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CAAB, Biman propose fee cuts to boost air cargo

Send recommendations to ministry

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) and Biman have proposed reducing landing, parking, and ground handling charges at the country's airports to make air cargo services cost-effective and resilient amid global disruptions.

The recommendations, among others, were made to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism after a meeting between CAAB and Biman, said CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal Md Monjur Kabir Bhuiyan.

"As per directives from the highest level, we've proposed adjustments to make cargo operations smoother and cheaper. The final decision now rests with the ministry," the CAAB chairman said.

CAAB and Biman came up with the much-anticipated move after India abruptly suspended third-country transshipment.

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Pabna's Edward College renames Suchitra Sen Hall

Locals slam decision

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Government Edward College in Pabna has dropped Suchitra Sen's name from the title of a residential hall, drawing criticism from residents of the district where the legendary film actress was born.

The college authorities recently renamed three residential halls, including the Suchitra Sen Student Hall for female students, which has now been changed to "July 36 Student Hall".

Additionally, Sheikh Russel Student Hall was renamed Bijoy 24 Student Hall, and Begum Fazilatunnesa Hall was renamed Aysa Siddika (R) Student Hall.

Edward College Principal Md Abdul Awal Miah inaugurated the newly installed nameplates yesterday.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Awal said the academic council of the college decided to rename the halls following students' demand in keeping with the spirit of the July uprising.

However, the removal of Suchitra Sen's name has drawn sharp reactions from the local community and cultural figures.

"Suchitra Sen was not a politician and should not be treated as one. A hall was named after her to honour her legacy in her home district. Now her name has been removed, just like the names of political figures. This is

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US trade bodies reiterate call for better labour rights

Say its tied to tariff talks

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), the US's largest trade body in the apparel and footwear sector, and the Fair Labour Association (FLA) tied Bangladesh's efforts to improve labour rights to ensure successful tariff negotiation with the Trump administration.

On May 20, the AAFA and FLA wrote to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus requesting for improvement of labour rights, which is vital for a long-term business relationship with the US.

The AAFA represents more than 1,100 prominent brands that employ more than 3.5 million American workers and contribute more than \$509 billion in annual US retail sales.

"We believe improving worker rights goes hand in hand with promoting a successful Bangladesh garment, footwear and travel goods industry now and in the years to come," said Steve Lamar, AAFA president and chief executive officer, and Jeff Vockrodt, FLA president, in the joint statement.

The two American trade bodies had brought up the issues in a letter to Yunus in September last year and brand delegation visits to Bangladesh in November last year and January.

Resolving the issues will help move negotiations towards a successful conclusion on President Trump's



Veiled in summer rain, a lone man with an umbrella strides across glistening railway tracks in Dhaka -- a fleeting silhouette against the rain-washed hush of the city.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Our children are dying slowly'

Says a Palestinian father searching for food in Gaza; 82 more killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

Father of four Mahmoud al-Haw and other Palestinians crowd around a soup kitchen in war-torn Gaza, surging forward and frantically waving pots.

Small children, squashed at the front, are in tears. One of them holds up a plastic basin hoping for some ladles of soup. Haw pushes forward in the scrum until he receives his share.

Haw does this every day because he fears his children are starving. He sets out through the ruins of Jabalia in northern Gaza in search of food, waiting in panicked crowds for up to six hours to get barely enough to feed his family.

Some days he gets lucky and can find lentil soup. Other days he returns empty-handed, reports Reuters.

"I have a sick daughter. I can't provide her with anything. There is no bread, there is nothing," said Haw, 39. "I'm here since eight in the morning, just to get one plate for six people while it is not enough for one person."

"I wish everyone would stand by us. Our children are dying slowly," he said.

With air strikes and tank fire continuing to

bound the enclave, killing 82 people yesterday, local bakers and transport operators said they had yet to see fresh supplies of flour and other essentials.

Fewer than 100 aid trucks were allowed to enter Gaza on Monday, after Israel agreed to allow limited humanitarian deliveries to resume following mounting international pressure. But, the United Nations said no aid had been distributed.

The amount of aid Israel has started to allow into the enclave is not nearly enough and is "a smokescreen to pretend the siege is over," the MSF aid group said yesterday.

"The Israeli authorities' decision to allow a ridiculously inadequate amount of aid into Gaza after months of an airtight siege signals their intention to avoid the accusation of starving

people in Gaza, while in fact keeping them barely surviving," said Pascale Coissard, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) emergency coordinator in Gaza's Khan Yunis.

In a separate development, Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani yesterday slammed the firing of shots on diplomats visiting the flashpoint West Bank city of Jenin and called on Israel to "immediately clarify", reports AFP.

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Armed forces more united than ever
Says navy chief



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The armed forces are more united than ever, and this inter-services harmony will be the foundation for building a stronger, modern military, said Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Nazmul Hassan yesterday.

"I am pleased and proud to say that the spirit of unity and the bond between the army, navy, and air forces is stronger than ever. We are firmly committed to transforming the forces into a more capable and future-ready institution," he said while addressing the President Parade (Summer) 2025 at the Bangladesh Air Force Academy in Jashore.

The event marked the commissioning of No 86 BAFA Course.

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- **UN says no aid distributed in enclave**
- **Israel allowing 'ridiculously inadequate' aid into Gaza: MSF**
- **Israeli troops open fire during diplomats' tour in West Bank**



The ongoing capital dredging of the Karnaphuli is being repeatedly hampered by polythene and waste clogging the machine, forcing frequent shutdowns and slowing progress. On International Day for Biological Diversity today, the river's condition stands as a stark reminder of how pollution endangers both development and biodiversity. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

**Ambassador to US
Siam likely to be new foreign secy**

Secy Jashim quit of his own accord, says Touhid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Asad Alam Siam is likely to be appointed the new foreign secretary, as Jashim Uddin is to step down from the post within a day or two.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain has clarified that Jashim leaving the post has no government involvement and the decision was his own.

A ministry official confirmed that Siam was instructed to return to the country and assume his new position by June 20.

Asad Alam Siam was appointed ambassador to the US on December 5, 2024.

Earlier, Siam served as the ambassador to Austria and was also the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the International Organizations in Vienna.

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NU VC attacked over auto pass demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National University Vice-Chancellor Professor ASM Amanullah was attacked yesterday allegedly by a group of students demanding automatic passes in their 2022 Degree (Pass) examinations.

The incident took place around noon in front of the university's administrative building in Gazipur, as the VC was getting out of his car, said Md Mostafizur Rahman, acting director of the NU Public Relations Department.

Protesters surrounded the VC and began shouting slogans demanding auto passes. Amid the chaos, some "criminals posing as students" attempted to assault him, he said in a press release, adding that he sustained minor injuries.

According to the statement, the university had already granted grace marks to this batch of students, taking into account the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and ongoing political unrest. Students were also given the opportunity

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Mob action won't be tolerated anymore

Ramna DC warns after Dhamondi incident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police will take strong action against any form of mob violence, regardless of who is involved, said Ramna Division Deputy Commissioner Masud Alam yesterday.

Speaking at a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre, he warned that vigilante actions risk anarchy and stern actions will be taken against those who engage in such activities.

His comments followed a Monday night incident in which three young men, including a former leader of Students Against Discrimination, tried to break into a publisher's home in Dhamondi, accusing him of being a "fascist agent."

They were detained after engaging in an altercation with police but were later released

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Banu Mushtaq wins Int'l Booker Prize for Heart Lamp

AFP, London

Indian writer, lawyer, and activist Banu Mushtaq on Tuesday won the International Booker Prize for her short story collection "Heart Lamp".

The 77-year-old is the first author of Kannada language literature to receive the prestigious literary award for translated fiction.

"This moment feels like a thousand fireflies lighting a single sky -- brief, brilliant and utterly collective," Mushtaq said at a ceremony at the Tate Modern gallery in London.

"I accept this great honour not as an individuals but as a voice raised in chorus with so many others."

Mushtaq will share the £50,000 (\$67,000) prize with her translator Deepa Bhasthi, who also helped choose the stories.

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