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**Liverpool, not Barca, started playing high-pressing**



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**Deforestation in Amazon fell 66pc in July**



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**Mango exports increase to 2,700 tonnes**



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**Erosion hits Marine Drive**

## POWER SECTOR SUBSIDY Low revenue collection limits disbursement

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

Though the government has allocated a large amount of subsidy to the power sector, it is unable to disburse the amount as per demand due to narrow fiscal space.

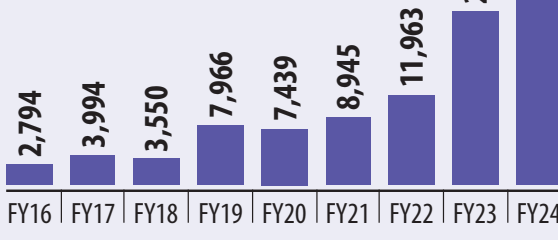
Since May, the power division has demanded Tk 20,900 crore from its subsidy allocation to settle dues for the period of July-November 2022.

The finance division has been able to release less than one-fifth of the sum: in June, Tk 2,800 crore was made available and in July, only Tk 1,200 crore, according to officials informed with the proceedings.

The finance ministry officials said that they are unable to pay the amount sought by the power division due to low revenue collection in July. Revenue collection is typically slow in the first quarter of a fiscal year.

“So it is tough to disburse huge amounts of money to one ministry. We need to think about all the ministries – they all have demand. Disbursement will increase when the collection picks up later in the fiscal year,” said one of the finance ministry officials on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly on the issue.

### POWER SECTOR'S SUBSIDY ALLOCATION OVER THE YEARS (in Tk cr)



Earlier, the power division's subsidy demand used to be Tk 700-800 crore a month. Since last fiscal year, it is in the neighbourhood of Tk 4,000 crore thanks to capacity charges and the Ukraine war-induced fuel price shock, finance ministry officials said.

“This is a burden for the government,” said one of the finance ministry officials.

Were the revenue collection more buoyant, the finance ministry would have been able to make the funds available.

Last fiscal year, the National Board of Revenue collected Tk 325,272 crore, falling short of the target by Tk 44,728 crore. In the first nine months of the fiscal year, non-NBR tax collection was Tk 6,014 crore, which is just one-third of the year's target.

In the absence of expected revenue collection, the government makes do with its fund requirements by borrowing from the banking system and issuing national savings certificates.

It cannot borrow from commercial banks as those are facing a liquidity crunch of their own.

And given the elevated inflation level, the government has changed tack this fiscal year and is not borrowing from the central bank. As of July 18, the government did not borrow from the central bank but returned Tk 7,000 crore, shows data from the Bangladesh Bank.

This raises the question of how the subsidy demand for December last year would be met, which is more than Tk 4,000 crore.

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Relatives try to comfort a woman as she leans over the body of her eight-year-old grandson Ayat at the Mugda Medical College Hospital yesterday. Ayat died of dengue and his mother, also infected with the disease, is in the ICU of the hospital. His father recovered from dengue only a few days ago. The family lives in Khilgaon Taltala area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

### SPL AL MEET TOMORROW

## Focus on unity, resolving feuds ahead of polls

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, at the the party's special extended meeting tomorrow, is likely to instruct her party leaders to make full preparations for the polls, leaving behind internal feuds.

She will also ask them to strengthen their presence on the streets to thwart the BNP's movement, said party insiders.

She will deliver a clear message to her party colleagues that the AL will not bow down to any pressure under any circumstances and will not move away from the path of election.

Sources say the ruling party chief will also assure them that the next general election will be held in time and in accordance with the constitutional provisions.

Around 5,000 party leaders and elected public representatives from the AL are expected to take part in the meeting at the Gono Bhaban.

Before every national election, the AL organises such meetings to give guidelines to the party leaders. The

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### DENGUE OUTBREAK

## Shishu Hospital having to turn away patients

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Three-year-old Omar Faruk was having seizures when his father Enamul Haque brought him to Bangladesh Shishu Hospital around 2:30pm yesterday.

But after one and a half hours, the authorities told the desperate father to immediately take the baby somewhere else because there was no room at the hospital.

“I don't know what I will do now,” Enamul told The Daily Star on the hospital premises.

The hospital has been overwhelmed for days by the influx of severely ill children with dengue, and doctors have been forced to turn away patients who require immediate attention.

Another father named Salaudhin arrived at the facility in the afternoon with his 11-year-old Nusrat Jahan, who had problems in her urinary tract.

After he was turned away by the hospital staff, Salaudhin, a garment factory worker from Tongi, said he was also turned away from Shaheed

Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital and the National Institute of Kidney Diseases and Urology earlier in the day.

Salaudhin added that he could not afford to take his daughter to any private hospital.

Different other hospitals in the capital have been at capacity due to the deluge of dengue patients for weeks.

A paediatrician at the Shishu hospital said, “We are handling too many dengue patients. We have over 100 dengue patients now, and this leaves less room for other patients.”

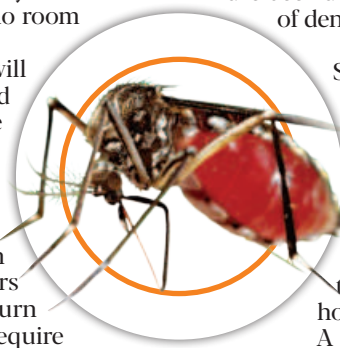
The doctor added that over 20 patients were turned away in just eight hours yesterday.

A government employee, requesting anonymity, said five days ago, he failed to get his seriously ill son admitted to the Shishu Hospital.

Shishu Hospital Director Prof Mohammad Jahangir Alam says there are 681 beds at the hospital. “We are trying our best to accommodate the patients.”

Jahangir acknowledged that in some

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### PRE-POLLS VIOLENCE

## Don't use excessive force

Urge UN, Amnesty

STAR REPORT

The United Nations and Amnesty International yesterday called on Bangladeshi authorities to refrain from excessive use of force amid recurring violence and mass arrests ahead of general elections.

The UN human rights office lamented the violence that has erupted at opposition rallies in recent months, with police using rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons.

“Police, alongside men in plain clothing, have been seen using hammers, sticks, bats and iron rods, among other objects, to beat protesters,” spokesman Jeremy Laurence told reporters in Geneva.

“Many opposition supporters, as well as some

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## AL can't stop BNP's movement even with force

Fakhrul tells protest rally

MD ABBAS

The ruling Awami League uses force to remain in power yet it cannot suppress the BNP's one-point movement by filing cases and carrying out attacks against its activists, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir told a rally yesterday afternoon.

“The Awami League has to resign. The movement cannot be suppressed by sentencing or filing cases against BNP activists. This government will be brought down through a strong movement,” he said while addressing the rally in front of the party's Nayapaltan headquarters in the capital.

The rally was organised in protest against the conviction and sentencing of BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his wife Zubaida Rahman.

Earlier on August 2, Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court sentenced Tarique to nine years and his wife Zubaida Rahman to three years in prison in a graft case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2007.

Terming the verdict “prescribed,” the BNP announced the nationwide protest

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

What looks like an image from a war-torn nation is actually the remains of a Dhaka North City Corporation market in Gabtoli area of the capital. The Roads and Highways Department had partially demolished the structures over a month ago but did not clear the debris. The photo was taken last week.

## Cyberattack alert for August 15

Govt asks banks, financial institutions to take precautionary measures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government's Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT) yesterday issued an alert to Bangladeshi banks, financial institutions and other organisations over possible cyber-attacks on August 15.

The alert was issued in response to a declaration made by some religious and ideologically motivated underground hacker groups on July 31 that they would launch a storm of cyber attacks against Bangladesh cyberspace on that day.

The alert is aimed at warning critical information infrastructures (CII), banks and financial institutions, health care and all government and private organisations of the possible cyber-attacks that may disrupt IT operations and businesses.

All organisations have been advised to be on alert for small to medium-scale cyber-attacks originating from the “hacktivist” groups, and to take the precautions to protect their infrastructures, according to a statement by CIRT.

CIRT reviews and responds to computer security incidents and activities.

According to the statement, a hacker group on August 1 claimed to have carried out a cyber-attack on a payment gateway in Bangladesh and law enforcement and banking organisations. On July 3, a hacker group claimed a DDoS attack on Bangladeshi transportation service for one hour, making the website unavailable for the period.

On June 27, a hacker group defaced the website of a Bangladeshi government college and shared a web archive supporting their claims. On

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