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## Waterlogging in Ctg worsening by the day

**Rough seas at outer anchorage hamper offloading of goods; trade in Khatunganj affected**

SIFAYET ULLAH, DWAIPAYAN BARUA, and MOHAMMAD SUMAN

Unloading of goods from larger vessels at the outer anchorage of Chattogram Port remains suspended due to rough seas since Friday, while trade at the Khatunganj Chaktai wholesale hub has dropped significantly.

Most of the low-lying areas in the city and several upazilas of Chattogram have gone underwater due to heavy rain over the last three days.

Unloading of goods from bulk carriers at the jetties and delivery of goods have slowed down considerably due to the persistent rain.

This has resulted in at least 25 cargo vessels, carrying over 800,000 tonnes of goods, being stranded at the outer anchorage.

Wheat, raw sugar, soybean oil, SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



A mother holds on to her child tight as a rickshaw-puller tries to navigate through almost waist-deep water on a street in Shantibagh Abashik in Agrabad area of Chattogram city yesterday. Parts of the city have been under water for three straight days.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## GENERAL ELECTION Rally behind whoever the party picks

Hasina tells AL leaders at special extended meeting

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday made the leaders from all tiers of her party vow that they would forget the divisions and campaign for those who get the party's nomination in the coming national election.

"Whoever we nominate -- no matter how good or bad, blind or lame -- you have to promise that you will work for them," Hasina told the party's special extended meeting at the Gono Bhaban.

At that, the nearly 5,000 AL leaders in attendance raised their hand to commit.

"When we give nominations, we follow certain rules. I do not sit idle at home. I work to build the country all day. I also do the work of the party. We conduct surveys every six months on who is in what state, the status of our lawmakers or the status of our elected representatives ... We take these into account when we announce nominations.



**"After the nominations are announced, some people think to themselves, 'Since the party has not nominated me, I should work against the person who got the nomination. The party will win the rest of the [parliament] seats...' In doing this, you will make all [of the party] lose."**

Sheikh Hasina

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The prime minister then slammed those who openly criticise lawmakers or local leaders from their own party, multiple AL leaders who attended the meeting told this correspondent.

"By trying to defame others, you actually defame your party, and the boat [AL electoral symbol] ends up getting fewer votes."

Addressing the meeting that went on from 10:30am to 6:00pm, she spoke of her plans to sit with the district-level leaders in phases to hear about local politics.

The Gono Bhaban premises were abuzz as the meeting resembled a reunion of the leaders.

They exchanged greetings, chatted among themselves and took selfies in a festive mood. The leaders were excited as they got the chance to speak in front of the AL president.

When the local leaders spoke, Kanai Lal Biswas, acting general secretary of Pirojpur district AL, expressed his desire to be the fully fledged general secretary.

Hasina replied that everyone who were in "acting" positions should be considered fully entitled to the posts.

At least 43 AL different district-, upazila-, and thana-level leaders spoke at the event, and many of them talked about their alienation from lawmakers.

Some of them urged the top leadership to nominate those who are popular in their constituency.

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## HC orders probe into S Alam's 'properties abroad'

**Move comes following report published in The Daily Star under the headline 'S Alam's Aladdin's Lamp'**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities to investigate the allegations against the S Alam Group owner of owning businesses abroad without Bangladesh Bank's permission.

There are allegations that Mohammed Saiful Alam, owner of S Alam Group, has many properties abroad, including a business empire worth almost \$1 billion in Singapore.

The court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) and Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police to launch the investigation and submit their reports to the HC in two months, Deputy Attorney General Saifuddin Khaled told The Daily Star.

The suo moto (voluntary) rule comes after The Daily Star on August 4 published a report titled "S Alam's Aladdin's Lamp".

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## Essential Drugs rationing saline to govt hospitals

Demand for IV drips surges 10 times the usual due to dengue outbreak

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Essential Drugs, the state-owned pharmaceutical company, is rationing injectable saline to public hospitals to manage the high demand arising from the unyielding surge in dengue patients.

As per the rules, Essential Drugs is the only supplier of injectable saline to about 1,100 public hospitals.

"The demand is 10 times more than usual, so it has become tough to meet it," Ehsanul Kabir, managing director of Essential Drugs, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The surge in demand has compelled the company to ration the supply of injectable saline, said Md Zakir Hossain, deputy general manager of sales and marketing at Essential Drugs.

Essential Drugs is yet to start producing saline in its plant in Gopalganj, which is expected to begin in January next year.

Since 2020, it has been supplying 11 types of saline by procuring through tender from Beximco, Orion Infusion, Libra Infusions, Opsonin, Popular and The ACME Laboratories.

To meet the rising demand, the six companies have been asked to double their daily production in a meeting held at the Directorate General of Drug Administration

(DGDA) in Dhaka on July 27.

"Increasing the production is not possible overnight, but the companies have agreed to double or triple their production immediately. We hope the demand can be met with this," said Md Salahuddin, deputy director at the DGDA.

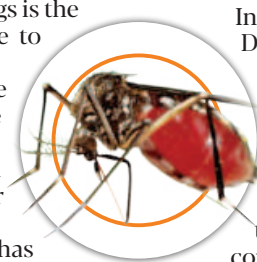
In fiscal 2022-23 fiscal, Essential Drugs supplied around 60 lakh bags of saline -- around five lakhs per month on average -- to hospitals all over the country.

Until the six companies manage to ramp up production, Essential Drugs is giving priority to the hospitals in Dhaka, where the concentration of dengue patients is the highest, said Hossain, who could not immediately share the number of saline bags the company has been supplying in a day in recent weeks.

The hospital authorities in Dhaka yesterday corroborated Hossain's claim: they were able to ensure injectable saline for all patients as per the demand.

"We need 500-700 bags of injectable saline daily and Essential Drugs has so far been able to provide us that quantity," said Khalilur Rahman, director of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

The hospital has been maintaining a week's SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



## No respite from high inflation

Inflation drops 10 basis points in July to 9.69pc

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Inflation slowed down slightly in July but not enough to bring any relief to the urban poor and the lower middle-class in Dhaka and Chattogram, who have been battling a cost of living crisis for a good year now.

In July, inflation stood at 9.69 percent, down 10 basis points from the previous month, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

"This is statistical randomness -- July's inflation number does not allow you to definitively say whether it has increased or decreased," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

Last month, food inflation edged up 3 basis points to 9.76 percent, while non-food inflation shed 13 basis points to stand at 9.47 percent.

There has been an infinitesimal drop in both rural and urban inflation in July.

Last month, rural inflation stood at 9.75 percent, down from June's 9.82 percent.

Urban inflation dropped from 9.45 percent to 9.43 percent in July, with food inflation accelerating 37 basis points to 9.63 percent.

This is particularly crushing for the low-skilled workers in urban areas,

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Dengue patients on the floor in front of doctors' chambers at Mugda Medical College Hospital yesterday. A part of the floor gets wet when it rains but patients ignore that for medical treatment at the hospital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## FIGHTING GRAFT US keen on sharing info, collaboration Says ACC secy after meeting US delegation

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US State Department's Coordinator on Global Anti-Corruption Richard Nephew in a meeting with the Anti-Corruption Commission discussed potential cooperation and information exchange on preventing graft and money laundering.

ACC Secretary Md Mahub Hossain told journalists after the meeting between a three-member US delegation led by Nephew and ACC officials at the latter's office in the city yesterday.

"Corruption is not only an issue in Bangladesh but a global problem. Richard Nephew's visit is aimed at understanding how the SEE PAGE 2 COL 1