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\$4.7 BILLION LOAN IMF defers release of 4th tranche

Two installments likely to be disbursed in June

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Monetary Fund has deferred the release of the fourth tranche of the \$4.7 billion loan to June instead of March as Bangladesh could not meet some prior conditions.

Earlier in December last year, upon completion of the third review, Chris Papageorgiou, the chief of IMF's visiting staff mission, had said that the proposal for the fourth tranche would be submitted before the IMF executive board on February 5.

However, the multilateral lender shifted the initial board meeting for the fourth tranche, which is likely to be \$645 million, from February 5 to March 12.

As per the latest development, the IMF might release both the fourth and fifth together in June, which could amount to more than \$1 billion, upon fulfilling conditions.

 "We told IMF that there are certain conditions that we will not be able to implement immediately. While the government has its own necessity to meet those conditions, it would do so at its own pace and not on the IMF's timeline."
SALEHUDDIN AHMED



Farmer Jahir Uddin, 58, helplessly stares at the Teesta in Lalmonirhat's Hatibandha upazila. As the river has dried up in the area due to a lack of water flowing downstream, his farmland has been suffering without proper irrigation, causing him losses. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

We'll launch independent student body
Say July uprising leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some leaders and activists of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement are set to launch a new student organisation soon with the slogan "Student First, Bangladesh First".

The announcement was made by Abdul Kader and Md Abu Baker Mojumder, former coordinators of the student platform, at a press conference held at the Madhur Canteen on the Dhaka University campus.

Kader and Baker emphasised that the organisation would be

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Bangladesh could not fulfil the prior conditions related to the Bangladesh Bank and the National Board of Revenue as there has been disagreement between the government and the IMF over the issues.

"We will wait -- we requested IMF to release the next two tranches together in June," Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed told reporters yesterday after attending the Deputy Commissioners' (DCs) conference in the capital.

Asked whether the deferral came from the IMF side, Ahmed said: "They supported it. We also told them that there are certain conditions that we will not be able to implement immediately."

While the government has its own necessity to meet those conditions, it would do so at its own pace and not on the IMF's timeline.

At present, Bangladesh's macroeconomic indicators are not looking bad, he said, citing the positive current account and financial account balances and growth in remittance.

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STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India must share water first if it wants friendship

Fakhrul tells demo along the Teesta

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday set a precondition for India to be a friend of the people of Bangladesh: It must resolve the Teesta water-sharing issue first.

India must also stop border killings and abandon its "big brother" attitude, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said at the launch of Teesta River Protection Movement Committee's two-day programme in Lalmonirhat.

The programme with the slogan "Jago Bahe, Teesta Bachai" (Wake Up, Save the Teesta) has been organised at 11 locations in Kurigram, Rangpur, Nilphamari, and Gaibandha to demand a just share of Teesta water from India.

Rallies, processions, and cultural events are being held as part of the programme. Senior BNP leaders and their allies joined the events.

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Govt moves to save electricity

Announces plans for equal rural-urban outage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan yesterday said air conditioner temperatures in government offices, banks, homes, and mosques should not be set below 25 degrees Celsius to lower electricity consumption, especially during Ramadan.

He said a Power Division team would monitor compliance and take necessary steps, including cutting off electricity supply, if violations were found.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB) said it was planning to ensure no power cuts across the country in Ramadan.

Kabir told reporters that all areas of the country, except Key Point Installations and hospitals, will see

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Dear readers,
The Daily Star has been bringing out a series of diverse and informative supplements around this time of the year for quite some time. This year too, we are pleased to publish a five-part 200-page special supplement series, beginning today, on the occasion of the newspaper's 34th anniversary. The first part, titled

"THE ECONOMY: REVIVING & REBUILDING"

features a collection of articles on how Bangladesh's economic system should be restructured, and how its business climate can be improved.

We thank our readers, patrons, and advertisers for their unrelenting support throughout the years.

Make sure you grab a copy of this collector's item free of charge from your hawker!



NEWS ANALYSIS

Transport reforms a pressing need



WASIM BIN HABIB

Four-year-old Ibrahim Islam was walking to his school in Kushtia town with his grandmother around 8:00am on Sunday. Perhaps his mind was buzzing with excitement, thinking about the games he would play with his friends.

The school, Prititi Biddyaloy, is in the Phultola area next to the Kushtia-Jhenaidah highway. Walking across the highway, they stopped on the median strip. Just as they stepped on the road again, a truck ran them over. Ibrahim died on the spot and his grandmother suffered serious injuries.

"My son wanted to be a pilot," his mother Jasmine cried beside his lifeless body at Kushtia General Hospital. In the blink of an eye, her hopes and dreams have been shredded and life turned

upside down.

This is just one of the countless tragedies happening on Bangladesh's roads every day, leaving families torn apart and stealing futures in an instant. The human toll from the crashes is incalculable, extending beyond personal grief, affecting the economy and public confidence in the transport system.

Every day, newspapers and TVs report road crashes and fatalities, often accompanied by harrowing images. Yet, these tragedies have become so routine that they rarely spark an outrage. Despite numerous laws and occasional crackdowns, the grim reality remains unchanged: the country's roads and highways remain plagued by disorder and lawlessness.

According to a report by road safety

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10 lives lost on the road
Couple, father-son among the victims

STAR REPORT

Three separate incidents of tragic road collisions yesterday claimed the lives of at least 10 people and left 25 others injured. The victims included a couple in Dhaka and a father and his son in Pirojpur, while six others died in Feni.

In the capital, a couple and their daughter, with heavy hearts, were on their way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital early in the morning, hoping to bid a final farewell to a departed relative.

As they were crossing the road near Saddam Market in Matuail around 7:00am, a lorry hit them.

Runa Akter was killed on the spot, while her husband Abdul Jabbar, a kindergarten teacher, died after he was taken to a nearby hospital.

Their daughter, Jui Akter, 14, is undergoing treatment at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Central Police Hospital in Rajarbagh with serious injuries.

"My parents and sister were going to DMCH to see the body of my mother's cousin who died on Sunday night... Just because of a single case of reckless

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In Loving Memory

On this day, we fondly remember
Mr. Abdur Rouf Chowdhury, a leader
who shaped industries and inspired generations.

His influence remains timeless.

(1937-2023)

Bank Asia