



"I don't think we've seen the final act."

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wagner Group's revolt against Russian authorities

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Graft in public hospitals costs Tk 459cr in 5yrs

Finds a CAG audit

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

The government has suffered losses amounting to Tk 459 crore thanks to irregularities at different public healthcare institutions, found four different compliance audit reports.

The losses were largely caused by irregularities in budget spending at the Central Medicine Store Depot (CMSD), according to the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh prepared for fiscals 2014-15 to 2018-19. The CAG report was placed at the parliament on Sunday.

The disputed amount during the period was 11.6 percent of the total allocation of Tk 3,952 crore: Tk 458.8 crore.

"During each fiscal year, such anomalies by the CMSD were consistently discovered during the audit," the CAG report said, while calling for ensuring proper utilisation of public funds when allocating CMSD's budget.

For instance, in fiscal 2016-17, the government incurred a loss of Tk 15.08 crore due to the CMSD supplying medical equipment to four medical colleges and hospitals without following proper protocols.

In fact, these supplies remained unused and were rendered useless, leading to significant financial loss, according to the report.

Among the institutions audited, Chattogram Medical College and Hospital, Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, and the National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease and Hospital responded by stating that they were in contact with the CMSD and the suppliers. They expressed their expectation that the machinery in question would be installed soon.

Meanwhile, Khulna Medical College Hospital, Suhrawardy Medical

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A CT scanner at DMCH broke down and it was repaired by a third party for Tk 1.16 crore even though the machine was under warranty.



Workers loading a truck with sacks of paddy at BOC Ghat in Brahmanbaria's Ashuganj, one of the largest paddy trading hub of the country. Paddy grown in different districts are brought to the bank of the Meghna by more than 100 boats every day and sent to rice mills. Currently, the bulk of the supply is of BR-29 variety, which is being sold for Tk 1,200 per maund. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY

Labour leader beaten to death in Gazipur

Thugs attacked him right after he tried to get workers of a factory their arrears

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A labour leader, who had been negotiating to get workers of a factory their arrears, was beaten to death right after he left a meeting at the factory in Gazipur on Sunday night.

Goons waylaid Shahidul Islam Shahid, 50, the president of the Gazipur unit of Bangladesh Garments and Industrial Workers Federation (BGIWIF), outside Prince Jacquard Sweater Ltd in Tongi Satish area.

They beat up Shahid and two other labour leaders. Shahid was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead around 11:30pm.

The factory workers, who had not been paid since April, were demanding their arrears and Eid bonuses.

The factory management had told workers that their payments would be cleared by Sunday. The workers waited at the factory gate since the morning, but the officials did not show up.

The workers started protesting around 6:30pm and called in Shahid, a labour leader for 15 years, to talk to the plant authorities.



Shahidul Islam

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4 out of 5 factories yet to pay workers their salaries

One in four did not give Eid bonuses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 2,501 garment, textile, and jute product factories out of 3,164 across the country have not paid their workers 15 days' wages for the month of June even though the government had asked them to do so before Eid.

Only 663 factories paid the wages as of 7:30pm yesterday, according to data from the Industrial Police.

However, 2,436 factories did pay the workers their Eid bonuses, the Industrial Police data shows. This means 728 factories are yet to pay their workers Eid bonuses.

Of the factories that are yet to pay half month's salaries, 55 percent are members of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), 20 percent are of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), and 10 percent are

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JOURNEY HOME

Traffic growing heavier, no major gridlock yet

STAR REPORT

With Eid two days away, people have started leaving the capital for their village homes to celebrate the festival with near and dear ones.

The highways witnessed heavy traffic but no major gridlocks were reported till yesterday evening.

The officials concerned, however, said there could be congestions today.

Almost all trains departed the capital on time yesterday. Launch operators have doubled the number of trips from Sadarghat terminal.

The major ferry routes also saw a rush of home-going people. In Sirajganj, movement of vehicles heading for northern districts was almost normal on Bangabandhu Bridge west zone highway.

Vehicles were moving slowly for around four hours from 6:00am due to heavy traffic but traffic became normal with the day progressing, said Rawshan Eazdani, officer-in-charge of Bangabandhu Bridge West Zone Police Station.

Over 650 law enforcers have been deployed on the highway to ensure hassle-free journey. Police remain alert so that no three-wheelers run on the highway, he added.

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POLLS-TIME GOVT

BNP to come up with outline after discussion

Fakhrul says they'll sit with all stakeholders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said the party will come up with an outline for an election-time neutral government after consultation with all stakeholders.

"We are discussing the neutral caretaker government system," he told journalists at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office yesterday.

Fakhrul, however, did not clarify when the outline will be unveiled.

The caretaker government system was annulled following a court verdict in 2011. The court declared illegal a constitutional provision that mandates an elected government to transfer

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Rejoinder, our reply

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has sent a rejoinder to our report titled "Lopsided deal to cost Biman over Tk 1,000 cr", published on June 19, 2023. Because we are unable to accommodate the entirety of the three-page rejoinder, The Daily Star is publishing a concise version of it.

Biman alleges that the report by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh (CAG) that this newspaper article is based on, are primary observations which can be discounted depending on Biman's response. The CAG office has asked Biman to form a technical team and respond which Biman is doing, said the rejoinder. The organisation, however, declines to share their response with the public because the contract between Biman and Sabre Gbl Inc is protected by a non-disclosure agreement.

Biman said that the shortlisting of the bidders was inked by a 13-member team, where the director-general of the Central

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Home Rush ... People throng the Sadarghat terminal to board launches to go to southern districts to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha with their loved ones. A good number of holidaymakers left the capital yesterday as it was the last working day before Eid holidays begin today. The photo was taken around 5:30pm yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

748MW more to come from Adani plant

2nd unit in Jharkhand goes into operation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh can import 748MW more electricity from the Adani Power Plant in India's Jharkhand as its second unit has started commercial operation.

The development was confirmed by officials of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) and Adani sources.

Adani Power yesterday issued a statement to the Mumbai stock exchange, saying that they have started commercial operation at the second unit at 12:00am (Bangladesh time) yesterday following successful completion of reliability tests.

The plant is located about 100km from the Bangladesh border.

An official of Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, wishing anonymity, told The Daily Star that Adani Power has completed the uninterrupted power supply test for 14 days and the 72 hours' reliability test on Sunday.

The reliability test was conducted in presence of a PDB technical committee.

Power Secretary Habibur Rahman told this paper that it would take one week more to get 1,496MW from the plant as the transmission line on the Bangladesh side will be ready by then.

Adani Power (Jharkhand) Ltd has two units, each with a capacity of 748MW. On April 7, the first unit started commercial operation.

PDB is obliged to take 34 percent of the power generated by the plant every year over the 25-year contracted period.

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