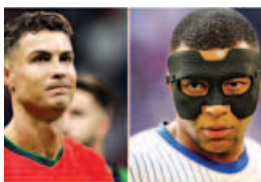




Govt reveals austerity measures for FY25
B1



Mbappe or Ronaldo: Who will prevail?
P11



India, China FMs agree to work on border issues
P7



One murder, too many questions
P3

Anti-quota protests swell across univs

For now, HC verdict not stayed; protesters vow tougher demos

STAR REPORT

Anti-quota protests intensified across the country yesterday as students of more universities joined in, and the demonstrators announced fresh programmes to press for scrapping of the quota system in government jobs.

Earlier in the day, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court decided to uphold until further orders the June 5 High Court verdict. The HC verdict reinstated the quota system after terming illegal a 2018 government circular that abolished it. The decision was announced around 10:00am.



Protesters said they will bring out processions on college and university campuses on Saturday and boycott classes and exams on Sunday, demanding the reinstatement of the government's 2018 circular. University students in and around Dhaka were demonstrating against the HC verdict for the last several days.

As part of the demonstrations, they blocked key intersections in the capital and highways for several hours, causing sufferings to the commuters.

Nahid Islam, an organiser of the movement, said the mainstay of the country's constitution and spirit of the Liberation War is equality for all.

"The crisis over the quota system should be resolved keeping in mind the public opinion. But we are seeing the system is being reinstated, ignoring public opinion. We'll continue our movement until our demands are met," he said during a procession at Dhaka University.

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Graft suspects getting promoted in civil service

Allege secretaries during meeting

BAHARAM KHAN and MD ABBAS

Secretaries at a meeting yesterday said some government officials facing allegations of corruption were getting promoted and posted to key positions at different ministries, divisions, and departments.

They observed that secretaries must take strict measures to ensure those officers are not considered for promotion in the future, according to sources present at the meeting held at the secretariat.

"We have enough laws and regulations to stop corruption, but these are not properly implemented, which is why corruption has become a burning issue," said one of the speakers.

"Officers who indulge in irregularities while providing public service need to be identified and held accountable," said a secretary.

A few corrupt officers are tainting the reputation of all government officials and they are the cause of criticism in the media, said another speaker.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

\$14b export data puzzle is unnerving

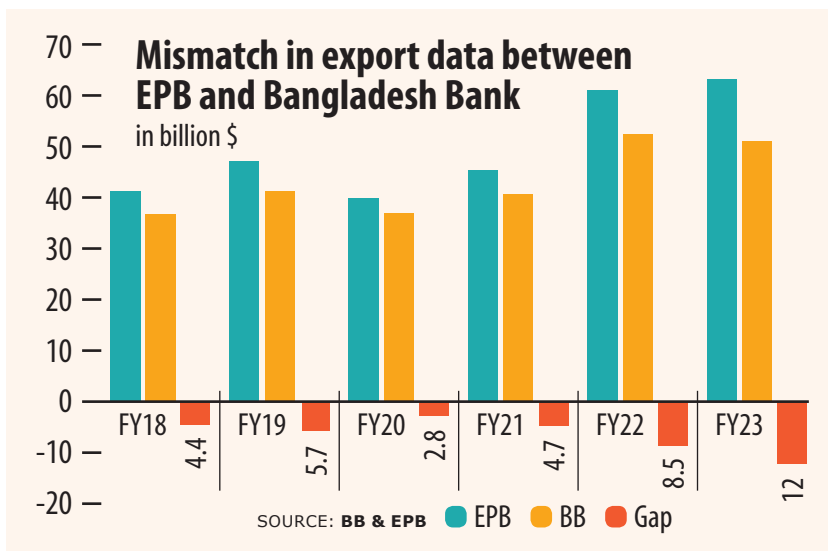
AHSAN HABIB

You can lie with data or illuminate the truth with data. And there's something in between – half-truths.

A \$14 billion correction in export figures by the central bank is necessary because it addresses one economic

silent.

What's clear is that the discrepancy in export figures again underscores the importance of accurate macroeconomic data. A lack of statistical accuracy can upend many indicators. The calculation of gross domestic product is one of them.



half truth.

But half-truths are unnerving.

The data revision that came on Wednesday through a regular update on the balance of payments raises disturbing questions about the country's economic performance and the policy that revolved around it.

The shocking revelation has sent economists scrambling for answers, but there are more questions than answers as the authorities are almost

Such a big discrepancy is "unbelievable", said MK Mujeri, an economist and former director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

Export and import data calculation is a simple task, but big mistakes such as this by officials raise questions over the authenticity of other components of the economy. "Entire GDP estimates should be revisited," said Mujeri.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



People using a bamboo raft to go to the WDB dyke for shelter at Hatirmela village in Kurigram's Ulipur upazila yesterday. Almost all the homes in the village have been flooded due to continuous rains and an onrush of water from the upstream.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

TEESTA PROJECT

Beijing open to working with Delhi

Says Chinese envoy ahead of Hasina's China visit; Dhaka's proposal seeking budget support likely to be considered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chinese ambassador yesterday hinted that Beijing may consider Bangladesh's proposal seeking budget support that will ease pressure on the country's foreign reserves.

China is open to working with India for the Teesta restoration and management project, but it is Bangladesh which has to make the decision in this regard, Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen told reporters at the Jatiya Press Club.

It is expected that during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to China next week, multiple "cooperation documents" will be signed and the two countries will jointly announce major cooperation achievements, according to the ambassador.

Bangladesh sought around \$5 billion from China in budget support in addition to loans for a number of mega projects, finance ministry officials said.

Regarding this, the ambassador said, "We too talk about these issues.

We too have some new proposals from Bangladesh. I should say it is very new for both of us. Some initiative we never came across before.

"But, China, we are open. We are still on the discussion. That is my position that whatever China can do, it we will do as per the request from Bangladesh side. Let's see, hopefully we can make some breakthrough in this regard."

About Teesta project, he said "The Teesta river is within the territory of Bangladesh. So, it is your river. Any

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