



**P5** Forest staffers helpless against offenders



**P6** The ABC generation reunites on Nov 12



**P11** Domingo to return for India series



**B1** Wheat flour prices keep rising

## Inflation cooling as food prices drop

Favourable exchange rate holds the key to reining it in

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

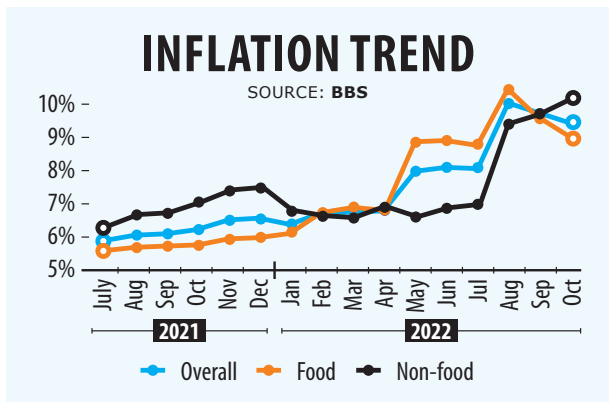
Inflation bucked the rising trend for the second consecutive month in October, helped by the cooling off of grocery prices.

Last month, inflation stood at 8.91 percent, down 19 basis points from September, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

October's figure means the average inflation so far this fiscal year is 8.75 percent -- a long way off the target of 5.6 percent set in the budget for this fiscal year.

However, the elevated consumer price level is a headache not just for Bangladesh.

In October, European inflation accelerated to a new record high of 10.7 percent as energy and food prices in the region continue to skyrocket. Inflation in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, shot up to 11.6 percent. In Italy, it rose to 12.8 percent, while France's rate climbed to 7.1 percent.



Although the US, the UK and India are yet to release their figures for October, analysts expect inflation to accelerate.

In fact, inflation may be a key factor in deciding the results of yesterday's US midterm elections to determine control of Congress, according to the latest polling data.

To control inflation, which has sparked off a cost of living crisis everywhere, central banks globally, including the Reserve Bank of India closer to home, are raising interest rates aggressively.

But this ammunition is not at the disposal of the Bangladesh Bank thanks to the interest rate cap to spur economic growth.

Where interest rates are not being hiked, inflation is racing ahead.

Turkish consumer price inflation accelerated for the 17th straight month in October, reaching a 24-year-high of 85.5 percent after the central bank cut its benchmark interest rate to fuel economic growth.

Turkey's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a self-declared "enemy of interest", has ordered the central bank to lower borrowing costs to single digits ahead of an election next year, unleashing the country's worst inflation in a quarter of a century.

"Inflation is controlled with monetary policy and our monetary policy is unable to do that -- the Bangladesh Bank cannot take any anti-inflationary measures," said Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh.

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Nuruddin Rana, left, the father of slain Buet student Fardin Noor Parash, breaks down after his son's body was brought to the central mosque of the university for a namaz-e-janaza yesterday afternoon. The body of 23-year-old Fardin was found floating in the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj's Siddhirganj on Monday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Shocking end of a dreamer's story



STAR REPORT

Buet student Fardin Noor Parash was supposed to fly to Spain to participate in the World Debate Championship next month and had just gotten his passport to go there.

But locals in Siddhirganj, Narayanganj, found his body floating in the Shitalakkhya on Monday evening, two days after he went missing.

The 23-year-old student of civil engineering left

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Immaterial who wins as long as polls free and fair

US ambassador tells editors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The USA does not care who wins the next parliamentary election in Bangladesh as long as it is a free and fair one, US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas said at a views exchange meeting with the Editors' Council yesterday.

Haas also said the US does not favour any political party over another, according to a statement the council issued after the meeting.

The ambassador stated that all entities in Bangladesh must play a proper role to ensure free and fair elections and emphasised the importance of a free press in ensuring such.

He said free and fair elections begin far earlier than the actual day of the polls in the form of

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COMMUNAL QUESTION IN HSC TEST

## A gross violation of govt guideline

Jashore board officials say as teachers behind it identified

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Teachers who prepared and scrutinised the HSC Bangla first paper question that hurt the religious sentiments of the Hindus have violated government guidelines for making question papers, officials have said.

Education board officials said they identified five teachers involved and launched a probe yesterday.

According to Tapan Kumar Sarker, chairman of Dhaka education board, Assistant Professor Prashanta Kumar Pal of Dr Saiful Islam Degree College made the question that was moderated by Associate Professor Syed Tajuddin Shaon of Narail Government Victoria College; Associate Professor Shafiqur Rahman of Satkhira Government Mahila College; Assistant Professor Shyamal Kumar Ghosh of Mirzapur United College in Narail; and Assistant Professor Rezaul Karim of Bheramara Adarsha College in Kushtia.

Jashore board officials told The Daily Star that all five teachers were

under Jashore board and were master trainers for question-paper makers and moderators.

"Normally a question setter gets three days' training but they have received 14 days of training as they are master trainers," said Jashore Education Board Chairman Prof Ahsan Habib.

He said the board yesterday formed a three-member probe committee, led by Jashore board Inspector of College KM Rabbani, to investigate the allegations of "instigating communalism".

It was asked to submit the probe report within three to seven days.

The number 11 question in the HSC Bangla first paper test under Dhaka board held on Sunday sparked uproar nationwide.

**GUIDELINE FLOUTED**  
The Daily Star collected an education ministry directive of 2009 that barred question makers and moderators from making any question that

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## Why such a long delay?

HC asks ACC about BASIC Bank scam probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday blasted the Anti-Corruption Commission for the long delay in completing investigations in the BASIC Bank loan scam cases.

It also wanted to know why the bank's former chairman Sheikh Abdul Hye Bacchu was not implicated in any of the cases.

"Several years have passed but the Anti-Corruption Commission is yet to submit charge sheets [to the lower court] in any of the cases filed over BASIC Bank loan scams. What is the reason for such a long delay in completing probes? Will the investigations continue for an indefinite period?"

"Those responsible for embezzling and looting huge amount of public money must be brought to book and should be mete out punishment like shooting down through summary trials," the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat Lizu said.

The court was hearing three bail petitions filed by Mohammad Ali, former general manager of BASIC Bank's Shantinagar branch, in three corruption cases filed by the ACC.

The HC bench ordered the graft watchdog to submit to it by November 21 a report on the latest positions of the cases mentioning the reasons for not implicating Bacchu in any case.

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## NZ, Pakistan meet in semis

REUTERS, Sydney

New Zealand, cricket's quiet achievers, and Pakistan, the game's most unpredictable side, clash in the opening Twenty20 World Cup semifinal on Wednesday after making their way to the knockout rounds by starkly contrasting paths.

The Black Caps hammered hosts and champions Australia in their tournament opener, had a match washed out and lost a high-quality contest to England before reaching a fifth successive white-ball World Cup semifinal as group winners.

Pakistan's journey started with a remarkable loss to India in front of 92,000 fans at Melbourne Cricket Ground which was followed by an equally dramatic upset at the hands of Zimbabwe and a rain-disrupted win over South Africa.

They scraped into the last four by beating Bangladesh

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Construction workers taking apart structures illegally built on the Kalunagar canal in the capital's Kamrangirchar yesterday. The owners of the buildings employed them to carry out the work after being asked by Dhaka South City Corporation to knock those down.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## 182 and counting

Dengue death toll hits single-year high

HELEML ALAM

At least five dengue patients died while 820 others were admitted to different hospitals across the country in 24 hours until yesterday morning.

With the five new deaths, the total number of dengue deaths this year rose to 182, which is the highest in a year. A total of 101,354 dengue cases, the annual highest, were recorded in 2019 when the death toll was 179.

In 2000, during dengue's first official outbreak, 93 dengue patients died while 5,551 others were infected, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Multiple exposures to dengue, late admission in hospitals and late diagnosis of the disease are the main reasons for increasing dengue deaths, said experts.

A recent analysis of the patient data by the DGHS has revealed that the dengue infection rate is the highest among people aged over 20 while the death rate is high among patients aged between 40 and 80 years.

It also showed that most dengue patients who died at hospitals breathed their last within three days of being admitted to hospitals.

There are four distinct serotypes of the dengue virus: DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3 and DENV-4.

For the first time, researchers this year detected the presence of DENV-4 which is an indication that DENV-1, DENV-3 and DENV-4 are now active in Bangladesh, said

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