



## S ALAM'S WEALTH ABROAD SC refuses to issue injunction on media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday refused to issue any injunction on news media and social media to restrain them from publishing reports about the now-stalled investigation into S Alam's wealth abroad.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, however, kept in record the gag petition filed on Tuesday by S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam and his wife Farzana Parveen.

The petition sought a blanket injunction against "any and all discourses" about the High Court-ordered investigation into Alam's offshore businesses, as found in an investigation by The Daily Star.

"If the press finds any information on corruption, it is only natural that they would report on it. Is it possible to restrict them from that?" asked the judge, adding that investigative reports have always happened like this.

Everyone should follow ethical guidelines, he said, adding that he did not see the materials required for an injunction in the petition.

The chamber judge said none of the media against whom the petitioners are seeking injunction is a party to

**"If the press finds any information on corruption, it is only natural that they would report on it. Is it possible to restrict them from that?"**

Justice M Enayetur Rahim



A train reaches Akhaura's Shibnagar border area from Gangasagar Railway Station in Brahmanbaria during a trial run yesterday. The new Akhaura-Agartala dual-gauge rail line is ready to be inaugurated jointly by Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi. Traders hope that trains between the two countries will help boost business.

PHOTO: MASHUK HRIDOY

## No scope for scrapping DSA cases Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq told parliament yesterday that there is no scope for quashing the cases filed under the Digital Security Act.

He said this while replying to a query from Gonoforum lawmaker Mukabbir Khan during the question-answer session with Deputy Speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku in the chair.

The Cyber Security Bill was passed in parliament on Wednesday, which is supposed to replace the controversial DSA.

The proposed law will come into effect after a gazette notification and the president signing it into law.

According to the Cyber Security Bill, trials of the cases already lodged under the DSA will continue.

In his question, Mukabbir wanted to know whether those who have been subjected to various forms of harassment and those who landed in jail due to the misuse of the DSA would be compensated.

He also wanted to know from the minister how these issues would be resolved.

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## PRICE HIKE OF ESSENTIALS Tipu Munshi takes flak from opposition MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition MPs came down hard on Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi yesterday for what they said was his failure to control the prices of essentials and take action against the market syndicates.

Jatiya Party and Gonoforum MPs lambasted the minister while participating in a discussion on the "Trade Organisation (Amendment) Bill 2023".

Gonoforum MP Mukabbir Khan said that even the price of potatoes has increased despite a sufficient stock in the country. "There is only one reason behind this - the syndicates," he added.

"The commerce minister himself is a businessman, he understands business well. He denied the [existence of the] syndicate many times in parliament.

"When people started alleging that the commerce minister is the owner of the syndicates, he started telling the truth about their existence and said they [the syndicates] cannot be touched."

Jatiya Party MP Shameem Haider Patwari said people are suffering due to the price hike as all the cheap sources of

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## Macron's visit may help diversify the ties

PORIMOL PALMA

French President Emmanuel Macron's recent Dhaka visit can serve as a solid basis for Bangladesh to enhance bilateral trade and diversify strategic and defence relations between the two countries, say foreign policy analysts.

They reckon that strategic relations with France, a major European country having veto power in the UN Security Council, can be very helpful for Bangladesh given that it requires support from global powers to face some key challenges like the Rohingya crisis and climate change.

The France-Bangladesh relationship is also significant in terms of economy. The annual bilateral trade between the two countries now stands at about €5 billion, of which Bangladesh's export is almost €4 billion.

The analysts, however, are not sure why the French president opted not to mention anything about the state of democracy, human rights and governance in Bangladesh.

"France generally plays a vocal and active role when it comes to democracy and human

rights. However, the joint statement after Macron's visit did not give any detail on those issues except for saying the two countries share friendship based on shared democratic values and promotion of human rights," said security and political analyst Maj Gen (retd) ANM Muniruzzaman, also the president of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies.

He said there were no details on how France assesses the status of democracy and human rights in Bangladesh.

Macron's September 10-11 visit took place more than three months after the US on May 24 announced a visa policy for Bangladeshis. The US said it will impose visa restrictions on individuals and their immediate family members if they are responsible for, or

complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

The policy was announced against the backdrop of alleged irregularities in the national elections in 2013 and 2018.

In December 2021, Washington imposed sanctions against Rab and seven of its

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President of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies

## Departmental case to be filed against ADC Harun Says home boss

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said a departmental case will be filed against Harun-or-Rashid, the suspended additional deputy commissioner of the DMP, for torturing two BCL leaders inside Shahbagh Police Station.

"The victims have not yet filed a case but if they do so, the authorities concerned will investigate their complaints. However, as an incident has taken place, a departmental case will be filed [against the suspended ADC]," he told reporters at the Secretariat yesterday.

After suspension, Harun was attached to the Rangpur Range Police.

Meanwhile, a three-member committee of Dhaka Metropolitan Police is currently looking into

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## ChatGPT diagnoses ER patients 'like a human doctor': study



AFP, The Hague

Artificial intelligence chatbot ChatGPT diagnosed patients rushed to emergency at least as well as doctors and in some cases outperformed them, Dutch researchers have found, saying AI could "revolutionise the medical field".

But the report published Wednesday also stressed ER doctors needn't hang up their scrubs just yet, with the chatbot potentially able to speed up diagnosis but not replace human medical judgement and experience.

Scientists examined 30 cases treated in an emergency service in the Netherlands in 2022, feeding in anonymised patient history, lab tests and the doctors' own observations to ChatGPT, asking it to provide five possible diagnoses.

They then compared the chatbot's shortlist to the same five diagnoses suggested by ER doctors with access to the same information, then cross-checked with the correct diagnosis in each case.

## Hunter Biden indicted on gun charges

REUTERS, Washington

US President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden was criminally charged yesterday, after efforts to reach a plea deal failed, leading to the first ever prosecution of a sitting president's child.

The indictment was filed yesterday at the US District Court in Delaware with three criminal counts related to gun possession.

The indictment brought by recently elevated US Special Counsel David Weiss comes after a deal for Hunter Biden, 53, to plead guilty to two misdemeanor tax charges and enroll in a program to avoid prosecution on a gun-related charge collapsed in a stunning turn in a July hearing.

The charges ensure that courtroom drama will play an outsized role in the 2024 US presidential campaign as Biden, 80, seeks reelection in a likely rematch with his Republican predecessor Donald Trump, 77, who faces four upcoming

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**THE MISUNDERSTOOD MONITOR ...** A golden monitor seemingly smiling right at the camera when spotted in Khulna's Dumuria upazila recently. Native to countries like India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, this lizard generally prefers wet areas, on the edge of forests or near human settlements and agricultural land. Almost all species of monitor lizards are scavengers and important for biomass decomposition and recycling. Golden monitors even have a playful side as they've been observed alternating between swimming and floating. Despite playing a significant role in the balance of the ecosystem and being quite harmless, the golden or yellow monitor lizard is now endangered because of human activities - direct killing as they are considered "terrifying pests" due to a lack of awareness, deforestation, destruction of habitats, and animal skin trade.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## LIBYA FLOOD Survivors search for loved ones

Death toll may reach 20,000,  
Derna mayor says

REUTERS, Derna

Survivors of a flood that swept away the centre of the Libyan city of Derna picked through the ruins yesterday in search of loved ones from among thousands of dead and missing, while authorities feared an outbreak of disease from rotting bodies.

A torrent unleashed by a powerful storm burst dams on Sunday night and hurled down a seasonal riverbed that bisects the city, washing multi-storey buildings into the sea with sleeping families inside.

Confirmed death tolls given by officials so far have varied, but all are in the thousands, with thousands more on lists of the missing. Derna Mayor Abdulmenam al-Ghaithi said deaths in the city could reach 18,000-20,000, based on the extent of the damage.

"We actually need teams specialised in recovering bodies," he told Reuters in Derna. "I fear that the city will be infected with an epidemic due to the large number of bodies under the rubble and in the water."

The head of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said yesterday that casualties could have been avoided in the floods if the divided country had a functional weather service able to issue warnings.

Mohamed al-Menfi, head of the three-member council that acts as the presidency in Libya's international recognised government, said on X that the council had asked the attorney general to investigate the disaster.

Usama Al Husadi, a 52-year-old driver, had been searching for his wife and five children since the disaster.