Salimpur, the District Commissioner said the area was once described as a “state within a state.” However, he said, visible changes have taken place since March 9, and a normal environment and public life are gradually being established.

He said approximately 14 kilometres of six roads are being constructed to improve connectivity in the area. The Bangladesh Army is implementing the road construction works, with around 25 percent of the work already completed, according to the District Commissioner.

Once the roads are completed, movement of people will become easier and safer, while providing government services to residents at their doorstep will also become more convenient, he added.

The District Commissioner further said there are plans to establish offices of 23 government institutions in Jangal Salimpur. Potential sites for several of these institutions have already been identified.

During the visit, the District Commissioner inspected several potential sites, the under-construction BGB camp and various ongoing development projects in Jangal Salimpur.

Among those present were Additional District Magistrate Syed Mahbulul Haque; Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Sakhawat Jamil Saikat; District Education Officer Md. Abdul Aziz; District Ansar Commandant Md. Sefaul Hossain; Senior Jail Superintendent Md. Iqbal Hossain; Sitakunda Assistant Commissioner (Land) Md. Fazle Rabbi; Upazila Secondary Education Officer Ismat Ara Begum; Upazila Project Implementation Officer Jamirul Islam; Public Health Engineering Officer Pranabesh Mahajan; Assistant Engineer Akhtaruzzaman, along with assistant primary education officers of the upazila.

## World Teachers’ Day

this year’s World Teachers’ Day guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education, the day will be observed at all educational institutions as well as at upazila, district and national levels.This year, the awards will be given to 100 outstanding teachers, including 10 at the primary level, 20 at the secondary level, 25 at colleges, 20 at general universities, 10 at medical colleges, three at agricultural universities, three at engineering universities, four at science and technology and other specialised universities, and five under the Prime Minister’s special quota.At the 26th General Conference of UNESCO held in Paris in 1993, a decision was taken to observe October 5 as World Teachers’ Day. The day was observed for the first time in 1994.

## Iconic Footballer

to get proper training from BKSP and top clubs like Abahani, Mohammedan, Bashundhara Kings and become like his idol Hamza Chowdhury and make Bangladesh football known to the world.

The Daily Bangla Sky, also wants like that overall Bangladesh search and make them Star.

The Government & Concern Ministry should take necessary action for future Challenging in The World.

## Millat calls for zero compromise

during the cargo fire, Millat said an initiative would be taken to install an anti-drone system to prevent such flights in the airport area.The airport is a designated Key Point Installation (KPI), he said, adding that security equipment and scanners must be available in numbers exceeding the minimum requirement.

The minister said passengers remain at the centre of all aviation activities and ensuring their safe, seamless and comfortable travel is a collective responsibility.He urged officials to remain vigilant so that passengers receive services of international standards and reach their destinations safely.Millat called for implementing recommendations from the post-exercise evaluation to improve emergency management capabilities.

Regular and realistic exercises would strengthen airports’ preparedness and their capacity to respond quickly and effectively, he said.The government is committed to building a modern, efficient and safe civil aviation sector consistent with international standards, giving the highest priority to safety and passenger services, he added.The exercise also assessed emergency teams’ response capabilities, communication systems and coordination. It examined how quickly teams could reach the scene, control a fire and evacuate passengers and crew.It was designed to identify gaps in preparedness, clarify agencies’ responsibilities and assess the effectiveness of equipment

agement. They also proposed a longer-term view to bring about a transformative change in how teachers perform and perceive themselves and how society perceives and values teachers, so that the “best and the brightest” are attracted to the profession.

In this connection, it’s worth mentioning the BNP government reform initiative called Bangladesh NextGen Overhaul. Developed with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Partnership Compact, it ambitiously aims to “transform teacher professionalisation for effective teaching towards enhanced learning outcomes.” The Partnership Compact will be funded, in addition to government funds, by a \$48.8 million System Transformation Grant from GPE with an additional \$350 million package of an Asian Development Bank concessional loan and GPE grant. The “key transformative pillars” of the initiative are indicated as: a) Blended Learning and Technology Deployment providing training to 7,00,000 teachers nationwide in digital delivery tools and modern pedagogical techniques; b) System Synergy and Transition Rates, in which success will be measured by the rate of students transitioning from primary to secondary school and the boost in secondary completion rates; and c) Long-Term Funding Commitment from Bangladesh government to scale up public education spending progressively from under 2 percent of GDP toward a 5 percent GDP target.The partnership compact focusing on change in teachers’ role and performance—aiming at a policy shift, mobilising domestic and external funding, and assessing measurable progress—is commendable but, in the past, such initiatives faltered and promises remained unfulfilled. This raises the question: does the new initiative rely on a technocratic formula ignoring political and cultural barriers, system capacity, work ethic and accountability deficits The “teacher professionalisation” relies heavily on standardised, metrics-driven outputs, such as training 70,0,000 teachers and deploying digital learning infrastructure. These quantifiable metrics are necessary, but does leaning on them risk treating systemic issues as mere logistics while glossing over deep-seated cultural, political, and institutional deficits? It can be justifiably argued that a primary vulnerability of the GPE model is its assumption.

and technology.

Millat also urged media professionals to remain vigilant against misinformation on social media during emergencies and work together to protect the country’s image.

## Bangladesh banking sector

stressed the importance of the effective and appropriate use of technology in expanding digital finance and fintech, developing innovative financial services and preparing the banking sector for the future.They also discussed the need for “One Person, One ID,” improved data management and secure data sharing, wider use of artificial intelligence and ensuring interoperability among financial service providers.They emphasised that banks and financial institutions need to enhance their technological capacity in line with rapid technological changes and expand innovative financial services to meet evolving customer needs.Participants later took part in a question-and-answer session on digital finance, fintech, digital banking and technology-based financial services, with the seminar speakers and panelists responding to their queries.Bangladesh Bank executive directors and directors, along with faculty members of the BBTA, attended the seminar.

## Robi's data leadership to drive TechCo transition with Axiata's AI backing: Group CEO

### Staff correspondent

Axiata Berhad Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Nik Rizal Kamil has said Robi’s leadership in the data business is the foundation of its transition into a technology company (TechCo), with the group’s AI capabilities set to support the shift.In an interview with BSS, Nik Rizal Kamil said Robi has been trying to take on the identity of a TechCo, and its market leadership in data is the biggest measurable success so far in this regard.

“I think the biggest measurable success in this regard is our market leadership in data because it is the data business that creates the foundation of TechCo,” he said.

Axiata, a Malaysian telecoms and technology group, is the parent company of mobile operator Robi and tower company Edotco, which owns and manages approximately 54,000 towers across Southeast and South Asia. The group says its portfolio serves more than 190 million customers.The Axiata Group CEO said Robi is well poised as the market leader in the data business, which he described as the outcome of focused investment in 4G from the very beginning in 2018, when it was launched in Bangladesh.Robi is eager to maintain this lead by ensuring 4G coverage and capacity throughout the country, he said, adding that the focus will remain on raising data speed for customers, whether on 4G or 5G.

Explaining how the data business opens the way for new services, he said, “When you have earned the trust of the customers, you naturally are in a position to leverage your position to introduce innovative products and services.”

He said businesses such as cloud, data centre and IoT will follow, but everything will hinge on how capable Robi is in leveraging AI, which in turn is premised on the amount of data a company deals with.

“So our data leadership serves as the building block to our emergence as a TechCo in future,” he said.On the role of AI, the Axiata chief said the group increasingly views it as more than a technology initiative. “Across Axiata, we increasingly view AI not just as a technology initiative, but as a strategic enabler of productivity, growth and value creation,” he said.He said one advantage of being part of Axiata is the ability to share successful AI use cases and capabilities across markets, allowing operating companies to scale innovation faster and more effectively.Within Robi, AI is already being applied in areas such as network planning, customer engagement, operational efficiency and business analytics, and its role is expected to expand significantly over time, he said.Nik Rizal Kamil said Axiata now has cross-company taskforces focusing on priority areas such as AI-native customer lifecycle management, AI-enabled customer experience, data monetisation and autonomous networks. Robi benefits directly from these group-wide initiatives, he said.He said Robi can also benefit from innovations that have already demonstrated success elsewhere in the group’s portfolio, including advanced analytics, enterprise solutions and digital monetisation models.Beyond traditional telecoms, Axiata has developed a technology portfolio comprising Boost.



## Bangladesh's exports to Turkey more than double in Q1

Staff correspondent

Bangladesh's exports to Turkey more than doubled in the first quarter of the current fiscal year 2026-27, highlighting the growing potential of the Turkish market for the country's export diversification drive. Exports to Turkey reached US\$210.54 million during July-September of fiscal year 2026-27, up 100.11 percent from US\$105.21 million in the same period of the previous fiscal

year, according to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB). Bangladesh mainly exports apparel products to Turkey, while jute and jute goods, footwear, and optical, medical and textile-related equipment are also among the products traded with the market. The strong growth in exports offers an opportunity for Bangladesh to consolidate its position in the Turkish market and explore new product categories beyond its traditional export

basket. Talking to BSS, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) Executive President Fazle Shamim Ehsan said that as the standard of living and income levels in Turkey have increased, workers in the country are gradually moving away from the readymade garment (RMG) industry. As a result, a supply gap is emerging in local production, increasing demand for imported garments to meet the

◆ see page 7

Why persecution for holding the pen for truth  
Journalists will not bow down to injustice

M Badal Khandakar (District Correspondent) B. Baria.

Why are we so humiliated yesterday? Why does persecution, threats and harassment come down upon us whenever we hold the pen for truth? This question is in the mind of every conscientious journalist yesterday. So should we bow down to brokers, usurers, and bribe-takers? No, never. A true journalist never bows down to injustice, and never will. Journalism is the conscience of the nation. If that conscience is sold, society will sink into darkness. But it is a matter of great sorrow that yesterday some individuals are practicing yellow journalism using the identity of journalists. They are collecting just a card by

◆ see page 7



## Govt takes long-term plan to install solar power systems nationwide

Staff correspondent

The government is moving forward with a long-term plan to install solar power systems across the country to strengthen national energy security, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and boost the environment-friendly electricity generation. Since assuming power, the incumbent BNP government has issued directives to install solar panels on the rooftops of various structures, ranging from government buildings to market structures in rural areas. Expanding the solar power sector also presents opportunities to develop domestic industries. If local entrepreneurs' participation is increased in areas like solar panels, inverters, batteries, electrical equipment, cabling and maintenance services, new employment opportunities will be created. Officials from the Power Division said the country's electricity demand is rising annually. Simultaneously, fluctuations in international fuel prices and an import-dependent energy system lead to increase production costs and uncertainty in the power sector.

In this context, increasing electricity generation by harnessing locally available sunlight is viewed as a crucial strategy for ensuring long-term energy security, they said. Power Division Secretary Mirana Mahrukh said, "The country's electricity demand is steadily increasing. At the same time, we must prioritise energy security and environmental protection. For this reason, the government has adopted a long-term plan to boost the generation of renewable energy, including solar power." She added that alongside large-scale projects, emphasis is also being placed on expanding rooftop solar power systems. The government's Renewable Energy Policy sets targets to meet 20 percent of electricity demand from renewable sources by 2030 and 30 percent by 2040, she said. Mahrukh said the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) has been entrusted with the vital responsibility of achieving these goals. According to official data, the country's power generation capacity from renewable sources has already exceeded

◆ see page 7



## A rally and discussion meeting was held on World Teachers' Day in Kalapara

Kalapara (Patuakhali) Correspondent

Patuakhali Kalapara Bishwa Shi Barnarya rally and discussion meeting was held on the occasion of Khasak Divas 2026 celebration. On Monday 05 October at noon, a discussion meeting on the significance of lipstick was held at the upazila administration conference room in Pyara organized by upazila administration and upazila secondary education office Kalapara Patuakhali and in collaboration with upazila teachers association Kalapara Patuakhali. Before this, a colorful rally came out from the Upazila Parishad and after the circuit of the main main road of the city, they met again in a discussion meeting.

Under the chairmanship of Upazila Secondary Education Officer Md. Akram Hossain, Upazila Executive Officer (Acting) and Assistant Commissioner (Land) Yasin Sadek were present as chief guests

◆ see page 7



## Two Arrested, Including Foster Father, in Jhalakathi Rape Case, Blackmail Involved Recording and Threatening to Circulate Video

Syed Bashir Ahmed, Chief Reporter.

Allegations have surfaced in Jhalakathi against a young woman's foster father for raping her over a prolonged period. Another man has also been accused of raping the same woman after recording a video of her and threatening to circulate it. The victim filed a case at Jhalakathi Sadar Police Station regarding these incidents, and the police have subsequently arrested both accused individuals. The case was filed at Jhalakathi Sadar Police Station on October 4. The accused are Kamal Khalifa, alias Lal Miah (60), and Bellal Hossain Howlader (55), both residents of the Krishnakathi area in Jhalakathi town.

According to the case statement, the victim lived with her mother at her maternal grandparents' home following her parents' separation. Later, her mother married Kamal Khalifa, and the three of them lived in the same house.

The complaint alleges that after the young woman came of age, Kamal Khalifa subjected her to immoral behavior and intimidation on various occasions. It is alleged that on the morning of April 1, taking advantage of the fact that no one else was home while the mother was away at the Union Parishad, Kamal Khalifa raped the young woman. He threatened to harm her if she disclosed the matter. The complaint further states that she was raped in a similar manner on multiple occasions thereafter.

The case statement also mentions that about three months prior, Bellal Hossain Howlader a relative and acquaintance of Kamal Khalifa recorded a video of the young woman on his mobile phone during an incident. It is alleged that on the morning of July 1, Bellal Hossain raped her after threatening to circulate that video. The complaint notes that she was subsequently coerced into immoral relations on various occasions through intimidation.

The young woman later confided in her mother about these events. Following this, the

◆ see page 7

## Bangladesh, Turkey seek to advance FTA talks

Staff correspondent

Commerce, Textiles and Jute and Industries Minister Khandakar Abdul Mukhtar today stressed the need to advance negotiations on a proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Turkey and further strengthen bilateral trade and investment cooperation. He said this during a meeting with Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Ramiz Sen at the Industries Ministry here this afternoon, said a press release. The meeting reviewed progress in initiating discussions on the FTA between the two countries, while the two sides also discussed expanding economic relations and exploring new areas of cooperation. The minister expressed interest in holding a bilateral meeting with his Turkish counterpart and meeting representatives of Turkey's investment agencies during his upcoming visit to the country. The two sides expressed optimism about further strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation. Bangladesh also sought contact details and profiles of Turkish fruit exporters to facilitate business-to-business connections and increase fruit imports

◆ see page 7

## IMF clears the way for Sri Lanka to draw \$345 mn

Staff correspondent

The International Monetary Fund said Monday it had reached a preliminary agreement with Sri Lanka that will allow it to access about \$345 million from its \$2.9 billion bailout programme. The Washington-based lender also warned that higher energy prices, the El Nino climate phenomenon and the Middle East conflict could threaten its economic recovery. The agreement marks the latest milestone in Sri Lanka's recovery from its worst economic crisis, which culminated in a sovereign default on \$46 billion of external debt in 2022. The South Asian nation secured a four-year \$2.9 billion IMF rescue package in 2023. "Sri Lanka's economy has proved remarkably resilient to successive shocks," the IMF said in a statement, noting the economy had recorded 11 consecutive quarters of expansion after contracting 7.3 percent in 2022. But the country "continues to face downside risks from uncertainty over the duration and

◆ see page 7

## No Full-fledged OC at Bar Aulia Highway Police Station for Two Months

Administrative Activities and Public Services Disrupted; Locals Demand Immediate Appointment



Md. Omar Faruk, Special Correspondent

The Bar Aulia Highway Police Station, a strategically important police station along the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway in Sitakunda, has reportedly been operating without a full-fledged Officer-in-Charge (OC) for nearly two months, raising concerns over administrative coordination and public service delivery.

According to sources, due to a shortage of manpower, a Sergeant is currently performing the duties of the officer-in-charge on an acting basis. The prolonged absence of a full-fledged OC has reportedly placed additional pressure

on the station's administrative activities, highway patrol operations, traffic management and response to road accidents and other emergencies.

The Bar Aulia Highway Police Station plays a crucial role in maintaining road safety and law and order on one of the country's busiest highways. A large number of passenger buses, goods-laden trucks, covered vans, private vehicles and motorcycles travel through this section of the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway every day.

In the event of road accidents, traffic congestion, violations of traffic laws or other emergencies, prompt decision-making and coordination among different agencies are essential. In such circumstances,

effective leadership at the police station is considered particularly important.

Key Challenges for Service Seekers

1. Delay in Prompt Decision-Making:

The absence of a full-fledged OC may create additional pressure in taking immediate administrative decisions during accidents, traffic congestion and other law-and-order situations.

2. Possible Delays in Public Services:

People seeking police assistance regarding road accidents, vehicle-related complaints, cases and other legal matters may face delays or need to communicate with multiple levels of officials.

◆ see page 7



## Bangladesh, Montenegro discuss forming parliamentary friendship group

Staff correspondent

Deputy Speaker Barrister Kayser Kamal and Member of the Parliament of Montenegro Gordan Stojovic on Monday discussed strengthening parliamentary ties between Bangladesh and Montenegro, including the formation of a parliamentary friendship group. During a courtesy meeting at the Deputy Speaker's office, Stojovic expressed his intention to form a parliamentary friendship group between the two countries to promote mutual relations, parliamentary democracy and the exchange of parliamentary experiences and best practices. Kayser Kamal welcomed the proposal and expressed a positive attitude towards forming such a group with the Montenegrin Parliament. The Deputy Speaker said legislatures, being composed of directly elected representatives of the people, play an important role in maintaining demo-

cratic practices, ensuring a balance of power and strengthening relations between the government and the people. Stojovic said the Parliament of Montenegro, like Bangladesh's Parliament, is unicameral and has 81 members. He said parliamentary committees in Montenegro work closely to scrutinise the overall activities of the executive branch. Kayser Kamal said political stability is essential for Bangladesh's socioeconomic development. He said the opposition should play a constructive role in building a developed nation and that opposition parties should not remain in Parliament merely to oppose the government. The Deputy Speaker also said Bangladesh had entered a new phase of parliamentary democracy following the July mass uprising, expressing hope that the new journey would play an important role in improving the people's lives and achieving economic freedom.

◆ see page 7



## Attack on Journalists at RU, No Probe Committee Formed Even After 14 Hours

Md. Sohel Rana, Rajshahi Correspondent.

Demands for lawsuit and arrest against the accused; administration assures committee formation once the VC returns in the afternoon. Even after 14 hours have passed since the attack on journalists at Rajshahi University (RU), the university administration is yet to form an investigation committee. The incident took place on Sunday around 8:30 PM in front of the university's Shahid Ziaur Rahman Hall, leaving four journalists severely injured and several others hurt. Following the attack, the journalists demanded that the administration file a lawsuit, arrest the accused, and ensure punitive action.

Later, when the university administration assured that a case would be filed by tomorrow, the journalists temporarily stepped back from their protest program. However, they announced a human chain demonstration in front of the university's Rabindra Bhavan yesterday at 11:00 AM. Journalists

◆ see page 7



## Tati Dal Leader and Prime Suspect in the Rape and Murder of Jasmine from Kaukhali, Arrested

Kaukhali Correspondent

Manik Howlader the alleged second husband of the deceased Jasmine and the General Secretary of the Pirojpur District Tati Dal—has been arrested from Madaripur with the help of information technology by SRB-8. He is the prime suspect in the rape and murder of a middle-aged woman named Jasmine at her home in Shialkathi, Kaukhali Upazila, Pirojpur. Following his arrest, the accused was handed over to the Kaukhali police late Sunday night.

According to police and family sources, Jasmine Begum (50) was raped and murdered late last Saturday night; the perpetrators ransacked her home and stole valuables, including jewelry. The next morning, a local teenager arrived at the house to harvest betel nuts. After calling out and receiving no response, he discovered the woman's naked body lying on the bed inside. Police later arrived and recovered the body.

The deceased, Jasmine Begum, was the eldest daughter of the late Afzal Khan of the same

◆ see page 7

## Bangladesh's exports to

shortfall, he added."This has created a promising market for Bangladesh's RMG exports. There is an opportunity to further penetrate this market by leveraging Bangladesh's production capacity, product quality, competitive prices and ability to ensure timely delivery," he said.

Fazle Shamim also said that to capitalize on this potential, Bangladesh needs to focus not only on RMG but also on product diversification and value addition.

Further, he mentioned that there is scope to expand the market for high-value garments, man-made fibre (MMF) and technical textiles, as well as jute and jute products, footwear and other promising products.He also stressed the need to strengthen connectivity and business ties with Turkey both the government and private sector should work in coordination to expand exports to new markets. Bangladesh's presence in the Turkish market can be further strengthened through participation in international trade fairs, buyer-seller meetings and increased business-to-business engagement, he added.Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) Vice Chairman Muhammad Hasan Arif said Bangladesh needs to strengthen its presence in international markets through a more focused assessment of product-wise export performance, buyer demand and emerging market opportunities.He said exporters should identify products that have strong demand in specific markets and explore opportunities to diversify Bangladesh's export basket beyond traditional products and destinations. Such an approach would help Bangladesh expand its export footprint and reduce dependence on a limited number of products and markets, Arif added.Turkey's export performance stands out against Bangladesh's overall export growth of 6.34 percent in the first quarter of FY2026-27. Bangladesh's total merchandise exports rose to US\$13.09 billion during July-September from US\$12.31 billion in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year.Apart from readymade garments, Arif said jute and jute goods could offer significant opportunities for further expansion in the Turkish market, particularly through the promotion of diversified and value-added products.

"Footwear and other manufactured goods may also provide scope for broadening the range of Bangladeshi exports, subject to market demand, product quality and competitiveness," he added.He said expanding exports of optical, medical and textile-related equipment would require a detailed assessment of product-specific demand, technical standards, certification requirements and the capacity of Bangladeshi manufacturers to meet buyers' specifications.

The EPB vice chairman said trade promotion activities, buyer-seller meetings, participation in international trade fairs and stronger business-to-business links could help exporters identify new opportunities in Turkey."EPB is always undertaking these activities," he said. Arif also stressed that exporters would need to maintain competitive prices, ensure consistent product quality and provide reliable delivery services to sustain and expand the recent growth in the Turkish market.

## Why persecution for

paying a thousand taka to the editor and doing all kinds of fraudulent activities. They are not journalists, they are a disgrace in the name of journalists.

It is because of these yellow journalists that genuine journalists are being humiliated yesterday, and the respect of journalists in society is being undermined.

So the time has come to boycott these fake and yellow journalists. Those who truly risk their lives in the field to spread the truth should stay away from these fraudsters and identify and boycott them.

Remember, the pen will never stop. No matter how much persecution comes, the pen will continue for the sake of truth. Because the victory of truth is inevitable.

## Govt takes long-term plan

1,700 megawatts, with solar power accounting for a significant portion of this total. Consequently, solar energy is viewed as a crucial source for future expansion.

Muzaffar Ahmed, Chairman of the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) said Bangladesh holds immense potential for solar power.

"In particular, if rooftop solar systems are widely expanded, it is possible to generate a significant amount of electricity without utilising additional land," he added.

He said consumers would also be engaged in renewable electricity generation through the expansion of net metering facilities. Rooftop solar power constitutes a key component of the government's solar energy strategy, he said.The SREDA chairman said initiatives were taken to utilise the rooftops of various government buildings, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, industrial plants, and other establishments for power generation under the national rooftop solar programme by 2025.

He said the programme aims to generate between 2,000 and 3,000 megawatts of solar power. This approach would reduce the need for large-scale land acquisition and create opportunities for the generated electricity to be consumed directly by the respective buildings or institutions, he said.

Muzaffar Ahmed added that solar power systems have already been installed at different facilities under SREDA's net metering framework.

He said the net metering facility — which allows consumers to supply surplus electricity to the national grid — plays a vital role in expanding solar power usage. There is also significant scope to increase the adoption of rooftop solar systems in industrial factories, he said.He further observed that electricity demand in industrial factories peaks during the daytime, coinciding with the period of maximum solar power generation. So, he said, if industries generate electricity using their own rooftops, it could help reduce the demand placed on the national grid during the day.He stated that initiatives have been taken to establish large-scale solar power plants alongside rooftop solar installations. "Tenders have been invited for the implementation of multiple solar power projects across different regions of the country. Once implemented, these projects could significantly boost the supply of renewable electricity to the national grid," he added.Engineer Md Rezaul Karim, Chairman of the Bangladesh Power Development Board, told BSS that alongside increasing electricity generation from renewable sources, the capacity to reliably integrate that power into the national grid must also be enhanced. Plans are being formulated to develop the necessary transmission infrastructure in alignment with these solar power projects, he said adding that the government's plan emphasises private sector participation.Since large-scale solar projects require massive investment, initiatives are underway to attract both domestic and foreign investors, Karim said.There is significant scope to boost investment in this sector through long-term power purchase agreements, policy incentives, and an improved environment for project implementation, he said.Mostafa Al Mahmud, President of Bangladesh Sustainable and Renewable Energy Association said there is immense potential for private investment in the solar power sector.If long-term policy, rapid approvals, easy grid connectivity, and financing facilities are ensured for investors, even larger investments could flow into this sector, he said. Solar power generation depends on sunlight and weather conditions; consequently, generation levels fluctuate throughout the day, he said.According to official data released from the Power Development Board on May last, the country's current solar power generation capacity connected to

the national grid stands at 1,073.5 megawatts.Additionally, there is an off-grid solar power capacity of 377.17 megawatts. The total installed solar power capacity in the country is about 1,450.67 megawatts.There is a target to increase solar power generation capacity to 5,000 megawatts over the next five years. Goals have been set to meet 20 percent of the country's total electricity demand from renewable sources by 2030 and 30 percent by 2040.Alongside solar power, other renewable energy sources like wind and hydropower will also play a role in achieving these targets.

Abdur Rashid Khan, Managing Director of Power Grid Bangladesh PLC, said adding large amounts of solar power into the national grid in the future will require the development of modern grid management systems, electricity storage solutions, and necessary transmission infrastructure.

To this end, he said, battery energy storage systems or electricity storage technologies are being incorporated into future plans.

The PLC managing director added that the effectiveness of solar power could be further enhanced by storing surplus energy generated during the day and utilising it in the evening or at night..

## A rally and discussion

Under the supervision of Upazila Teachers Association Joint Secretary Nurul Haque and Organizational Secretary Abul Basar, Upazila Academic Supervisor Md. Moniruzzaman Khan. President of Upazila Secondary Teachers' Association and Principal of Musullliabad AK Secondary School spoke as special guests. Fakhrul Islam, Principal of Bangladesh China Technical School and College Abdus Salam, Principal of Dhankhali Technical College Mahmuda Khanam, Vice Principal of Khepupara Neshar Uddin Kamil Madrasa Muhammad Waliullah, Vice President of Kalapara Upazila Secondary Teachers Association Chakamiya Betmore Secondary School Principal Mahabub Ullah Liton, Hajipur Secondary School Assistant Principal Al Imran Haroon, Kuakata Secondary School Principal Md Khalilur Rahman, Jalal Uddin Degree College Lecturer Md Al Mamun, Moazzempur Chalihia Alim Madrasa Principal (Acting) Maulana Md Nazrul Islam, Khepupara Girls Secondary School Senior Teacher Md Bakhtiar Hossain, Noor Mohammad Secondary School Scout Group President Awardee Md Hizbullah etc.

The speakers sought the help of all in drawing the attention of the concerned officials of the government to eliminate the suffering, plight of teachers and the discrimination of government and private teachers.

## Bangladesh, Turkey

from Turkey.The meeting discussed sharing the information with relevant Bangladeshi businesses through the Ministry of Commerce.Cooperation in the management of hazardous industrial waste also received importance during the meeting, particularly waste generated by the electronics and ship-breaking industries.The two sides discussed possible cooperation with Turkey in establishing and operating specialised facilities, including treatment, storage and disposal facilities (TSDFs), for the treatment, storage and disposal of hazardous waste.On the leather industry, Ambassador Sen said leather processing and tannery activities had declined in Turkey due to environmental concerns. At the same time, the use of synthetic leather and imports of raw materials have increased in the country, he said.The Turkish ambassador also invited Bangladesh to participate in the upcoming ministerial meeting under the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC), as well as the World Halal Industrial Summit and Halal Expo.Bangladesh informed the ambassador that the Commerce Minister would attend the main COMCEC conference, while other Bangladeshi representatives would participate in subsequent programmes. Industries Secretary Abdun Naser Khan, Economic Counsellor of the Turkish Embassy, and senior officials of the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Industries were present at the meeting.

## No Full-fledged OC at Bar

3. Additional Pressure on Highway Patrol:

When an officer has to simultaneously handle administrative responsibilities and field-level highway duties, maintaining regular patrols and surveillance may become more challenging.

4. Emergency Response Challenges:

Accidents and traffic congestion frequently require rapid deployment of personnel, traffic control and coordination with other agencies. Any shortage of leadership or manpower can place additional pressure on emergency response operations.

5. Potential Difficulties for Transport Stakeholders:

Transport owners and workers regularly require police services regarding detained vehicles, legal procedures, documents and other issues. A shortage of administrative leadership may create additional coordination challenges in such matters.

6. Administrative Coordination and Accountability:

The OC plays a key role in coordinating the overall activities of a police station. A prolonged vacancy in the post may increase pressure on officers responsible for administrative coordination and distribution of duties. Considering the strategic location and responsibilities of the Bar Aulia Highway Police Station, local residents have demanded the immediate appointment of a full-fledged OC. According to Assistant Superintendent of Police of Chattogram Circle Shah Md. Arif Hossain, the station currently has no regular OC due to a shortage of manpower. He said the matter has already been communicated to the higher authorities in writing, requesting the appointment of an OC as soon as possible.

Local residents expect that a full-fledged OC will be appointed without further delay to strengthen the administrative activities of the Bar Aulia Highway Police Station and ensure more effective services for highway users and the general public. They also stressed that adequate manpower and effective leadership are essential for ensuring road safety, maintaining traffic discipline and responding swiftly to emergencies along this vital industrial and transport corridor.

## Attack on Journalists at RU

expressed outrage over the fact that no investigation committee had been formed even 14 hours after the incident. Addressing the issue, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Dr. Mamunur Rashid stated that Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Faridul Islam is currently away from the campus. The probe committee will be formed upon his return in the afternoon.

?Professor Dr. Mamunur Rashid said, "The VC sir is not on campus right now. He will arrive in the afternoon, after which the investigation committee will be constituted."

?Allegations have been raised against several leaders and activists, including Ahsan Habib, vice-president of the university unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, regarding Sunday night's attack. However, comments from the accused could not be immediately obtained.

?The journalists injured in the attack include Arif Uz Zaman Korban (university correspondent for bdnews24.com), Jahidul Islam (correspondent for Agamii Shomoy), Nur Ahsan Mridul (correspondent for The Daily Star), and Mainul Islam Raju (correspondent for Dainik Samakal).

In protest against the attack, the journalists have demanded

that the university administration file a case against the accused, ensure their arrest by 12:00 PM, cancel the student status of those involved who are current students, and revoke the certificates of those who have already completed their studies.

Additionally, they demanded a ban on any accused individuals who are not university students from entering the campus.

## Two Arrested, Including

mother and daughter went to the police station and filed the case. Mehedi Hasan, Inspector (Investigation) of Jhalakathi Sadar Police Station, said, "Following the filing of the case, two accused were arrested in Barguna district during a raid conducted with the aid of information technology and based on a tip-off. Further legal action against them is underway."

## IMF clears the way for

intensity of the Middle East war, global trade policy, and the impact of El Nino", it added.The IMF also criticised the government's decision earlier this month to reinstate a \$126 million diesel subsidy, saying fuel prices should continue to adjust in line with international markets while protecting vulnerable households.It said the central bank should be prepared to tighten monetary policy further if higher energy prices trigger a second round of inflation.Sri Lanka's central bank recently raised interest rates 100 basis points to 8.75 percent, but has resisted calls for further increases, arguing that they could undermine growth.The latest agreement clears the way for what is expected to be the penultimate disbursement under the programme, which is due to expire in March.Sri Lankan authorities have yet to decide whether they will seek a new arrangement with the IMF when the programme ends.

## Tati Dal Leader and Prime

village and the wife of retired police officer Keramat Ali. Following her husband's death a few years ago, she had been living in that house with her younger daughter. Without informing her family, Jasmine had married Manik Howlader—a former close associate and the General Secretary of the Pirojpur District Tati Dal, hailing from the Bhabanipur Ghosher Hat area of ??Zianagar Upazila. Family members stated that, some time later, strains had developed in their relationship over financial matters.

The victim's brother, Nazir Hossain, alleged that his sister was gang-raped and then deliberately murdered. He claimed that the prime suspect owed Jasmine approximately six lakh Taka. He further alleged that jewelry and other valuables were stolen from the house after the murder.

Kakon Moni, the daughter of the deceased, has filed a case at Kawkhali Police Station as the plaintiff, charging the accused with rape, torture-murder, and robbery. Mohammad Anwar Hossain, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Kawkhali Police Station, stated that within 24 hours of the incident, the prime suspect was arrested in Madaripur while attempting to flee; the arrest was made possible through the use of information technology and the assistance of the SRB. The exact cause of Jasmine's death will be confirmed upon receipt of the autopsy report. Police operations are ongoing to unravel the mystery behind the incident and to identify and arrest those involved.

## US-German trio win medicine Nobel for work on optogenetics

### International Desk

The Nobel medicine prize was awarded Monday to US psychiatrist and neurologist Karl Deisseroth and his German colleagues Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel for their work in the field of optogenetics.The field helps researchers understand how specific cell types contribute to behaviours like learning, fear, addiction and movement, and may one day lead to treatments for neurological and sensory disorders such as Parkinson's disease and epilepsy.

"Using optogenetics, researchers have been able to reveal neural circuits governing specific memories, feelings, and behaviours relevant for neurological and psychiatric disorders," the Nobel Assembly said.In clinical medicine, researchers are using the method in attempts to restore sight in people with visual impairment.

"Optogenetics has fundamentally altered our understanding of the brain. Every day brings new discoveries, helping to solve one of humanity's great mysteries: how our incredible brain works," the Nobel Assembly said.Last year, the medicine prize went to Mary Brunkow and Fred Ramsdell of the United States and Japan's Shimon Sakaguchi for research into how the immune system is kept in check by identifying its "security guards".

This year's laureates will receive their prize -- a diploma, a gold medal and a \$1.2-million cheque -- from King Carl XVI Gustaf at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10, the anniversary of the death in 1896 of the prize's creator, scientist Alfred Nobel.

- Physics prize Tuesday –The Nobel prize for physics will be announced on Tuesday.

Physicists Sir John Pendry of Britain and David Smith of the US, who pioneered the concept of the "invisibility cloak", have been seen as possible winners for years.They showed that engineered metamaterials could bend electromagnetic waves around an object, concealing it from view. The chemistry prize will follow on Wednesday and the literature prize on Thursday. Some pundits have suggested that for literature, the Swedish Academy could follow up last year's award to Hungary's Laszlo Krasznahorkai with a woman writer, possibly from Central or Latin America. Argentine author Samanta Schweblin, 48, could be one such pick, literary critic Lina Kalmtge told AFP.

Others often mentioned in Nobel speculation include Antiguan-American author Jamaica Kincaid, Chinese writer Can Xue, Australia's Gerald Murnane and Alexis Wright, Thomas Pynchon of the US and Mexican writer Cristina Rivera Garza.- All eyes on peace –Perhaps the most keenly anticipated award is that due on Friday, the peace prize -- the only Nobel to be awarded in Oslo.This year, some experts have suggested the jury could choose a laure-

ate who enjoys broad consensus, after last year's winner, Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, stirred controversy.US President Donald Trump lobbied intensively last year to get the prize -- Machado ended up giving him her Nobel medal -- and the committee is aware he will be watching closely again.

"There's always a lot of lobbying, and ultimately perhaps also attempts to exert pressure on the committee," the secretary of the Nobel committee, Kristian Berg Harpviken, told AFP in an interview."We're very used to that."Among possible laureates this year are a joint prize to Save the Children and Mykola Kuleba, a Ukrainian children's rights activist campaigning for the return of Ukrainian chil Others include Sudan's Emergency Response Rooms (ERR), a vast network of volunteers risking their lives to help people facing the double threat of war and hunger, and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) after the deadliest year on record for the profession in 2025. The economics prize wraps up the Nobel season on October 12.

## Attack on journalists at RU: 5-member probe body formed

### Staff correspondent

A five-member committee has been formed to investigate an attack on journalists carried out allegedly by activists of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) on the campus.The university administration is also preparing to file a case with Motihar Police Station over the incident, said University Proctor Prof Dr Mahbubur Rahman.On Sunday, 10 people including four journalists were injured in an attack allegedly by some leaders and activists of JCD in front of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall around 8:30 pm.Witnesses said JCD leaders and activists came to the hall gate from the university's Transport Market in a procession allegedly intending to attack the hall students’ union general secretary (GS) Ariful Islam.They were reportedly carrying locally made weapons, including machetes, cleavers, hockey sticks, pipes and baseball bats. When the university proctor arrived at the spot, the JCD activists hid the weapons, witnesses said.Journalists who approached the area to record video of the situation were then attacked.Witnesses said a Samakal correspondent was beaten with sticks in the presence of the proctor, while an attempt was also made to seize the mobile phone of an Ajker Patrika correspondent.The bdnews24.com correspondent was later allegedly assaulted.The proctor subsequently took the journalists inside the hall and locked the door for their safety.When other journalists arrived after hearing about the attack, The Daily Star and Agamir Shomoy correspondents were beaten. Zahidul Islam suffered a head injury.Journalists who tried to intervene were also allegedly threatened by the attackers.The incident reportedly stemmed from a dispute over comments made by JCD leader Ahsan Habib on a Facebook post concerning Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (RUCSU) GS Salahuddin Ammar.University Proctor Mahbubur Rahman said, “We failed. It was not possible for us to control the situation. We called the police, but the police also fled in fear.”

Rajshahi University unit JCD President Sultan Ahmed Rahi said he had informed the central committee of the incident and that action would be taken against those responsible.In protest against the attack, journalists staged demonstration demanding that the university administration file a case against those accused, ensure their arrest, cancel the studentship of students involved in the attack and revoke the certificates of those who have already completed their studies.They have also demanded that people accused in the incident who are not university students be barred from entering the campus.They later withdrew their programme after the university administration assured them that a case would be filed by Monday.CCTV footage allegationMeanwhile, allegations have surfaced that CCTV footage from the site of the attack was deleted after the incident.The JCD unit on the campus and Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall Provost Dr Mahbubur Rahman have been accused of being involved in deleting the footage.Journalists alleged that important parts of the attack should have been captured by a CCTV camera installed in front of the hall. However, the footage was later found to be unavailable.They claimed the footage was deleted to conceal the identities of those involved in the attack and the actual circumstances of the incident.Denying the allegation, Hall Provost Mahbubur Rahman said the CCTV connection had been disconnected because renovation work was ongoing at the time.“So, there is no footage. The allegation that the footage was deleted is completely false,” he said.University Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Administration) Dr Abdul Alim, said the relevant information had been preserved.“Anyone can make allegations. There is no shortage of documents. The investigation committee is collecting information from the sources it needs to,” he said. Asked about the allegation that the CCTV footage had been deleted, or the hall provost's claim that the connection had been disconnected, the pro-vice-chancellor declined to comment further.



ESTD-2006

কর্মজীবী মানুষের সুবিধার্থে

# জালালাবাদ চক্ষু হাসপাতালে

এখন প্রতি **শুক্রবার** বিকালে রোগী দেখবেন

চক্ষু বিশেষজ্ঞ ও সার্জন

## ডা. আহম্মাদুল বারী

এম.বি.বি.এস, এম.এস (অপথ্যালমোলজী)  
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পিএইচডি (অপথ্যালমোলজী)  
সিনিয়র কন্সাল্ট্যান্ট ও সার্জন,  
জালালাবাদ চক্ষু হাসপাতাল গ্রুপ ফ্যাকালি সেন্টার

সন্ধ্যা ৬টা থেকে রাত ৯টা

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ওয়াপদা গেট, অক্সিজেন, চট্টগ্রাম

### Humanitarian Eye Doctor

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

# Houthis capture another Yemeni town as they push toward strategic Taiz



International Desk

Iran-backed Houthi rebels have seized more territory in southwestern Yemen, capturing a key town and dealing a setback to Saudi-backed government forces as they advance toward Taiz, a strategically important provincial capital.

The Houthis took control of Turbah on Sunday, shortly before Yemen's internationally recognized government announced a major military campaign against the rebels. The escalation involving Saudi Arabia and the Houthis has reignited Yemen's civil war following a four-year ceasefire.

Turbah lies along a major route connecting Taiz with the port city of Aden, the temporary headquarters of the internationally recognized government. The town has long served as an important position for government forces defending Taiz against Houthi attacks. The rebels had earlier captured several villages and areas around Taiz, further advancing their efforts to surround the city, Yemen's third-largest.

The Iranian-backed group also made

rapid gains along Yemen's western Red Sea coast in early September, capturing the strategic port city of Mokha and several islands. Those advances gave the Houthis control over the Yemeni side of the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a major global shipping route through which about 12 percent of world trade passes.

In an announcement Sunday, the Saudi-backed government said it was deploying additional forces across areas under its control.

Rashad al-Alimi, chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council, said in a televised address that the military campaign was aimed at "recovering the remaining territories" held by the Houthis. He urged the international community to support the Yemeni government.

Several hours later, Saudi military spokesman Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki pledged "full operational support" for Yemeni government forces until the Houthis were "eliminated."

Al-Malki also said Saudi Arabia had the right to take necessary steps to deter the rebels, who have continued launching missiles and drones toward Saudi terri-

tory during the nearly three-month escalation.

The latest surge in violence began in mid-July when the Houthis accused Saudi Arabia of carrying out an airstrike on Sanaa airport, which is under rebel control, to prevent an unauthorized Iranian aircraft from landing there. The Houthis subsequently launched missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia and Yemeni government forces.

The rebels also declared a blockade of Saudi-linked shipping in the Red Sea and attacked several vessels associated with Saudi Arabia.

In September, they expanded their offensive along the Red Sea coast in what represented their biggest territorial advance in years.

The capture of Turbah is likely to seriously hamper the ability of government-aligned forces to reinforce and supply front-line positions across Taiz province and the provincial capital, according to the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War.

The think tank said in an analysis Sunday that cutting supply routes has clear military significance, while control of roads north of Turbah could also prevent government forces from withdrawing from the area.

The latest escalation has brought back the civil war that began in 2014, when the Houthis moved south from their northern stronghold, seized Sanaa and forced the government to flee to Saudi Arabia. The conflict triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises and has killed more than 150,000 people.

The latest violence has killed more than 800 people and injured over 3,600, according to the United Nations. The escalation has also displaced more than 145,000 people within Yemen, while over 3,000 others have crossed the sea to Djibouti, the UN migration agency said.



## Spain PM calls early election after housing measures defeated

International Desk

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has called an early general election for Nov. 29 as pressure mounts on his government over the country's housing crisis following a major parliamentary defeat last week.

The announcement came after opposition right-wing parties joined forces to block two emergency decrees proposed by Sánchez's government. The measures included steps to reduce evictions and curb real estate speculation.

Public pressure over housing affordability has grown in recent weeks, with protests held in cities across Spain. Anger intensified after the televised eviction of an 87-year-old woman in Madrid last month.

Addressing the nation on Monday, Sánchez said voters must decide the country's future and argued that a broader progressive majority in parliament could help address Spain's major challenges.

He asked voters to choose between what he described as a far-right political shift and a future based on openness, social justice and environmental responsibility.

Sánchez, 54, has served as prime minister since 2018. His government has gained international attention for its support for migration, diplomatic efforts on behalf of Palestinians and criticism of the US and Israeli war against Iran. Spain has also recorded strong economic growth in recent years.

However, he faces domestic challenges, including legal cases involving members of his Socialist Party, as well as his wife and brother, both of whom deny wrongdoing. His government has also faced criticism over a border crossing this summer involving tens of thousands of people, mostly Moroccans, into Spain's North African territory of Ceuta, where a humanitarian crisis has continued.

Since 2023, Sánchez has led a minority coalition with left-wing party Sumar. His reliance on smaller parties to pass legislation has limited his government's ability to implement policies.

Political analyst Oriol Bartomeus of the Autonomous University of Barcelona said the housing issue could benefit Sánchez's party by framing the election around affordability and the traditional left-right divide.

Sánchez will face Popular Party leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo, whose party currently holds the largest number of seats in parliament.



## Two killed, nearly 30 injured in shooting at homecoming party in Georgia

International Desk

Two people were killed and nearly 30 others injured after gunfire broke out at a large homecoming party in the southern US state of Georgia early Sunday, authorities said.

Dooly County Sheriff Craig Peavy identified those killed as Jaquevion Jackson, 21, of Cordele, and Macaleb Jackson, 23, of Hawkinsville. He did not say whether the two were related.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation Director Chris Hosey said some of the injured suffered gunshot wounds but could not confirm how many.

"We're still trying to work through that," Hosey said at a news conference Sunday evening.

No arrests had been announced several hours after the shooting, and authorities had not identified a possible motive.

The injured, aged between 14 and 51, were taken to several hospitals in the region. Some remained in critical condition while others were stable, Peavy said.

More than 1,000 people were attending the event when more than 50 shots were fired at at least two locations about a block apart, Peavy told WMAZ-TV.

Vienna, a small rural community, is about 210 kilometres south of Atlanta.

Deputies were near the area when the shooting began, Peavy said. After they arrived, additional gunfire broke out about a block away.

The shooting occurred during homecoming weekend for Dooly County High School but was not a school-sponsored event, school superintendent Sherrod Willaford said.

"We recognise that its impact may reach many of our students, families, and staff," he said in a statement.

Schools were scheduled to reopen Monday with additional safety measures in place, although officials did not provide details.

Ashley Gee, 30, who travelled from nearby Turner County to attend the party, told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution that she heard repeated bursts of gunfire before people began running.

"Like a machine gun," she said.

The party reportedly attracted people from several surrounding counties after a local high school football team's homecoming victory Friday night.

Peavy said celebrations began Friday and remained peaceful as deputies patrolled the area. Saturday night's gathering, however, became much more difficult to control because of the large crowd.

Dooly County Coroner Brett Walls said the two victims were pronounced dead at the scene from gunshot wounds. He described the scene as "horrific" and said several others were shot, while about a dozen people were injured while trying to escape.

"This doesn't — it's not supposed to — happen in a small town like that," Walls told the newspaper.

Authorities have not said whether suspects have been identified or whether anyone is in custody. Investigators are continuing to search for suspects and determine a motive.

Vienna Mayor Eddie Daniels said the shooting occurred about a block from his home. He said he saw numerous police vehicles but had not yet received details from investigators.

Daniels also said the city had not issued a permit for the block party and that he did not know whether it was officially connected to the high school's homecoming.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation spokesperson Lydia Bullard declined to provide further details, citing the ongoing investigation.



## US Marine held over killing, robbery of woman in Okinawa

International Desk

Japanese police have arrested a US Marine on suspicion of robbing and killing a woman on Okinawa, a case that has renewed public anger over the presence of US military personnel on the southern Japanese island.

The Okinawa prefectural police said Sunday that the 20-year-old Marine, stationed at Futenma Air Station, allegedly killed a 39-year-old woman at a hotel in Naha, the prefectural capital, and took her wallet and backpack early Saturday.

Kyodo News, citing police, reported that the woman was found dead in her hotel room and appeared to have been strangled.

Security camera footage showed a man believed to be the suspect entering the hotel with the woman and later leaving alone, police said. He was arrested after an officer spotted him walking alone in an entertainment district in Okinawa City late Saturday, according to Kyodo.

"The case deals a major shock and adds fear to the Okinawans who have already been forced to live next to US bases," newly elected Okinawa Gov. Genta Koja told reporters. "It is absolutely unforgivable and we are outraged."

Koja also questioned whether measures taken by the US military to improve discipline and troop education following previous crimes were working.

About 50,000 US troops are stationed in Japan under a bilateral security agreement, with roughly half based on Okinawa. The island has become increasingly important to the Japan-US military alliance as tensions with China grow.

Okinawans have long raised concerns over noise, pollution and crime associated with US military bases. Such incidents have also strained relations between Japan's central government and the

Okinawa administration.

The latest case comes as Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's government seeks to strengthen Japan's military presence on Okinawa and expand cooperation with the US military.

Takaichi called the killing "extremely regrettable" in a message on X. She said her government had strongly protested to the US and demanded full cooperation with Japanese authorities, stricter discipline for US service members and measures to prevent similar incidents.

Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi also summoned US Ambassador to Japan George Glass and conveyed Japan's "outrage," the Foreign Ministry said.

Glass expressed condolences to the victim's family and said the US was cooperating with Japanese national and local authorities.

The US Marine Corps said the suspect is assigned to the III Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa and that it is fully cooperating with Japanese authorities.

"The Marine Corps takes these allegations very seriously and expects every Marine to adhere to the highest standards of behavior," it said.

Futenma Air Station, located in a densely populated part of central Okinawa, has been a longstanding source of concern. Many residents have demanded its relocation. The Japanese government approved a plan to move the base to Henoko on Okinawa's eastern coast, but the project has faced major delays.

Public opposition to the US military presence intensified after three US service members raped a 12-year-old girl in 1995, triggering massive protests.

Okinawa prefectural police said arrests involving US service members and their families exceeded 100 last year. Repeated sexual crimes and delays in reporting some cases have also fueled anger among residents in recent years.

## Questions raised over security lapses after FlyDubai incident

International Desk

The United Arab Emirates shared passenger and crew details, including pilots' names and nationalities, with Israel before a FlyDubai flight to Tel Aviv was targeted in an attempted hijacking, regional officials said Sunday.

The disclosure has raised questions over how the attacker managed to board the aircraft despite previous concerns about his views.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later ordered the head of the National Security Council to appoint an examiner to review "all security aspects regarding foreign civil aviation to Israel."

The preliminary investigation has pointed to several possible security failures. Officials have said the Omani co-pilot had previously been barred from flying in Oman because of concerns about his extremist views.

It also remains unclear how an Omani citizen was allowed to serve as co-pilot on a flight carrying Israelis to Tel Aviv, given that Oman does not have diplomatic relations with Israel.

The UAE, which is leading the investigation, said the co-pilot attacked the captain with a cockpit crash axe and tried to take control of the aircraft in what it described as a "terrorist attack" on Wednesday.

The plane, carrying 182 people, nearly crashed before the Indian captain managed to open the cockpit door. Passengers and other people then entered the cockpit and subdued the attacker.

No Israeli security warning Regional officials said Emirati authorities had shared information about the passengers and crew with Israel, including their nationalities. However, Israel did not flag any passenger or crew member as a security concern, the officials said.

They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the investigation publicly. Israel's Shin Bet security agency said the Transportation Ministry is responsible for checking passenger lists from foreign flights.

# British PM revives Brexit debate, leaves door open to EU membership

International Desk

British Prime Minister Andy Burnham has reignited discussion over the country's future relationship with the European Union (EU), including the possibility of rejoining the bloc.

His comments mark a shift from Labour's earlier position and raise questions about how far Britain could go in restoring closer relations with its European neighbors.

Speaking at his first Labour Party conference as prime minister on Tuesday, Burnham said Brexit had "done more harm than good" and outlined several possible paths for Britain's long-term ties with the EU.

In a BBC interview broadcast the following day, he said rejoining the EU could be considered. "I would like to see Britain rejoin in my lifetime," he said, while stressing that he would examine the different available options.

The choices include keeping the existing arrangement, joining a customs union, returning to the EU single market or seeking full EU membership. Each would involve a different level of economic integration and political commitment.

Burnham's position differs from Labour's 2024 election manifesto, which ruled out returning to the single market or customs union and restoring free movement. According to the Financial Times, Burnham had also previously promised not to reopen the "divisive arguments about rejoining the EU."

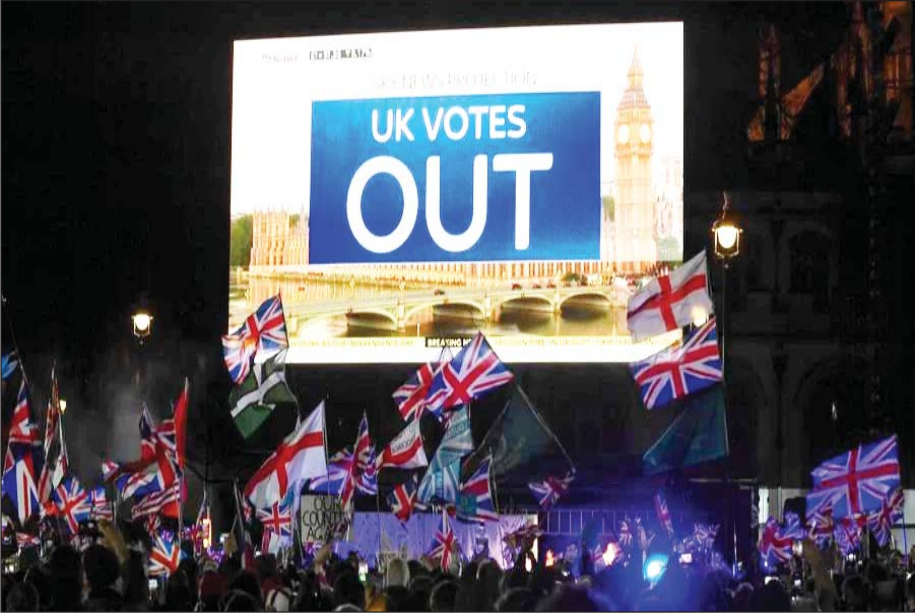
The renewed debate comes 10 years after 52 percent of British voters chose to leave the EU in the June 2016 referendum. Britain formally exited the bloc in 2020.

Economic benefits weighed against political risks Burnham has placed economic growth at the center of his argument for reconsidering Britain's relationship with the EU.

In an interview with ITV News on Wednesday, he said Brexit had hurt economic growth and argued that it would be difficult to restore stronger growth rates while Britain remained too distant from its largest market.

Recent opinion polls indicate considerable public support for closer ties with the EU, although that does not necessarily translate into support for full membership.

A Public First poll found that 70 percent of British voters wanted the government to establish closer relations with the EU, the Independent reported Wednesday. YouGov polling published the same day showed 59 percent of respondents



favored Britain rejoining the bloc.

However, reopening the Brexit question could create political difficulties. Labour MP Graham Stringer described a reversal of the 2016 vote as a "betrayal" and warned that a renewed debate could become even more divisive than it was a decade ago.

EU leaders welcome prospect, but return would be complex French President Emmanuel Macron and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez have welcomed the possibility of Britain returning to the EU.

Macron said "welcome back" in English, describing a potential British return as good news for both Britain and Europe.

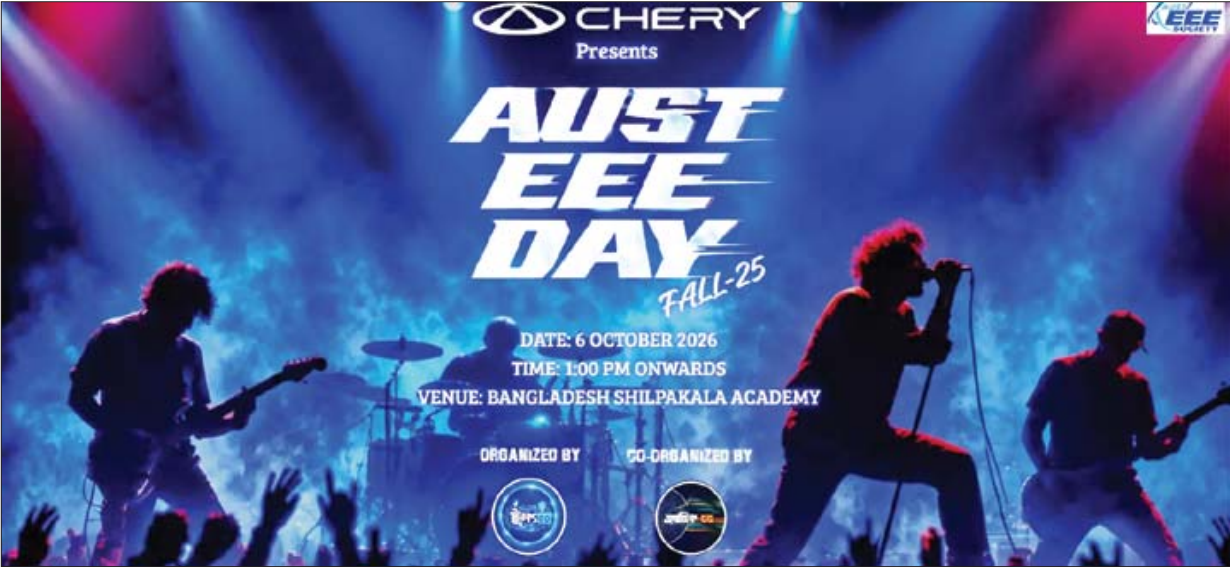
Sanchez said Brexit had represented a "huge loss" for both the British people and the EU.

While such statements demonstrate goodwill, they do not amount to agreement among all EU members on the terms of any potential British return.

Rejoining the EU would require negotiations on membership conditions, approval from the European Parliament, unanimous consent from the EU Council and ratification of an accession treaty by Britain and every EU member state.

A planned UK-EU summit could offer an early indication of how Burnham intends to develop his position. The meeting, initially scheduled for July, was postponed and could now take place in November. British media have reported that Burnham wants the summit to address the wider framework of relations between Britain and the EU.

The immediate question is whether the British government will formulate a specific negotiating position. Such a move would show whether Burnham is seeking closer practical cooperation with the EU or considering a more fundamental overhaul of Britain's post-Brexit relationship with the bloc.



# AUST EEE Day 2026 to bring students, industry leaders together

Entertainment Desk

AUST EEE Day 2026, the flagship semester fest of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) at Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST), will be held Tuesday at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA), bringing together students, faculty members, alumni and industry leaders. Organised by Soroikko-50 and co-organised by Trayottik-55 under the AUST EEE Society, the fest will begin at 1 pm on Oct 6. The event aims to create a platform where engineering education, emerging technology, industry and culture come together, while providing students with opportunities to showcase their talents and interact directly with corporate and technology-sector leaders. The organisers said the fest will also help students gain exposure to real-world technologies and career perspectives as they prepare to enter the workforce. The Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Chery and the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Neural Semiconductor are expected to attend

the programme and deliver speeches. The Vice-Chancellor of AUST, professors and faculty members, current students and distinguished alumni will also attend the event. Around 2,000 participants are expected to join the fest. AUST EEE Day will feature various student performances alongside activities aimed at strengthening ties among students, faculty members and alumni. The event also seeks to encourage young engineers to explore innovation in areas including automotive technology, semiconductors and sustainable energy. Chery is the title sponsor, Neural Semiconductor the powered-by partner and Superstar Group the driven-by partner. Gigabyte, Polar Ice Cream and Omera Solar are also among the sponsors. As part of the fest, Chery is showcasing its vehicles at the AUST campus on Oct 4 and 5. The showcase will continue at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on Oct 6. The fest will conclude with a live concert by popular singer and composer Habib Wahid. United News of Bangladesh (UNB) is the media partner of AUST EEE Day 2026.



## Nusraat Faria’s special preps for movie ‘Lajja’

Entertainment Desk

Actress Nusraat Faria is completely transforming herself for her new movie ‘Lajja’. Last month, she had revealed that she has lost about 8kg for her character. Now, it has been revealed that this glamour girl has also undergone a ‘facial rejuvenation treatment’ to portray the character perfectly on screen. The movie ‘Lajja’ is being directed by MH Khokon, a joint production of Impress Telefilm Ltd and Jazz Multimedia. It has not been fully revealed what kind of character Faria will be seen in. However, the heroine has hinted that she will appear in front of the audience in a challenging role of a police officer or commando genre. Nusraat Faria said that preparing for a new character is not limited to costumes or makeup. After losing a lot of weight for this movie, her face showed signs of fatigue and volume loss. So, before starting the shoot, she underwent this special skin treatment to restore her natural freshness. In this regard, Nusraat Faria said, “Even though beauty is given by Allah, you have to take care of yourself, and I do it according to the doctor’s advice. For some roles, I need to lose weight. I had to lose about 7 to 8kg for the movie Shame.

# Meryl Streep's casting as Aslan in Greta Gerwig's Narnia film sparks gender debate

Entertainment Desk

The casting of Oscar-winning actress Meryl Streep to voice Aslan the lion in Greta Gerwig's upcoming adaptation of The Chronicles of Narnia has sparked controversy among conservative Christian commentators, even though the public has yet to see a single frame of the film. The critics have expressed concern over a female actor voicing Aslan, a central character in the seven-book fantasy series by British Christian author C.S. Lewis. Published in the 1950s, the books portray the lion as male, with a magnificent mane, and Aslan is widely regarded as a literary representation of Jesus Christ. Filmmakers often make changes when adapting literary works for the screen. Gerwig, for instance, has moved the setting of The Magician's Nephew from around 1900 to the 1950s. However, the decision to cast Streep does not necessarily mean Aslan will be portrayed as female. Conservative Christian critics argue that even the possibility of presenting a figure associated with Christ as anything other than male goes beyond artistic freedom. They point to the Bible and ancient Christian creeds, which refer to God as the Father and Jesus as the Son of God. Seth Udinsky, writing for the evangelical news website Christian Post, described the casting as an attempt to undermine Christian symbols. He also accused Gerwig of making Aslan transgender, citing a promotional image showing the lion with rainbow-coloured whiskers. The casting has also drawn mixed reactions on social media, including numerous comments and counterarguments under Netflix's Instagram post announcing the decision. Some scholars and admirers of Lewis's work have urged people to wait until the film is released before reaching a conclusion. Kat Coffin, a New York-based writer and Lewis scholar, said she had questions about the casting but was more troubled by the intense hostility towards the possibility of a feminine portrayal of a figure representing God. The film is scheduled for theatrical release in February. Gerwig seeks a voice with wisdom and wonder. Gerwig has not directly addressed the controversy over Aslan's gender. However, she has explained the qualities she wanted in the actor voicing the character. “I wanted someone who was profound but not pretentious, who had gravitas but not morose self-seriousness,” Gerwig said. She said she wanted a voice capable of conveying emotional depth, sadness, joy and delight. She also sought someone older than 70

who could bring the wisdom of experience while retaining a child's sense of wonder. Gerwig said she first read The Magician's Nephew as a child and fell in love with its story and magical world. The director is known for bringing feminist perspectives to films such as Barbie and Little Women, the latter also based on a classic work of children's literature. A report in film magazine Empire has added to the debate, saying Gerwig drew inspiration from pop artist David Bowie, known for his gender-fluid image, when developing Aslan's appearance, including the lion's differently coloured eyes and bold red-striped face. Published in 1955, The Magician's Nephew follows two children, Digory and Polly, who travel between parallel worlds through magic. They eventually reach the

ume 75 years ago this month. Many Christian readers feel a strong personal attachment to the stories because of their religious themes. Author Christin Ditchfield Lazo, who has written books about Lewis, said the stories had deeply influenced millions of readers, particularly those who value their spiritual messages. She encouraged Christians to wait until the film's release before judging the casting decision. “There's a huge difference between a woman voicing a male character and the director changing the gender of the character,” she said, adding that the decision could raise concerns but its implications would not be clear until audiences watched the film. She also noted that actors have long played or voiced characters of different genders, from



newly created land of Narnia but inadvertently bring along the evil witch Jadis. In this and later books in the series, Aslan guides young characters in their struggle against evil. Critics question changes to Christian themes. Ted Baehr, founder and publisher of Movieguide, which advises Christian families on film and television content, said casting a woman to voice Aslan challenged Christian teachings about the nature of God. He acknowledged Gerwig's directing abilities but questioned whether she fully understood the importance of the character to many Christians. Although Lewis said his Narnia books were not allegories, they contain strong parallels with biblical stories and Christian beliefs, Baehr said. He argued that the series could not be adapted in the same way as Greek mythology in Christopher Nolan's recent film The Odyssey. “The Gospel is not a myth,” he said. The controversy reflects the strong connection many Christians, particularly evangelicals, feel with Lewis, whose fiction and non-fiction works promoted Christian teachings. The Narnia series has reportedly sold 120 million copies worldwide since the publication of its first vol-

Shakespearean theatre to modern animated productions. Lewis family expresses support for Gerwig. Several evangelical Christians embraced the film adaptations of the first three Narnia books released in the early 2000s, in which actor Liam Neeson provided Aslan's deep, masculine voice. Coffin noted that literary works have sometimes portrayed God through feminine characteristics. She pointed out that Aslan also appears as a lamb in the Narnia series, with a voice Lewis described as “sweet milky”. A statement from the family of Lewis's late wife, Joy Davidman Gresham, praised Gerwig's enthusiasm for the books. “We saw this enthusiasm during our visit to the set in London,” the statement, provided by Netflix, said. The family expressed excitement about working with the director and production team on the film and future projects. The C.S. Lewis Company, which holds the rights to Lewis's intellectual property and is producing the film, also welcomed Gerwig's approach. The company said it was deeply moved by the director's commitment to Lewis's fictional world and her efforts to bring joy, emotion and genuine affection for the story to The Magician's Nephew.

# What Jolie says after sharing Gaza satellite images



Entertainment Desk

Satellite images now clearly show the devastation in Gaza. Where there were once homes, schools, hospitals and settlements, there are now vast areas of destruction. American actress Angelina Jolie shared satellite images of the Gaza war before and after, writing that these images can show the extent of the destruction, but they cannot show the suffering of the people who survived the destruction, the emptiness of the families who were killed, or the reality of life for those who lost their homes. Ahead of the coming winter, she called for emergency shelter for the people of Gaza, humanitarian aid and medical equipment for hospitals.

According to the Qatar-based media outlet Al Jazeera, American actress Angelina Jolie shared satellite images of Gaza on her verified Instagram page, highlighting the situation before and after Israel's war. “Now you can open Google Earth and see what has been done to Gaza,” she said. She did not mention Israel by name in the lengthy post. However, she said, “Entire areas have been reduced to rubble.” At the same time, he also mentioned that the infrastructure necessary for people to survive has been ‘damaged or destroyed.’ He said that about 1.98 million people in Gaza are in need of humanitarian assistance. However, she noted, “Relief and shelter supplies are still facing various restrictions and delays.” She wrote, “Google Earth is showing the true picture of the devastation very clearly. People need to be sheltered before winter sets in. Humanitarian aid needs to reach civilians in the required quantities. Hospitals need medical equipment.” Jolie wrote in her post, “Now you can open Google Earth and see what has been done to Gaza. Entire areas have been reduced to rubble. Homes, schools, universities, hospitals, roads, water and sewage systems, and the infrastructure that people depend on to survive have been damaged or destroyed.” The American actress also wrote, “UN satellite analysis shows that 82 per cent of Gaza's infrastructure has been damaged as of June 16, 2026. Nearly two-thirds of these damaged infrastructures have been identified as destroyed. As winter approaches, 1.98 million people in Gaza, or 94 per cent of the total population, need shelter assistance and essential supplies. Relief and shelter supplies are still facing various restrictions and delays.” At the end of the post, Jolie wrote, “The devastation is visible before our eyes. The needs are known. The important thing now is whether those needs are actually being met.”



Entertainment Desk

Last February, it was reported that small screen actress Tania Brishty was diagnosed with a brain tumour. She underwent two surgeries. After the first surgery in Dhaka, she was taken to Chennai, India for advanced treatment. There, she underwent a second round of surgery. Since then, Tania has been away from acting and shooting. Fans are deeply concerned about her physical condition and treatment. Many want to know how she is now, when will she return to shooting? The actress did not escape the questions of the fans. Tania Brishty went live on Facebook yesterday to answer those questions. She said that she has been undergoing chemotherapy for three months. Now she is much healthier than before; she wants to return to shooting this month. Giving information about her physical condition, Tania Brishty said, “I have been sick for a long time, I am still here. Much better than before. Chemotherapy is going

# Tania Brishty’s chemotherapy undergoing

## Wants to return to shooting this month

on now. Three months have passed, I will have to undergo chemotherapy for another three months.” Regarding further treatment, Tania Brishty said that after the six-month chemotherapy is over, some more tests will be done on the head. The doctor will inform about the further treatment after seeing the results of those reports. The actress has been spending her life in and out of the hospital since she became ill. She has naturally gained weight. When netizens commented on this on Facebook Live, Tania Brishty also explained it. She said, “Weight is supposed to increase. If someone has two surgeries, their weight will increase, it's very natural.” Before her illness, Tania Brishty was busy shooting all year round. But everything suddenly stopped last February. She has not been able to shoot for nine months. Tania said that although she misses the world she knows, she has taken a break from acting due to her illness. However, she also gave her fans the good news of her return. She said that she is planning to return to work from this month. Tania Brishty said, “Many people ask, when I will return to drama? Of course I want to return to drama. I want to start working again from this month. Talks are ongoing. I could not shoot for almost nine months due to illness. I am still sick, but I was a little sicker before. Currently, I am much better. So, I am thinking of returning to shooting.”



# Call for Unity to Uphold Journalists’ Rights; Journalist Protection Law Must Be Implemented Without Delay

**Md. Mizanur Rahman, Mirsarai (Chattogram)**

Md. Mizanur Rahman, General Secretary of the Chattogram North District Branch of the Journalist Development Society of Bangladesh and Mirsarai Upazila Representative of The Daily Destiny and JA TV, has called on all journalists and journalist organizations across the country to work together to ensure professional rights, safety, dignity, and freedom of the press.

He said, No government can stop corruption by silencing journalists. When the path to independent journalism is obstructed, corruption, irregularities, and abuse of power may find greater opportunities to remain hidden. Therefore, ensuring press freedom and protecting the safety and professional rights of journalists are essential to effectively combating corruption.

He further stated that journalism is not merely a profession; it is the voice of the people, one of the foundations of democracy, and an important means of ensuring transparency and accountability in the state. One of the key responsibilities of journalists is to bring information about corruption and irregularities within government institutions, the administration, and influential circles to public attention. It is essential to ensure that journalists do not face intimidation, threats, attacks, harassment, or undue pressure while carrying out these responsibilities.

Unity Is Essential to Establish Journalists’ Rights

Md. Mizanur Rahman said that although numerous journalist organizations operate in the country with different ideologies and organizational structures, they must stand united on issues concerning professional rights, safety, and dignity.

He emphasized that journalists must rise above personal interests, organizational divisions, and partisan influences and work collectively for the greater interests of the journalistic community.

Whenever a journalist faces an attack, abuse, threat, or professional harassment, others must stand beside that journalist regardless of organizational affiliation, media outlet, or political identity. Supporting a fellow journalist in times of difficulty is not only a humanitarian responsibility but also a reflection of professional solidarity.

He called on all journalist organizations to adopt coordinated initiatives. Joint meetings, collective protests, human chains, submission of memorandums, and other lawful programs should be organized whenever necessary to advance legitimate demands. He noted that a united voice can make the movement to establish journalists’ rights significantly stronger than isolated efforts.

Journalist Protection Law Must Be Implemented Without Delay

Regarding journalists’ safety, Md. Mizanur Rahman said that allegations of attacks, threats, intimidation, obstruction of news gathering, and harassment arising from the publication of news must be taken seriously.

He stressed the importance of prompt and impartial investigations, accountability for those responsible, and access to justice for affected journalists.

Calling for the establishment of an effective legal framework to protect journalists’ professional independence and safety, he urged the relevant authorities to take effective steps toward enacting and promptly implementing a Journalist Protection Law. He said that such legislation should protect journalists’ safety while safeguarding their right to gather and publish news independently.

He also emphasized that passing a law alone would not be sufficient.



efficient. Proper enforcement, impartial investigations, and an effective judicial process must be ensured. Effective measures are necessary to prevent any individual or group from abusing power to obstruct press freedom.

Fair Wages and Job Security Must Be Ensured

Md. Mizanur Rahman further stated that journalists’ safety is not limited to physical protection. Fair wages, regular payment, job security, labor rights, and professional dignity must also be guaranteed.

Journalists working at district, upazila, and remote levels play an important role in serving the public interest despite limited resources and numerous challenges. Many of them perform their duties amid financial uncertainty and professional difficulties.

He called on media owners, editors, relevant authorities, and journalist organizations to play responsible roles in establishing journalists’ legitimate rights.

Ensuring financial security and professional independence would enable journalists to perform their duties more freely and effectively in the public interest.

Professional Ethics Must Accompany Press Freedom

He said that press freedom does not mean irresponsibility. Every journalist has a professional obligation to verify facts, rely on credible sources, seek comments from relevant parties, maintain impartiality, and uphold professional ethics before publishing news.

At the same time, protecting media freedom, ensuring access to information, and safeguarding journalists’ legitimate professional rights are responsibilities shared by the state and relevant institutions.

He added that the declared policy of ,zero tolerance against corruption must go beyond statements and promises. Allegations of corruption must be investigated impartially, transparency and accountability must be strengthened, and appropriate legal action must be taken against those responsible. Independent and responsible journalism can play a significant role in identifying irregularities at different levels of the state.

Call for Collective Action to Establish Journalists’ Rights

In conclusion, Md. Mizanur Rahman said that journalists’ rights are not the concern of any single individual or organization; they are directly linked to the professional interests of the entire journalistic community. He stressed the need to strengthen mutual respect, cooperation, and solidarity among journalists. When it comes to defending professional rights, journalists should regard one another as colleagues working in the same profession rather than as rivals.

He urged all journalist organizations to unite to protect journalists’ rights and safety, take initiatives toward the prompt implementation of a Journalist Protection Law, ensure fair wages and benefits, and create an environment where journalists can report freely and independently.

He said, we want a Bangladesh where journalists can report the truth without fear, ask questions independently, and perform their duties in a safe environment. We demand freedom, not the silencing of journalists; unity, not division; and legitimate rights, not neglect. We need effective action to ensure journalists’ safety and establish their professional rights, not merely assurances. Ensuring unity among journalists, professional safety, legitimate rights, and an environment conducive to independent journalism can pave the way for building a transparent, accountable, and corruption-free Bangladesh.

West Indies deny India clean sweep as Hope scores unbeaten 162

**Sports Desk**

Shai Hope anchored the chase with an unbeaten 162 off 143 balls as West Indies prevented India from completing a series sweep with a five-wicket victory in the third and final one-day international in New Chandigarh on Saturday.

After the early loss of John Campbell in the fifth over, Hope combined with Amir Jangoo for a crucial 109-run stand to steady the innings, helping West Indies reach 78-1 at the end of the powerplay. Jangoo struck his third ODI half-century before being run out for 67, while Sherfane Rutherford fell soon after for 24. Hope, however, maintained the momentum, adding another vital 56-run partnership to keep the chase on track.

Nakase returns to bench after exhaustion scare, guides Valkyries to semifinal win

**Sports Desk**

Golden State Valkyries head coach Natalie Nakase returned to the bench and led her team to a 71-60 victory over the Las Vegas Aces in Game 1 of their WNBA semifinal series on Sunday, two days after collapsing on the sideline due to what she described as exhaustion.

“Just exhaustion,” Nakase said. “I ate and drank right after and felt better.”

The 46-year-old coach said she consulted a doctor on Saturday, the day before the semifinal opener, and plans to take a proactive approach to protecting both her physical and mental health.

Her players had encouraged her to take time to recover, following the same advice she regularly gives them.

“I’m good. I had a little exhaustion, obviously,” she said, adding that her father had taught her an important lesson about balancing work and health.

About 10 years ago, when she was uncertain about her career, her father advised her never to let her professional life come at the expense of her health or mental well-being.

Nakase said the recent incident served as a wake-up call. She added that medical examinations had shown no apparent problems. During Sunday’s game, Nakase spent some periods sitting on the bench, unlike her usual practice of standing for most of the contest.

Assistant coaches Kasib Powell and Landon Tatum took turns supporting her as she struggled to communicate everything she wanted to convey.

“I was all right, I wasn’t my best but luckily I have an amazing staff,” she said. Nakase said she plans to manage her demanding work routine more carefully, potentially by wearing a heart monitor and taking other precautions. She already uses a tracking ring to monitor some health indicators. “Information for me is really important,” she said. “I just want to be proactive, be smart. I understand this job for me I love it, sometimes I love it too much to a point I overwork. I just want to make sure I’m being smart.”

She said this could mean limiting additional video analysis sessions and following her daily schedule more closely. “It’s taking the time and organizing my mornings,” she said, noting that changing game times and schedules had affected her usual routine.

# Messi readies for final farewell in Argentina send-off

**Sports Desk**

Lionel Messi will bring the curtain down on his glittering Argentina career on Tuesday with a farewell friendly against Benin that marks the dawn of a new era for the South American champions. After more than two decades of service to his country, the 39-year-old superstar will hand over the captain’s armband for good as he makes his final appearance in the Albicelste jersey at the Estadio Monumental in Buenos Aires.

Messi will be joined for his international swansong by 85,000 spectators and several of the teammates with whom he reached the pinnacle of football at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, alongside members of Argentina’s emerging generation.

The friendly marks a symbolic passing of the torch for a player whose international legacy includes a World Cup title, two Copa America crowns and the Finalissima.

Messi also bows out as Argentina’s record appearance-maker and leading scorer, with 125 goals in 207 games, as well as a record 68 assists.

His farewell comes two and a half months after Argentina’s ill-tempered World Cup final defeat to Spain in New Jersey, where Messi exited in tears after making little impression.

“I gave it my all; I have nothing left to give, and besides, there are great young players coming up who deserve their chance,” Messi wrote when announcing his international retirement in August.

Messi remains under contract with Inter Miami until 2028, although following the death of his father, Jorge, two months ago, he revealed he may hang up his boots for good sooner than anticipated.

- Friends reunited -

Members of Argentina’s 2022 World Cup-winning squad -- the players who delivered the country’s third star -- and their families will join Messi for Tuesday’s farewell against Benin, ranked 93rd in the world.

Veterans of that Doha triumph such as Angel Di Marja, who retired from international football in 2024, will be there to witness the passing of the torch to a new generation charged with extending the Albicelste’s golden era.

Several of the newcomers, including Franco Mastantuono and Leonel Flores, were not even born when “La Pulga” (“The Flea”) made his Argentina debut in 2005 for a team whose history had for so long been dominated by Diego Maradona.

“It’s going to be an unforgettable day for everyone. Everyone wants to be at this match, and now it’s just about enjoying it,” Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said.



Argentina’s new generation has already shown what it can do without its captain, although nobody is pretending replacing a man regarded by many as the greatest footballer in history will be straightforward.

“Collectively, we will try to fill the void left by Leo,” said Scaloni, who is negotiating a contract extension after leaving his future unresolved following the World Cup defeat in July.

Scaloni, who mastered the art of building the right supporting cast around Messi, will also say goodbye on Tuesday to 38-year-old vice-captain Nicolas Otamendi.

Like Messi and Otamendi, midfielders Rodrigo De Paul and Giovani Lo Celso were called up solely for the Benin game, raising the possibility that neither will represent Argentina again.

- New generation -

Those certain to be involved, at least from the bench, include other veterans of the 2022 World Cup who will be the standard-bearers for Argentina after Messi: defender Cristian Romero, midfielders Alexis Mac Allister and Enzo Fernandez, and forwards Julian Alvarez and Lautaro Martinez.

Tenacious centre-back Romero is set to inherit the captain’s armband, first worn by Messi at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. Goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez and Lautaro Martinez are next in the captaincy hierarchy. They have already begun to rally around Messi’s heirs, who showed their appetite for success in Argentina’s first game since the World Cup final, against Bolivia in Cordoba on Wednesday.

Argentina swept the Bolivians aside 4-0, with young talents Nico Paz and Jose Manuel Lopez among the scorers.

They followed that victory with a 7-0 rout of Burkina Faso at the Monumental on Saturday, with Mastantuono and Gianluca Prestianni scoring their first international goals.

While Argentina’s future is beginning to take shape, one small but symbolically significant question remains: who inherits Messi’s number 10 shirt? “We won’t give the number 10 to anyone until Leo’s match takes place,” Scaloni said. “After that, we’ll see.”

# Ronaldo can return to Portugal team if he wants: coach Jesus

**Sports Desk**

Portugal superstar Cristiano Ronaldo can return to the squad if he wishes, despite walking out on his team-mates, said national team coach Jorge Jesus on Sunday.

Jesus said Ronaldo can come back into the fold “if he wants to” after the team beat Norway without the veteran attacker to reach the Nations League quarter-finals. The dispute began last week when Jesus left 41-year-old Ronaldo on the bench for Portugal’s first win over Norway. Ronaldo subsequently walked out on the squad on Wednesday after learning he would not start against Denmark. “For me, Cris, in the next call-up, if he’s playing at Al-Nassr, he’ll be a player who can be called up,” Jesus told reporters, referring to Ronaldo’s Saudi club side. “If he wants to, he’ll return to the national team.”

The coach said if Ronaldo wishes to speak to



him before Portugal’s next matches in November, that would happen.

“If he wants to, as we did before this call-up, we talked before the call-up, we can talk before the next call-up,” continued Jesus.

“But Cris is the one who’s going to decide.” Former Real Madrid and Manchester United attacker Ronaldo is Portugal’s all-time leading scorer and most-capped player.

Jesus said he had told Ronaldo he needed him in the squad for his first games at the helm after replacing Roberto Martinez following the 2026 World Cup. “Cristiano should end his time in the national team the way he wants, he’s the one who will decide how he wants it,” said Jesus.

“That’s how we talked, the two of us -- I said, ‘I need you’. In my first call-up, I said, ‘I need you, I need you to be close to me, playing or not playing, I need you’. And now I’m saying the same thing.”

# Community Police Kabaddi Championship begins in Mymensingh



**Sports Desk**

The inaugural Community Police Kabaddi Championship began yesterday (Monday) amid much enthusiasm and festivity

at the Circuit House ground in Mymensingh.

Mymensingh Deputy Commissioner Md Saifur Rahman formally inaugurated the tournament by releasing balloons.

Mymensingh Police Superintendent Mohammad Kamrul Hasan presided over the inaugural ceremony.

District Sports Association member secretary AKM Mahbubur Rahman and District Sports Officer Al-Amin attended the programme as special guests.

Mymensingh District Police organised the tournament in collaboration with the District Sports Association. Teams from all 14 upazilas of Mymensingh are taking part in the competition in both boys’ and girls’ categories. The ground turned festive as players from different upazilas, police officials and local sports enthusiasts gathered for the opening ceremony. The final of the tournament will be held on Wednesday (Oct 7).

**Sports Desk**

The 31st International Under-18 Junior Tennis Tournament-2026 began at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex yesterday with players from 10 countries taking part.

The tournament was inaugurated at 9am through balloon and festoon releases and cake cutting. The guests were also introduced to the participating players.

Rajshahi City Corporation Administrator Mahfuzur Rahman Riton said the tournament would provide young Bangladeshi players an opportunity to display their talent at the international level and further strengthen Rajshahi’s tradition of hosting international sporting events.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Yusuf Ali presided over the inaugural ceremony.

DIG of Rajshahi Range Ashik Sayeed, Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mohammad Faizul Kabir, Deputy Commissioner Kazi Shahidul Islam, Rajshahi Zila Parishad Administrator Advocate Ershad Isha and Rajshahi Development Authority Chairman Abul Kalam Azad Sweet were, among others, present at the event.

Tournament Director Hasinur Rahman Tinku delivered the welcome speech, while Bangladesh Tennis Federation General Secretary Ishtiaque Ahmed Tariq and Rajshahi Tennis Complex Ad-hoc Committee Convener and Additional Divisional Commissioner Habibur Rahman also spoke.

The tournament is being held from October 5 to 10, with more than 100 players from Bangladesh, India, Thailand, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Nepal, Japan, China, South Korea and the United States participating.

Thailand’s Likul Patcharaphul, ranked 1,059 in the ITF World Junior Rankings, is the highest-ranked boy, while India’s Sheikh Shazfa, ranked 2,045, is the highest-ranked girl.

The boys’ and girls’ singles events will have 32-player draws, with eight players qualifying for the main draw and four receiving wild cards in each event. The doubles events will feature 16-team draws.

Five players from Rajshahi are competing in the tournament, with Rakin Rahman and Bokul Ali featuring in the main draw.

Indian ITF White Badge referee Joy Mukherjee is serving as the tournament referee.

Ireland players wear black armbands, refuse handshakes with Israel in 1-1 draw

**Sports Desk**

Ireland players wore black armbands and bowed their heads during Israel’s national anthem to protest Israel’s actions in Gaza before the two teams drew 1-1 in a tense Nations League soccer match on Sunday.

Israeli players also wore black armbands to remember those killed in the Hamas-led attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023. Israel captain Dor Peretz had “7.10” written on his armband.

Ireland goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher, who captained the team in place of Dara O’Shea, avoided shaking hands with Peretz before the match. O’Shea was excused from the squad to be with his wife for the birth of their child. Kelleher followed the example of O’Shea, who had avoided shaking hands with Israel captain Manor Solomon before Ireland’s 3-0 victory in their first meeting in Debrecen, Hungary, last week. Ireland scored all three goals in the first half of that match. Solomon was named among the substitutes for Sunday’s game in Backa Topola, Serbia. Israel forward Sayed Abu Farchi returned to the squad after serving a suspension for his red card following a goal celebration during a 3-1 defeat to Austria on September 25, but did not feature in the match.

Irish forward Finn Azaz, whose mother has Israeli heritage, also remained among the substitutes.

Troy Parrott put Ireland ahead from the penalty spot in the 39th minute after Peretz fouled Jimmy Dunne. Tensions rose on the touchline as players headed into the dressing rooms at half-time. Peretz raised the back of his jersey above his neck before the second half, apparently highlighting the Israeli flag on it. He then equalised from close range just two minutes after the restart.



# Alleged Filling of Century-Old Bohoddar’s Big Pond in Sitakunda

## Construction Reportedly Continues Despite Environmental Department Notice, Locals Express Concern



**Md. Omar Faruk, Special Correspondent**

An allegation has surfaced that a century-old waterbody known as ‘Bohoddar’s Big Pond’ in Latifpur area of Salimpur Union under Sitakunda Upazila of Chattogram is being gradually filled with soil and used for construction of structures. Local residents allege that different parts of the pond, covering approximately 300, have been filled with soil through various means over the past year. They further allege that houses and other structures are being constructed on the filled portions.

During a field visit on Monday (September 28), it was observed that several sections of the large pond beside the Latifpur railway line had been filled with soil. Construction work was also reportedly underway at some locations. According to local residents, after reports on the alleged filling of the pond and construction of structures were published in several national newspapers, officials of the Department of Environment visited the site. They said Regional Director Zakir Hossain and Deputy Director Mohammad Ashraf Uddin inspected the site, found evidence supporting the allegations and subsequently issued a legal notice to the concerned person.

However, locals claim that the alleged filling and construction activities did not stop even after the notice was issued. Rather, they allege that construction of one of the houses has progressed to an almost completed stage despite the notice. They also claimed that another house had previously been construct-

ed after filling part of the pond and was later rented out. Meanwhile, locals said a case had also been filed against a person named Omar Faruk over allegations of enclosing another portion of the pond with a tin fence. Omar Faruk, however, claimed that the case had already been settled. “I am not filling any part of the pond at present. I have rented out the pond-side area to someone for use as a nursery,” he said. Local residents fear that if different individuals continue to occupy and fill various portions of the pond, the existence of the century-old waterbody could eventually be threatened.

A local resident, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, “Around 400 to 500 people use this pond for bathing every day. Worshippers at the nearby mosque also use its water for ablution. Those who protest are

allegedly threatened with various forms of obstruction, which is why many people are reluctant to speak out.” When contacted for his comment regarding the allegation of filling the pond, Maksudur Rahman alias Bojol Sowdagar said, “It is my pond that I am filling. Why should the local people or the Department of Environment be concerned? I went to the Department of Environment. They have my number. If they take any action, they will do so. That is a matter between me and them.” Several attempts were made to contact Mohammad Ashraf Uddin, Regional Deputy Director of the Department of Environment, over the phone, but he did not answer the calls. Attempts were also made several times to contact Mohammad Fakhru Islam, Upazila Nirbahi Officer and Executive Magistrate of Sitakunda, through his official mobile number, but his comment could not be obtained. However, Mujahidur Rahman, Deputy Director of the Chattogram District Office of the Department of Environment, said, “The accused was served a notice by the regional office of the Department of Environment. He did not appear at the hearing. Another notice will be issued and legal action will be taken in accordance with the law.” Local residents have called for immediate and effective measures to protect the century-old waterbody. They fear that continued filling with soil and construction of structures in phases could eventually threaten the existence of this historically important pond.

## A rally and discussion were held in Fakirhat on the occasion of World Teachers’ Day

**S A Kalam Fakirhat Bagerhat**

World Teachers’ Day was celebrated in the Fakirhat Upazila of Bagerhat. On this occasion, a colorful rally and a discussion meeting were organized. Under the auspices of the Upazila Administration, on Monday (October 5) at 11 AM, the colorful rally started from the expanded complex building of the Upazila Parishad and went around various roads. Later, a discussion meeting was held in the Upazila Parishad auditorium, presided over by Upazila Executive Officer Md. Roknuzzaman. The welcome speech was delivered by the Upazila Secondary Education Officer Md. Golam Mostafa. At this time, Upazila Academic Supervisor Asaduzzaman, Upazila Agriculture Officer Sheikh Sakawat Hossain, Upazila Primary Education Officer Shobha Roy, President of Upazila BNP Sheikh Kamrul Islam Gora, Amir of Upazila Jamaat-e-Islami Maulana A B M Taiyebur Rahman, Assistant Professor Md. Mofazzel Haider, Assistant Programmer Md. Alamgir Hossain, along with officials from various government departments, teachers, and members of the media were present.



## BGB Seizes Large Quantity of Tapentadol Tablets in Rajshahi Border Operation

**Md. Sohel Rana, Rajshahi, Representative**

In accordance with the directives of the Director General of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and adhering to a “Zero Tolerance” policy against drugs, members of the Rajshahi Battalion (1 BGB) are conducting special anti-narcotics operations in the border areas. Continuing these efforts, on October 4, 2026, at around 19:45 hours, a vigilant BGB operational team received secret information that a consignment of illegal drugs would enter Bangladesh. Based on this intelligence, a sharp operational team from the Khidirpur BOP under Rajshahi Battalion (1 BGB) laid an ambush at the “10 No. Padmar Char” area under Katakhal Police Station in Rajshahi district to prevent the drug shipment from entering the country. After waiting in ambush for a long time, the operational team observed an individual crossing the international border into Bangladesh territory. When the team immediately chased the individual to apprehend him, the smuggler dropped his bag and fled. However, the operational team was able to identify the fleeing suspect as Md. Rabbil Miah (25), son of Robiul Islam, resident of 10 No. Khidirpur Middle Char, Post: Kajla, Police Station: Paba, District: Rajshahi. Subsequently, upon searching the bag left behind by the suspect, the BGB operational team seized 800 pieces of Indian Tapentadol tablets. Proceedings are underway to file a case against the fleeing suspect and hand over the seized drugs to Katakhal Police Station.



## Member of a fraud ring arrested in Gaibandha

**Rangpur Correspondent**

The Special Response Battalion (SRB)-13 arrested a member of a fraud ring that swindled money by posing as a high-ranking army officer from Dakshin Dhanghara village under Sadar police station of Gaibandha last night. The detainee is Md Afzal Khan alias Momin, 55, son of late Jannat Khan of the same village, an SRB-13 press release said here tonight. The release said that the arrested accused had been committing fraud by using the name, rank, and uniformed photographs of high-ranking Bangladesh Army officers serving in the SRB. Operating from various locations, including Rangpur and Dhaka, the arrested person used SIM cards registered to other people to contact individuals via mobile phone. He lured people with promises of government jobs (including in the Bangladesh Army) and subsequently blackmailed them to extort money. On a tip off, an SRB-13 team from Gaibandha Camp arrested Md Afzal Khan alias Momin from his house in Dakshin Dhanghara village under Gaibandha Sadar police station at 9:10 pm on Sunday.

# Integrated Fish Farming Project Launched in Mirsarai

**M oliullah Nizami,, Chittagong district Correspondent**

An integrated fish farming project has formally started in West Ichakhali Union under Jorarganj Police Station of Mirsarai upazila in Chattogram. Engineer Md. Azmal Haque (Ripon), a young entrepreneur, has launched the project on 12 acres of a waterbody spanning nearly 50 acres. Around 10 maunds of fish of various species have been released into the waterbody as part of the initial phase of the project. According to the entrepreneur, he has invested approximately Tk 1.5 crore in the project, with the aim of developing a sustainable fish farming venture and creating an example for unemployed young people. Speaking to journalists, Azmal Haque said he started the project with the expectation of generating profit while also encouraging other unemployed youths to take up fish farming and become self-reliant. However, he expressed concern over security, alleging that miscreants had previously damaged his fish farm by cutting the embankment at night, causing losses of around Tk 300,000 worth of



fish. “I have invested millions of taka in this project this time. I hope the law enforcement agencies will provide necessary support to ensure the security of the project and prevent any further damage,” he said. The entrepreneur also expressed hope that the project would contribute to the local economy and inspire more young people to become involved in fisheries and entrepreneurship. Add the project inauguration date Clarify the investment amount consistently Use one unit for fish quantity,

# Youth arrested over allegation of raping college student on promise of marriage

**Mohinul Islam Sujon, Crime Reporter**

A youth named Md. Mostakim Billah (22) has been arrested by Special Response Battalion (SRB-13), CPC-2, on allegation of raping a college student in Nilphamari by promising to marry her. The matter was confirmed to journalists in a press release signed by Senior Assistant Director of the Media Department and Additional Superintendent of Police of SRB-13, Biplab Kumar Goswami, on Sunday (October 4) afternoon. The arrested Mostakim Billah is the son of Md. Nuruzzaman of Uttar Parulia village under Hatibandha upazila of Lalmonirhat district. According to the press release, Mostakim Billah had been in a long-term romantic relationship with the victim student. On June 20, he was ???ing around with the victim at Udayan Park in Nilphamari town. At that time, while taking rest in a room, he allegedly raped the victim against her will by promising to marry her. Later, he allegedly raped the victim several times at the same park. Later, when Mostakim refused to marry the victim, attempts were made to settle the matter locally. However, when Mostakim went into hiding, the victim’s family filed a case with Nilphamari Sadar Police Station on August 16. On Saturday (October 3) night, a team of SRB-13 Nilphamari CPC-2 conducted an operation and arrested Mostakim from Tista Toll Plaza in Lalmonirhat. Nilphamari Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Zillur Rahman said that when Mostakim was produced before the court on Sunday afternoon, the learned judge sent him to jail.



## Drug-Free Chhagalnaiya: Police and Public Unite in Massive Rally and Discussion Panel at Banglabazar

**Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter**

Police and local residents have joined forces to protect the youth from the grip of narcotics and eradicate drugs from the area. Under the slogan “Say No to Drugs, Build a Healthy and Beautiful Society,” Chhagalnaiya Police Station and Pathannagar Beat Police jointly organized a massive anti-drug rally and discussion panel at Banglabazar. Yesterday (October 4) at 7:00 PM, a large rally was brought out from the main road of Banglabazar. After parading through key streets of the market, the procession converged on the main road for a brief discussion session. Around 100 to 120 people including local traders, leaders and activists of various political parties, and general pedestrians—spontaneously participated in the program. Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Chhagalnaiya Police Station, Mohammad Abu Taher, addressed the gathering as the chief speaker. Issuing a stern warning, he declared, “There will be zero compromise on drugs. To completely wipe out narcotics from society, joint police-public drives will be conducted against every drug spot and dealer.” Political and business leaders present at the rally voiced full solidarity with the OC’s tough stance. Speakers called for building strong social resistance and a mass movement against drug abuse. The assembly collectively pledged to extend full cooperation to the police in transforming Chhagalnaiya into a zero-tolerance, drug-free zone. Locals believe this joint initiative and resolute stand by the police and the community will play a vital role in preventing the spread of drugs in the region.

## Two tourists killed in Thanchi road accident

**Bandarban Correspondent**

Two tourists were killed and five others injured when a tourist vehicle, locally known as a “Chander Gari,” plunged into a deep roadside gorge in Thanchi upazila here this afternoon. “The accident occurred around 3:45 pm yesterday on the Dimpahar-Tendumukh road, about 600 metres from the Tendumukh Naval Checkpost, as the vehicle was travelling from Dimpahar towards Tendumukh Naval Ghat,” said a BCB press release signed by Bollipara Battalion (38 BGB) Commander Lt Col Md Yasir Arafat Hossain this evening. He said the vehicle lost control after its steering malfunctioned and fell into a deep gorge beside the road. On receiving information about the accident, members of the Tendumukh BGB Camp rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation. BGB personnel recovered two bodies from the accident site and rescued five injured tourists. The injured were subsequently sent to Alikadam Upazila Health Complex for treatment.

## Kaikandiar Par Football Tournament Final Held in Gowainghat

**Naeem Ahmed, Jaintapur-Gowainghat Sylhet.**

The final match of the Kaikandiar Par Premier League 2026 was held with a festive atmosphere in East Jaflong of Gowainghat Upazila, Sylhet. The grand final was played on Monday (October 5) afternoon at the Kaikandiar Par Government Primary School ground, where Muktijoddha Football XI faced Basundhara Football XI. As neither team could secure a victory within the stipulated time, the match went into a penalty shootout. Muktijoddha Football XI defeated Basundhara Football XI 3–2 on penalties to become the champions. The final match and prize-giving ceremony was held under the chairmanship of Abdullah Al Mamun. Amzad Box, Vice President of Gowainghat Upazila BNP and President of East Jaflong Union BNP, was present as the chief guest. Speaking at the prize-giving ceremony after the match, Amzad Box said there is no alternative to sports for keeping young people away from drugs, crime and social degradation. He praised the enthusiasm created among local youths through the tournament and congratulated the players of both the champion and runners-up teams. He also called for the continuation of such sporting events in the future.

## Teacher Joyashree Muhuri Passes Away in Banshkhal

**Jahangir Alam, Staff Reporter**

Joyashree Muhuri (43), an assistant teacher at Dakshin Jaldi Government Primary School in Banshkhal upazila of Chattogram, passed away on Monday morning after a long battle with cancer. She breathed her last around 10:00 AM at her residence while undergoing treatment. She leaves behind her husband, two daughters, a son, and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death. Joyashree was a resident of Dakshin Jaldi village under Banshkhal Municipality and the wife of Shankor Prasad Das, headmaster of Uttar



Jaldi Government Primary School. A deep pall of gloom descended on the local educational community following the premature demise of the dedicated and beloved teacher. The Banshkhal Upazila Primary Teachers’ Association and the Government Primary School Office Assistants’ Welfare Association expressed deep grief and conveyed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members.

# Retailers selling cylinders for Tk 2,000–2,200 LPG gas crisis in Amtali

## Gas cylinders sold at inflated prices



**Amtali (Barguna) Correspondent**

Allegations have surfaced that LPG gas cylinders are being sold at exorbitant prices in Amtali by exploiting a perceived shortage. Dealers sell the cylinders to retailers for Tk 1,800, while retailers resell them for between Tk 2,000 and Tk 2,200. Affected consumers complain that there is no oversight by the Upazila administration regarding this matter and are demanding immediate action against the syndicate involved. It is reported that the government fixed the price of LPG gas cylinders last September, setting the retail price for a 12kg cylinder at Tk 1,598. However, a syndicate in Amtali is selling these cylinders for Tk 2,000 to Tk 2,200 by citing a shortage, causing significant hardship for buyers. Consumers allege that the syndicate sells at arbitrary, inflated prices because the Upazila administration fails to take effective action against them; they are demanding immediate measures to curb this practice.

Humayun Kabir, a buyer, said, “Three days ago, I purchased a 12kg gas cylinder from Talukdar Bazar for Tk 2,100. I am having to pay Tk 500 more per cylinder than the government-fixed price.” Retailer Aman Ullah stated, “Dealers Ibrahim and Bachchu sell gas cylinders via van. I purchase Omera, iGas, BM, Sena, and Petromax cylinders for Tk 1,800 each and resell them with a Tk 50 markup. I am selling at a higher price because I am buying at a higher price.” Ibrahim, a dealer for Petromax Gas, stated that he is

selling 12kg cylinders for 1,800 Taka each. Md. Atiqur Rahman Bachchu, a dealer for Omera Gas, reported a severe gas shortage, noting that gas cylinders from only six companies are currently available in the market; these companies have raised the price by 130 Taka per cylinder. Md. Mohiuddin, a dealer for Bashundhara Gas, said that the company has not supplied gas cylinders for the past two months, so sales have been halted. Md. Rezaul, a dealer for Sena Gas, mentioned a significant shortage of LPG cylinders, noting that he hired a truck for 19,000 Taka to transport 200 cylinders from Mongla and must sell the gas by factoring in both the company’s price and the transport costs. Amtali Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Hasan Mohammad Hafizur Rahman stated that selling gas cylinders at prices higher than those fixed by the government is not permitted, and strict action will be taken against anyone selling at inflated prices.