



DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 9, 2025

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 165

ASHAR 25, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

MUHARRAM 13, 1447 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00



BB looking for new investors for Nagad

B1



Shrimp adulteration threatens health, exports

P4



Arming Ukraine prolongs war, says Kremlin

P5



Mbappe set for PSG reunion

P11

## US tariff threatens export economy

Govt pins hopes on trade negotiations with the Trump administration later this week



REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

A new 35 percent tariff imposed by the Trump administration, set to take effect next month, poses the most formidable challenge in years to Bangladesh's export-driven economy. Now, the government is scrambling to cushion the impact through urgent, high-stakes negotiations with the US, seeking to protect the nation's global competitiveness.

The tariff, a slight reduction from an earlier 37 percent rate but still punishingly high, places Bangladesh at an immediate disadvantage against regional competitors in the garment trade.

Most notably, Vietnam, a primary rival, recently secured a far more favourable 20 percent tariff rate from Washington. This 15 percentage-point gap creates a severe pricing disparity that Bangladeshi exporters will find difficult to absorb.

Amid deliberate unpredictability from

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

### TARIFF RATES FOR 14 COUNTRIES

COUNTRY	NEW RATE	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS RATE	SHARE OF US IMPORT
Japan	+25%	↑ from +24%	4.5%
South Korea	+25%	same	4.0%
Thailand	+36%	same	1.9%
Malaysia	+25%	↑ from +24%	1.6%
Indonesia	+32%	same	<1%
South Africa	+30%	same	<1%
Cambodia	+36%	↓ from +49%	<1%
Bangladesh	+35%	↓ from +37%	<1%
Kazakhstan	+25%	↓ from +27%	<1%
Tunisia	+25%	↓ from +28%	<1%
Serbia	+35%	↓ from +37%	<1%
Laos	+40%	↓ from +48%	<1%
Myanmar	+40%	↓ from +44%	<1%
Bosnia & Herzegovina	+30%	↓ from +35%	<1%

## CARETAKER GOVT SYSTEM Repeal stripped people of their voting rights

Eventually led to the uprising, observes HC in full verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court, in the full text of a verdict, observed that abolition of the non-party caretaker system destroyed the basic structure of the constitution, paving the way for holding the last three controversial elections.

As a result, the whole world witnessed the disenfranchisement of the citizens. It also led to a deadly 2024 mass uprising, which demanded democratic reforms, the court said.

Considering the above, if we give a glance at the consequence of abolishing the non-party caretaker government system by the Fifteenth Amendment Act, 2011, the result is: three consecutive polls which were held in 2014, 2018, and 2024 in the absence of the said system have failed to demonstrate public confidence that those were held freely and fairly ensuring the right of franchise of the respective voters...

Ultimately, it led to a nationwide student mass revolution in July-August 2024, involving sacrifice of the lives of thousands of people and leaving thousands more permanently disabled – just for a change of government.

Eventually, the past government had to step down from power leading to formation of an interim government under extraordinary circumstances that does not base its root in the non-party caretaker government system but backed by the reference of the Appellate Division under article 106 of the constitution and the people at large," the HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub, who is now a judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury, observed in the 139 page judgement.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



March 22, 1996  
JS passes 13th amendment, introducing the caretaker system

March 28, 1996  
13th amendment comes into effect

May 10, 2011  
The Appellate Division declares 13th amendment unconstitutional

June 30, 2011  
JS passes 15th amendment, abolishing the caretaker system

July 3, 2011  
15th amendment comes into effect

## Wider dengue spread sparks concerns

Cases reported from 60 districts; death toll crosses 50

HELEMUL ALAM and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Dengue cases have been reported in 60 districts as of yesterday, signalling a much wider and earlier spread of the mosquito-borne disease than in the last two years.

The only districts yet to report any cases are Gopalganj, Chuadanga, Joypurhat, and Sunamganj, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Till July 8 last year, cases had been reported from 54 districts. During the same period in 2023, the number was 56.

This year's faster and broader spread has raised serious health concerns, with 51 dengue-related deaths already recorded between January 1 and yesterday.

Barishal division continues to account for an unusually high proportion of cases – 43 percent of the total. The coastal district of Barguna remains a hotspot despite interventions by local authorities.

In the past 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, three more dengue patients died and 425 others were hospitalised across the country, according to the DGHS.

Experts attribute the spike in cases to inadequate anti-mosquito drives, coupled with favourable weather conditions – suitable temperatures and intermittent rain – that support Aedes mosquito breeding.

Prof. Kabirul Bashar, entomologist at Jahangirnagar University, said local government bodies previously played a key role in Aedes control.

"Many of these efforts have stopped since August 5 last year. Councillors are largely absent, disrupting the chain of command among public representatives," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Due to this breakdown and a lack of control measures, the density of Aedes larvae has increased,

as recent surveys show. Consequently, dengue cases have surged."

Of the 4,575 union parishad chairmen across the country, at least 1,535 have been absent from duty since August 2024, as reported by this newspaper in April.

In their absence, panel chairmen are currently serving in 885 unions, while administrators have been appointed in 650, according to LGRD ministry officials.

Experts attribute the spike in cases to inadequate anti-mosquito drives, coupled with favourable weather conditions – suitable temperatures and intermittent rain – that support Aedes mosquito breeding.

As of this January, 245 union parishad chairmen and 335 members had been suspended.

In August last year, the interim government replaced mayors with administrators in eight city corporations. One month later, councillors of 12 city corporations and 323 municipalities were removed and replaced with administrators.

Prof. Halimur Rashid, line director of the DGHS's Communicable Disease Control, acknowledged the rising pressure on hospitals. "We are prepared. We'll relocate patients and doctors to other hospitals if needed."

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

JULY 9, 2024

A pause before the storm

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

The ongoing Bangla Blockade paused for a day as students leading the quota reform movement prepared for their next round of protests. In the evening, coordinators of the Baisommobirodi Chhatro Andolon (Students Against Discrimination) announced their fresh programme: a countrywide Bangla Blockade to be held the following day, from 10:00am until sunset, in pursuit of their single demand – meaningful reform of the quota system in public service recruitment.

The announcement came at a press conference held in front of Dhaka University's central library.

Speaking to the media, Nahid Islam, one of the movement's coordinators, reiterated that their demand was not for the abolition of quotas but for their rational reform through parliamentary legislation. The protesters sought to reduce unreasonable and discriminatory quotas across all grades of government jobs, while maintaining minimal quotas only for genuinely disadvantaged groups as specified in the Constitution.

At the press conference, the student organisers proposed that no more than five percent of government jobs should be reserved under the quota system. Hasnat Abdullah, another key coordinator, made it clear that their movement did not oppose the spirit of the Liberation War or the freedom fighters themselves. "We are not against the freedom fighter quota. The Bir Mukti Joddhas are the best sons of the nation. We never questioned

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



A one-kilometre stretch of the Khulna-Jashore Highway has been under repair for about a month. With the entire section dug up, rains have turned the road into a muddy mess, forcing locals and travellers to abandon vehicles and wade through the sludge. The photo was taken in the Chengutia Urtola area on Monday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN





## MY DHAKA

# 3 unexpected monsoon weekend plans you must try

RBR

What to do this monsoon, when Dhaka is in a shroud of either oppressive heat or unbearable humidity? Lest we forget the sudden showers, heavy rains, or a light, breezy drizzle? However, the unpredictability of the Dhaka monsoon should not be a killjoy. Instead, fill your weekend calendar with pleasurable activities if you know where the fun is.

Monsoon needs to be celebrated beyond a bowl of khichuri for us bored city people. Try something out of the ordinary and add a little spice to your routine eating-out weekend plans.

We city folks do things only to make our social media identity look trendy and happening. Prove me wrong; every outing must be Instagrammable or nothing. But allow me to guide you to three random and slightly bizarre spur-of-the-moment fun activities.

Circus, that too inside a village fair, just on the periphery of the metropolis, sounds like an amazing change of tempo. Friday morning, a long drive to Roth Khola in Joydebpur, Gazipur, or to Dhamrai, will take you to the vibrant Roth Mela, or chariot festival fair, that commemorates the journey of the triad of Lord Jagannath (an avatar of Vishnu) and his siblings to their aunt's place.

A dancing crowd chanting Vedic hymns and blowing conch shells, and a vibrant fair with local circus groups and portable amusement park rides, the Roth mela is a different spin on entertainment. Between the two traditional fairs, the elaborate one is going on in Dhamrai, boasting a



400-year-old tradition of Roth jatra.

Grab a pack of crunchy hot onion fritters, or salted nimki and murial, and walk up and down the street lined with stalls, food carts, and games. If you are a traditionalist and love random stuff, then the terracotta paraphernalia, cane and bamboo wares, wooden home accessories like jalpuri (a four-legged seater), or cash boxes, and our exquisite green cane mat, the shital pati, are sure to take your breath away.

These melas are celebration centres of all things local, indigenous, and artisanal. A shital pati for only Tk 1,000 (prices vary with sizes), a dhamma or changari, which is a large, round basket made of cane or bamboo, used for storage in the villages; you come across many such long lost, ecologically sustainable, everyday use items that were once the way of living.

Environmentally friendly, ethnic, and celebrating the time-honoured and non-mechanised art of craftsmanship,

these village fairs on the outskirts of the metro are like a revelation on how artisanal our lives were once. The fairs will continue till the end of this month. So, plan a trip, fast!

Next, try to drench your soul with spirituality on 9 July, which is the full moon night of Ashari Purnima. The full moon's brightness is often seen as a symbol of enlightenment and clarity of mind. Ashari Purnima is of great consequence, not only for the Buddhists, but also for those who consider themselves to be 'moon children.'

The pearly sheen of the moonbeams will replenish you spiritually. Plan an Ashari Purnima celebration with friends, either in the city parks, your rooftop gardens, or simply gaze upon the moon, breathe, and meditate for 10 to 15 minutes. You don't have to be perfect or feel anything dramatic -- just try. Let it be a moment of quiet

contemplation as Ashari Purnima is seen as a powerful day for setting intentions, seeking blessings, and realigning with one's spiritual path. Make it a night to remember, and let the full moon shine on you.

What is monsoon without getting soaked to the skin in the pouring rain? When was the last time you were carefree enough to stand in the rain and feel the splash of raindrops on you? One of my favourite rainy-day rituals is cherishing the heavy monsoon rain with my favourite songs on full blast. Stop worrying about catching a cold and plan a rain shower party with your friends, family, or kids, loaded with water balloons, water guns, and a football. Don't forget to brew a kettle of masala milk tea and order in hot singaras.

Let's not curate everything in life; be footloose, and let spontaneity take over.

## US tariff threatens export economy

FROM PAGE 1

Washington, President Donald Trump on Monday extended his deadline to seal country-by-country trade agreements, this time until August 1. The announcement came as a threat in letters sent to 14 world leaders, including Bangladesh's. Trump declared that their exports would be subject to levies ranging from 25 percent to 40 percent.

Addressing Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, Trump wrote: "If for any reason you decide to raise your Tariffs, then, whatever the number you choose to raise them by, will be added onto the 35% that we charge."

About the new deadline, Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform yesterday, "TARIFFS WILL START BEING PAID ON AUGUST 1, 2025. There has been no change to this date, and there will be no change."

In other words, all money will be due and payable starting AUGUST 1, 2025 - No extensions will be granted."

### A PERFECT STORM

This tariff shock will compound a series of pre-existing vulnerabilities that have already placed the garment industry under immense pressure. According to a recent Bloomberg Economics forecast, Bangladesh's apparel exports are set for a hit this year from three directions simultaneously: a separate and ongoing trade tussle with neighbouring India, domestic energy shortages that have hampered production, and now, the crushing new US tariffs.

The cumulative effect of these headwinds could be staggering. Bloomberg Economics estimates the damage to garment exports could reach \$2 billion in 2025 alone. This is a significant blow for an industry that constitutes the backbone of the national economy, accounting for 81 percent of total exports.

In response to the new tariff, Dhaka is mounting a diplomatic push. Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman, who departed for Washington, DC, to join the negotiating team for meetings on July 10-11, expressed hope that the tariff could be significantly reduced. Rahman will join Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin and National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman in Washington, DC.

The core of Bangladesh's argument rests on the possibility of a preferential rate for least developed countries (LDCs). "I'm hopeful that Bangladesh's tariff will be a 10 percent baseline as the Trump administration has been working to fix a separate tariff line for the LDCs," the commerce secretary said.

and medium enterprises will face immense trouble.

Furthermore, Khan warned of dangerous ripple effects. If exporters are forced to divert their focus away from the US and toward other markets, such as the European Union, it will create a glut of suppliers. "There will be many players in the same markets and there will be an unfair price competition," he said. "The buyers will take the chance of a price cut."

Some top exporters argue the 35 percent figure is a negotiating tactic rather than a final decree. AK Azad, chairman of Ha-Meem Group, a major exporter to the US, believes the rate is simply too high to be sustainable. "The 35 percent tariff rate will not be finally executed," he said, viewing the proposal as a "chip of negotiation" and expressing hope that the Trump administration will review the rate.

Uncertainty has left many in limbo. Ramzul Seraj, managing director of Elite Garments Ltd, which ships nearly 65 percent of its products to the US, said his buyers have yet to respond to the news. He acknowledged that exports will "face challenges" if the new rate is finalised, but also pointed to potential silver linings.

"If the tariff is fixed at 55 percent on China, Bangladesh may benefit," he said, adding that Vietnam, despite its lower tariff, cannot absorb a large volume of new orders.

"Bangladesh has a lot of production capacity, which is a plus point for this country," he said.

## EU parliament approves start of automated border system

AFP, Strasbourg

The European Parliament yesterday gave final approval to a phased rollout of a new border check system for non-EU nationals which will do away with passport stamps.

The so-called Entry/Exit System (EES), was supposed to kick in last November but was delayed at the last minute as several states were not ready.

First agreed on in 2017, the automated system will record visitors' date of entry and exit and keep track of overstays and refused entries.

Visitors to the bloc's Schengen free movement area will also have biometric data -- facial images and fingerprints -- collected at ports of entry.

## A pause before the storm

FROM PAGE 1

any rewards given to them. If the government wishes to expand their benefits, we welcome it. But we oppose quotas that extend to their grandchildren and beyond," he said.

Earlier in the day, two students from Dhaka University filed a writ petition at the High Court, challenging the reinstatement of the quota system. The petition was later forwarded to the chamber court for a hearing scheduled for July 10.

In response to that development, Sarjees Alam, another coordinator of the quota reform movement, emphasised that regardless of the court's decision, their demand for legal reform through the parliament remained unchanged. "Even if the court gives a favourable verdict, our demand will not be fulfilled. We want a comprehensive reform of the quota system across all job grades through the formation of a commission. Only then will we leave the streets and return to our studies," he said.

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, responding to the ongoing movement, acknowledged that the protesters were demanding reform, not abolition, of the quota system. He welcomed the students' decision to appoint legal representation and to participate in court proceedings. "We hope the country's highest court will give a realistic decision after hearing all sides. Until then, I urge everyone to exercise patience," he said.

However, Quader also warned that the BNP's support for both the quota reform movement and the simultaneous protests by university teachers and staff against the

Universal Pension Scheme was an ill-intentioned move. He directed party leaders and activists to remain vigilant to prevent any political forces from using these apolitical movements to create nationwide unrest.

While Dhaka remained relatively quiet, the quota reform protests continued on campuses across the



Buet students demonstrate in front of the university's main entrance in Dhaka on July 9, 2024, demanding reform of the quota system in government jobs.

PHOTO: FILE/PRABIR DAS

country. At Rajshahi University, students held a sit-in on Paris Road for an hour from 3:00pm. At Rajshahi College, students blocked the road in front of the college from 11:00am for three hours. In Chattogram, students from Chittagong University formed a human chain and held a mass campaign at the Shaheed Minar premises from 10:30am. Kaniz Fatima, a student of the university and daughter of a freedom fighter,

of Brojomohun College (BM College) blocked the Dhaka-Barishal highway in Nathullabad for two hours starting at 11:30am.

While July 9 offered a temporary break in the blockade programme, the determination of the students to carry the movement forward remained unwavering. With a renewed call for the next day's full day blockade, the stage was set for further escalation in the days ahead.

## Repeal stripped people of their voting rights

FROM PAGE 1

The bench in the full text of the verdict released yesterday said, "Now, the entire focus or demand of the nation is for establishing a system that will effectively ensure free, fair, and impartial elections for protecting democracy, rule of law, and independence of judiciary, which can be held only under a non-party caretaker government system, which will pave the way for a new democracy, a new hope, new freedom, and a new Bangladesh."

On December 17, the HC bench delivered the verdict following two separate writ petitions.

In the judgement, the bench scrapped a part of the 15th amendment to the constitution that abolished the non-partisan caretaker government system and restored the provision for holding referendum for bringing any amendment to the constitution.

On that day, the HC bench also said the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court will make the final decision about the restoration of the caretaker government system as review petitions on a verdict on the amendment are pending with the apex court.

Mohammad Shishir Manir, a lawyer for Jamaat-e-Islami who filed one of the review petitions, told The Daily Star yesterday that the release of the full text of the HC would help lawyers place arguments before the Appellate Division for quick disposal of the review petitions.

"We will try to move the review petitions before the Appellate Division for the hearing on Thursday [tomorrow]."

If the Appellate Division overturns its verdict, delivered on May 10, 2011, scrapping the 13th amendment, the caretaker system will be automatically restored, the lawyer added.

In the full text of verdict, the HC said, "With the repeal of referendum, as it was part of article 142 of the constitution vide section 42 of the Act No 14 of 2011 is declared void, as it is repugnant to and inconsistent with the basic structure of the constitution. Consequently, article 142 as it then was vide Twelfth Amendment Act, 1991, is hereby restored."

"Incorporating articles 7A and 7B after article 7 of the constitution is squarely contradictory to article 7, guaranteeing the will of the people and the supremacy of the constitution, including the right of freedom of thought and conscious and of speech and expression. It also has taken away the power of amendability of the successor parliament. Hence, it is declared void and a nullity in the eye of the supreme law of the land, i.e. the constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Consequently, section 7 of the act, 2011, incorporating articles 7A and 7B after article 7 of the constitution is hereby declared void being ultra vires the constitution," the HC said in the full text of the judgment.

## BB forms Tk 25cr fund for July injured and martyrs' families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank has decided to form a special fund of Tk 25 crore to support the treatment of protesters injured during the July uprising and to provide financial assistance to the families of those killed.

Of the total amount, Tk 14 crore will come from the central bank's own resources, while the remaining Tk 11 crore will be contributed by 11 commercial banks. Each of these banks posted over Tk 400 crore in net profit in the last fiscal year and will contribute Tk 1 crore each, sources said.

The decision was taken at a bankers' meeting held yesterday at the BB headquarters, with Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur presiding.

The entire fund will be handed over to the July Martyr's Memorial Foundation, an official who attended the meeting told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Additionally, a managing director of a leading private commercial bank, also requesting anonymity, said the governor urged banks to scale up QR code-based transactions.

## Nigerian gangs kill 40 in 'revenge' attack

AFP, Jos

An armed gang killed at least 40 members of village self-defence groups in a weekend ambush and related attack in Nigeria's central Plateau state, the Red Cross and residents told AFP yesterday.

One resident described the assaults as a "revenge" attack on local vigilante groups set up to defend communities from the gangs.

For years, the heavily armed gangs -- locally known as "bandits" -- have intensified assaults in rural areas in northwest and central Nigeria where there is little state presence, killing thousands and conducting kidnappings for ransom.

Plateau state Red Cross secretary Nuruldeen Hussain Magaji said "hundreds of vigilantes were ambushed" Sunday and 30 killed in the village of Kukawa.

That attack came as the vigilantes regrouped after clashes earlier in the day in the nearby community of Bunyun Nyalum left 10 vigilantes dead, said Musa Ibrahim, a resident.

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A rain-soaked sparrow perches on a branch, unable to fly. Two days of rain in Khulna have left many birds stranded with their nests washed away and no place to shelter. This photo was taken at the city's Shibbari intersection yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, CHILDREN

## Offenders now weaponising AI

Cyber Support for Women and Children reports 29 cases of cyber abuse in last 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cyber and gender-based violence in Bangladesh has seen a disturbing rise in the first half of 2025, with artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly being used to cause harm, according to a new report by the Cyber Support for Women and Children (CSWC) platform.

Between January and June, the CSWC recorded 29 incidents based on data compiled from media sources and human rights organisations.

The cases revealed a trend of technology-enabled abuse, including blackmail and sexual harassment through digitally recorded videos of rape incidents, AI-generated obscene images, and the unregulated online spread of private photos, videos, and personal information.

The report noted that the nature of these crimes is becoming more complex and layered, often involving

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

## Rape cases already near last year's total count

481 incidents recorded from Jan-Jun in 2025, compared to 516 in all of 2024, says Bangladesh Mahila Parishad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

From January to June this year, 481 cases of rape against women and girls were reported in Bangladesh, with 345 of the victims being children, according to data from Bangladesh Mahila Parishad.

This figure is nearly as high as the total number of rape cases reported throughout all of last year, which was 516, the organisation noted.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad published these figures after compiling reports from 15 newspapers on violence against women and girls.

An analysis showed that in just six months of 2025, the number of reported rape incidents is only 35 fewer than the entirety of 2024. Among various forms of violence against women, rape remains the most common.

These findings were presented at a discussion titled "The Scenario of Violence Against Women and Girls:

## AT A GLANCE

- 345 of the victims children
- 106 cases involved gang rape
- 17 victims killed after the assault

Perspectives of Women Journalists" held yesterday at the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad's office in the capital's Segunbagicha.

Munima Sultana, special correspondent at The Financial Express and a member of the organisation's media subcommittee, and Afruza Arman, senior training and research officer at the organisation, presented two reports at the event.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

## SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

PBI allowed to interrogate accused Tanvir

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday allowed Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) to interrogate Tanvir Rahman, an accused in the case filed over the murders of journalists couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Rumi in 2012.



Tanvir, a family friend of the couple, was arrested on October 10, 2012 in connection with the murders and later released on bail.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Minhazur Rahman passed the order after Investigation Officer Md Azizul Haque, also an additional superintendent of police at the PBI, appealed on May 21 in this regard.

The magistrate asked Tanvir to meet the IO on the next scheduled date.

A day before the death of the victims, Rumi met Tanvir in front of Square Hospital at Panthapath around 5:15pm on February 10, 2012 and travelled in Tanvir's car to different places in the capital.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

ENGINEERING SECTOR  
Buet students demand merit-based promotion

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) students staged a sit-in yesterday, demanding a recruitment test for promotions to assistant engineer or equivalent positions, alongside direct entry, and eligibility restricted to BSc engineering degree holders.

At a press briefing on the campus, they said sub-assistant engineers (10th grade) with diplomas are often promoted to 9th-grade assistant engineers through internal quotas, reducing entry-level opportunities for BSc graduates.

They alleged this violates rules allowing only 33% promotion per vacancy, yet nearly 100% are filled through promotion.

The protest, held in front of the registrar's building, included a three-point demand. Students also

## JP splits deepen as top leaders ousted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Participating in the next national election amid ongoing mob violence and a lack of security would be like "jumping into a pond with hands and feet tied," said Shameem Haider Patwari, newly appointed secretary general of the Jatiya Party (JP), yesterday.

He also announced the removal of three top leaders - Anisul Islam Mahmud, Ruhul Amin Hawlader, and Mujibul Haque Chunnu - from all party positions in line with the JP charter.

In response, the three leaders held a press conference in the capital, rejecting their removal and calling JP Chairman GM Quader's move illegal.

They said they do not accept his decisions and plan to participate in the party's upcoming council.

**WHAT SHAMEEM SAID**

Speaking to reporters at his office in Dhaka, Shameem said JP's participation in the election depends on whether the government and the Election Commission ensure security and a level playing field.

"If there's no security, if mob violence continues, then taking part in the election will be like jumping into a pond with hands and feet tied," he said.

He stressed the need for visible government action to create a safe and fair environment. "The government must ensure all political parties can

participate safely," he added.

Shameem also said the party has been unable to secure a venue for holding its council. "We booked a hall, but the authorities cancelled it citing security reasons," he said.

Noting that holding national elections is a massive task, he said JP would decide on participating after observing whether the government and the EC are capable of managing it properly.

## STATEMENTS FROM ANISUL, HAWLADER, AND CHUNNU

At a press briefing at Hawlader's office in Gulshan, the three ousted leaders claimed the meeting in which they were removed was not valid, as only the secretary general can convene such a meeting under party rules.

"GM Quader cannot call such a meeting. The decision is unconstitutional - we remain in our posts," said Anisul.

On Monday, GM Quader removed Senior Co-Chairman Anisul, Co-Chairman Hawlader, and Secretary General Chunnu, replacing Chunnu with Shameem as the new secretary general. With this, all JP leaders have been removed in the past week, deepening party tensions.

Anisul demanded that the clause of the party charter enabling the chairman to unilaterally appoint or

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

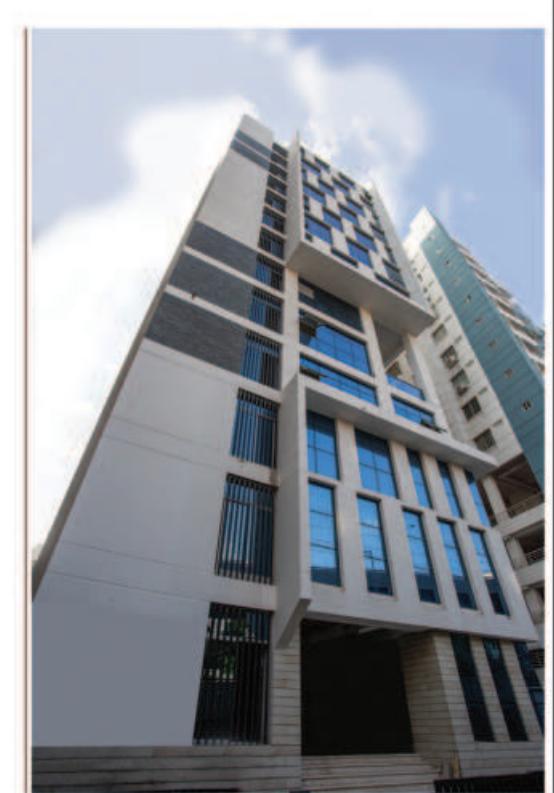
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# Drought stalls Aman farming in Rangpur

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

A prolonged dry spell over the past three weeks has severely disrupted Aman paddy cultivation across the Rangpur region, leaving farmlands parched and seedbeds wilting.

Farmers in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha, and Nilphamari -- where Aman is the principal monsoon crop -- have not been able to transplant paddy seedlings due to a lack of rain.

"We usually begin transplanting Aman seedlings in early July, but there's been no rain at all," said Samir Ali, 68, a farmer from Naodanga village in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila. "I prepared 12 decimals of seedbed, but the seedlings are drying up due to the drought."

Santosh Chandra Sen, 76, a farmer from Lahirihari village in Rangpur Sadar upazila, echoed similar concerns.

In Lalmonirhat's Barabari village, 65-year-old farmer Nazrul Islam said, "We're already behind schedule. If the seedlings can't be transplanted on time, the yield will definitely suffer."

The dry spell has also left many agricultural labourers jobless.

"We should be transplanting seedlings in the fields by now," said Narayan Chandra Roy, 50, a farm labourer from Kulaghata village in Lalmonirhat. "But there is no work. Farmers aren't calling us because they haven't started tilling their lands."



Firefighters in operation to douse a blaze inside an apartment in Chattogram yesterday. The fire broke out around 12:35pm on the seventh and eighth floors of a nine-storey building in the Askar Dighir Par area and was brought under control after an hour of efforts, according to fire service officials.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Shrimp adulteration threatens health, exports

Malpractice persists despite raids, fines, and industry warnings

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

The shrimp industry, known as Bangladesh's "white gold," significantly boosts foreign exchange earnings and supports thousands of marginalised farmers, especially in the Khulna region.

The industry, which began expanding since the 1960s, involves the economic participation of approximately 15 million people directly or indirectly, according to Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters Association (BFFEA).

However, the continued adulteration of shrimp with harmful substances raises health concerns and threatens Bangladesh's reputation in the global market.

Despite raids and penalties, prevention remains elusive as profit-driven traders keep injecting jelly and other substances into shrimp to boost weight and improve appearance. Even with all of its potential, this malpractice threatens the shrimp industry's growth.

There are over 700 depots in Notun Bazar and Rupsa areas of Khulna, as well as many others in Satkhira and Bagerhat. While playing a critical role in the supply chain, these depots are also the origin of this malpractice.

Wahiduzzaman Monjur, former general secretary of the Khulna Shrimp Traders Association, said shrimp are not adulterated at the farm level but at depots, where workers inject jelly before sending them to processing

factories, which knowingly accept them to meet export demands.

Various shrimp species are farmed in Khulna's saline waters and processed at about 50 factories along the Rupsha river, before being exported to countries across Europe, Asia, and beyond.

The shrimp rejected during quality control are later sold to traders in Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Dhaka, Savar, Dinajpur, Panchagarh, Bogura, Chandpur, Patuakhali, Feni and other districts.

Tariqul Islam Zahir, a frozen food exporter, said traders at some depots in Khulna often push jelly, liquid substances and marbles into shrimps to increase their weight by 100-200 grammes per kg. This in turn results in bacterial contamination, causing shrimp to decompose quickly.

Also, foreign buyers usually return such adulterated shrimp, following laboratory tests, and demand fresh shipments at lower prices, causing losses to exporters, said Zahir, also managing director of Achlya Sea Food Ltd.

A single rejected shipment can result in losses ranging from Tk 30-35 lakh, he added.

Most recently, on June 12, around 300 kilogrammes of (bagda) tiger shrimps injected with jelly were seized from three individuals -- Sayed Hasan, Babu Gazi, and Liton Karikar from Kaliganj upazila -- by law enforcers in Ashashuni of Satkhira, said

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



Adulterated shrimp being destroyed in a recent drive in Rupsha, Khulna.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Adulterated shrimp being destroyed in a recent drive in Rupsha, Khulna.



Adulterated shrimp being destroyed in a recent drive in Rupsha, Khulna.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## BNP won't tolerate extortionists within party ranks Says Rizvi

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday warned that the party will not tolerate any extortionists or land grabbers within its ranks.

"This party [BNP] does not accommodate any anti-social elements, grabbers or extortionists," he said during a press conference at BNP's Nayapaltan central office in the capital.

Rizvi said someone can create anarchy and chaos using the name of BNP, but the party has not hesitated to take organisational action against them whenever such incidents are reported.

"This party believes in an ideal state and society; the leadership must be entrusted to competent, skilled, honest and humane persons," Rizvi said, adding that whenever BNP was in power.

"On the other hand, a vested quarter are using technology in very planned way and are spreading various propaganda through social

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

## Three die in road crashes in two dists

STAR REPORT

At least three people died in road accidents in two districts yesterday.

A female garment worker was killed after being hit by a pickup van while crossing the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Gazipur's Sreepur upazila early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Shilpi, 40, of Bongram in Mymensingh. She was employed at Dekho Garments in Sreepur's Nayapaltan.

Ayub Ali, officer-in-charge of Mawna Highway Police Station, said Shilpi was crossing the road in the MC Bazar area around 5:00am on her way to work when the pickup van struck her, killing her on the spot.

Police rushed to the scene, recovered the body, and seized the vehicle involved in the incident. However, the driver fled and remains at large.

The body has been kept in police custody for legal procedures, and further action is underway.

Meanwhile, a father and his son were killed, and another son injured after a truck hit a battery-run auto-rickshaw on Hatikumru-Bonpara highway in Ullapara upazila of Sirajganj yesterday morning.

The victims were identified as Abdul Mannan Khandakar, 70, and his son Jewel Khandakar, 35, of Puran Bera village of Solonga in Sirajganj.

Md Abdur Rouf, officer-in-charge of Hatikumru Highway Police Station, said that as Mannan was feeling sick this morning, his son took him to the hospital on a battery-run three-wheeler.

When their vehicle reached Chorai Shikha around 7:00am, a Bonpara-bound truck hit the auto-rickshaw, leaving both father and son dead on the spot.

Mannan's other son, Russel Khondokar, was injured in the accident. He was taken to Sirajganj General Hospital.

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নেটিঝন্টার দণ্ড  
চট্টগ্রাম মেডিকেল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়  
বিআইটিআইডি ভবন, ফৌজদারহাট-৪৩১৬  
চট্টগ্রাম, বাংলাদেশ।

## ফ্ল্যাট ভাড়া নেওয়ার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

আগামী আগস্ট ২০২৫ ইং হতে চট্টগ্রাম মেডিকেল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম এর ঢাকাট গেস্ট হাউজের জন্য উত্তরা/ইনিয়া নোট/ ডি.ও.এইচ.এস-মিরপুর/ ধানমন্ডি/ শ্যামলী/ আগরাগাঁও/ সেগুন বাঁচা/ মগবাজার/ মালিবাগ/ হাতির খিল/ ফার্মগেইট/ বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয় ও ইউজিসির আশেপাশে আবাসিক এলাকায় প্রশংস্ক রাস্তার পার্শ্বে আধুনিক সুযোগ-সুবিধা সম্বলিত এবং লাইনের গ্যাস সংযুক্ত সহকারে (অনাবশ্যক), গাড়ি পার্কিং, কেয়ারটেকার/গৃহপরিচারিক/ ড্রাইভার রুমসহ সর্বমোট ২৫০০-৩০০০ বর্গফুটের (কম-বেশি) ০১টি/০২টি ফ্ল্যাট ভাড়া নেওয়া হবে। আবাহী ফ্ল্যাট এর মালিকণ -কে আগামী ২২.০৭.২০২৫ ইং তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন (সকল ৯.০০টা থেকে বিকাল ০৩:০০টা) সময়ের মধ্যে সহকারী রেজিস্ট্রার (প্রশাসন), চট্টগ্রাম মেডিকেল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, বিআইটিআইডি ভবন, ফৌজদারহাট, চট্টগ্রাম বরাবরে ফ্ল্যাট ভাড়ার শর্তাবলি, ভাড়ার পরিমাণ ইত্যাদি উল্লেখসহ আবেদন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

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বিআইটিআইডি ভবন, ফৌজদারহাট, চট্টগ্রাম।

ফোন: ০১৭১৯-৩৯৩১৫৮

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বাংলাদেশ-ঢাকা কার্পেট ফ্যাটুরী  
(বাংলাদেশ প্রাচীন অর্থনৈতিক একাডেমি)

উত্তর কাটলি, ঢাকায়

বাংলাদেশ-ঢাকা কার্পেট ফ্যাটুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ-ঢাকা কার্পেট ফ্য

## Iran president faces backlash over 'soft' US stance

AFP, Tehran

Iranian President Masoud Pekeshkian yesterday came under fire after voicing support for renewed talks with the United States, with critics accusing him of being "too soft" in the wake of last month's attacks on the country.

The backlash followed the release of an interview with US media personality Tucker Carlson, in which Pekeshkian said Iran had "no problem" resuming talks so long as trust could be rebuilt between the two sides.

His comments came less than a month after Israel launched an unprecedented bombing campaign on June 13 that killed senior military commanders and nuclear scientists in Iran.

Iranian state media reported Monday that the death toll in Iran following the 12 day war with Israel has risen to at least 1,060.



Palestinians carry a body at the site of an Israeli strike on a school sheltering displaced people in the Bureij refugee camp, in central Gaza, yesterday. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said that a "sharp surge" in deaths and injuries in incidents around aid distribution sites in Gaza is pushing the territory's already stretched health system past its capacity.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Arming Ukraine prolongs war

### Warns Kremlin after Trump pledges more weapons

AFP, Moscow

The Kremlin yesterday warned that sending arms to Ukraine only serves to prolong the conflict, a day after US President Donald Trump pledged "more weapons" for Ukraine to defend itself.

"It is obvious of course that these actions probably do not align with attempts to promote a peaceful resolution," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying in a briefing.

Peskov also criticised European countries for "actively contributing to the continuation of hostilities" with their arms supplies to Ukraine.

Trump's announcement followed Washington saying last week that it was halting some weapons shipments to Kyiv, leaving Ukrainian officials caught off guard and scrambling for clarity.

A pause poses a potentially serious challenge for Kyiv, which is contending with some of Russia's largest missile and drone attacks of the more than three-year war.

"We're going to have to send more weapons -- defensive weapons primarily," says Trump

"They're getting hit very, very hard," he said of Ukraine, while adding that he was "not happy" with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Putin launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and has shown little willingness to end the conflict despite pressure from Trump.

The US president's pledge to ship more arms to Ukraine came after Moscow said Monday that its forces captured its first village in Ukraine's central Dniproptetrovsk region after advancing towards it for months.

Russia launched a fresh large-scale drone and missile barrage before the announcement, including on Ukraine's military recruitment centres.

Kyiv also said it carried out a drone attack on a Russian ammunition factory in the Moscow region.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin said yesterday that it was shocked by the sudden death of Russia's former transport minister Roman Starovoit, news of which broke hours after President Vladimir Putin had sacked him.

**"We're going to have to send more weapons -- defensive weapons primarily," says Trump**

#### AGENCIES

A damaged cargo ship is under "continuous attack" in the Red Sea, a maritime monitor said yesterday, after Yemen's Houthi rebels ended a months-long lull in their harassment campaign of the vital but volatile waterway.

The Eternity, a Liberian-flagged bulk carrier, first came under attack on Monday, shortly after the Iran-backed Houthis claimed responsibility for an earlier assault on another cargo ship, the Magic Seas.

"The (Eternity) has sustained significant damage and has lost all propulsion," the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, an offshoot of the British Army, said in a statement. "The vessel is surrounded by small craft and is under continuous attack."

Two crew on the cargo ship died, it added.

The Houthis have not claimed responsibility for the latest attack. On Monday, they said they used unmanned boats, missiles and drones against the Magic Seas, their first attack on a cargo vessel this year.

All but one of the 22 crew stranded aboard the Eternity were from the Philippines, officials in Manila said yesterday.

The crew of the Magic Seas, which was also badly damaged, was rescued on Monday.

The Houthis began targeting Israel and ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden after the Gaza war broke out in October 2023, claiming



solidarity with Palestinians.

In response, Israel has carried out several strikes on Yemen, including a wave of attacks on Sunday that hit the port city of Hodeida and nearby areas.

In May, the group struck a ceasefire with the United States after weeks of intense American strikes aimed at halting their attacks on the Red Sea trade route.

Israel has struck Houthi targets in response, launching strikes on Monday for the first time in nearly a month. A US Houthi ceasefire deal in May did not include Israel, reports Reuters.

Magic Seas was carrying iron and fertilisers from China to Turkey, a voyage that appeared low-risk as it had nothing to do with Israel, said a representative of the Stem Shipping, adding that Stem Shipping had received no warning

of the attack.

But the fleet of Allseas Marine, Magic Seas' other commercial manager, had made calls to Israeli ports over the past year, according to analysis by UK-based maritime risk management company Vanguard Tech.

"These factors put the Magic Seas at an extreme risk of being targeted," said Ellie Shafik, head of intelligence with Vanguard Tech.

The manager of ETERNITY C is also affiliated with vessels that have made calls to Israeli ports, security sources said.

John Xylas, chairman of the dry bulk shipping association Intercargo, said the crew were "innocent people, simply doing their jobs, keeping global trade moving".

"No one at sea should ever face such violence," he said.

## Wider dengue spread sparks concerns

FROM PAGE 1

### SHARP RISE IN CASES

Till yesterday, 13,188 people have been hospitalised with dengue this year -- a 3.26-fold increase from the 4,041 cases recorded during the

died from dengue this year, compared to 47 deaths during the same period in 2024.

Interestingly, Dhaka has seen fewer cases this year. As of yesterday, 2,840 cases

Prof. Bashar. "As a result, over half the city's residents are believed to have been already infected with at least one serotype, which reduced their chances of reinfection."

Despite efforts by health and local authorities, 84 new cases were recorded there just yesterday.

On June 30, the DGHS directed local authorities to launch awareness campaigns emphasising early hospitalisation. A team of medicine specialists was also sent to train local doctors on more effective dengue management.

Barguna Deputy Commissioner Mohammed Shafiq Alam said cleaning drives and mobile courts are being conducted to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds.

"Many residents store rainwater in open containers, which serve as prime breeding spots for Aedes mosquitoes," he said. "We're trying to raise awareness so that these containers are kept covered ... The situation has improved recently, and we're working to bring it further under control within this month."

(22 percent of this year's cases) were reported from the capital, down from 1,451 cases (36 percent) in the same period last year.

All four dengue serotypes have circulated in Dhaka over the past 25 years since the first outbreak in 2000," said

He added that Dhaka's anti-mosquito drives have also been relatively more effective than those in other districts.

**BARGUNA: A HOTSPOT**

Barguna alone has reported 3,420 cases (26 percent) and six deaths so far this year.

2024 (TILL JULY 8)	2025 (TILL JULY 8)
4,041 hospitalisations recorded	13,188 hospitalisations recorded
47 dengue-related deaths reported	51 dengue-related deaths reported
527 cases from Barishal division (13% of total)	5,697 cases from Barishal division (43% of total)
1,451 cases reported in Dhaka (36% of total)	2,840 cases reported in Dhaka (22% of total)
54 districts had reported dengue cases	60 districts have reported dengue cases

same period in 2024. Till July 8, 2023, the number of dengue cases was 9,549.

Of the 13,188, 5,697 cases (43 percent) were reported from Barishal division, compared to just 527 (13 percent) last year.

So far, 51 people have

## Thousands suffer

FROM PAGE 12

Union, along with parts of Teknaf municipality, have gone under water.

"We are monitoring the situation and staying in touch with the locals," said Teknaf Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Sheikh Ehsan Uddin.

On Saint Martin's Island, multiple villages reported seawater intrusion due to tidal surges and rough seas.

In Ukhia, runoff from nearby hills triggered flash floods in around 16 villages, affecting approximately 10,000 people, said UNO Kamrul Hossain Chowdhury.

Floodwaters also entered refugee camps 3, 7, 12, and 22, affecting nearly 15,000 residents. NGOs are assessing the damage and providing relief, he added.

In Ramu, water from the swollen Bakkhali river flooded around 1,000 homes in 10-12 villages of Fatekharkul, Rajarkul, and Sreekul unions, as well as Banglazara and Khurulia of Jhilonia union under Cox's Bazar Sadar.

Meanwhile, the Matamuhuri overflowed due to heavy rain, inundating more than 2,000 homes in Chakaria and Pekua upazilas. Across these three upazilas, at least 10,000 people have been marooned.

yesterday as continuous downpour over the past 24 hours submerged most parts under knee-deep water.

According to Md Rahat of the Patuakhali Met Office, 241.4mm of rainfall was recorded in 24 hours, the highest in four years.

Students and office-goers faced hardship as they waded through floodwaters, with most battery-run rickshaws and vehicles staying off the roads.

Patuakhali Municipality Administrator Md Jewel Rana said he and his team had been working since morning to keep sluice gates and drainage channels functional.

"Heavy rainfall and high river levels are delaying water outflow, but we're trying to manage the situation," he added.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has suspended vessel operations on 30 routes from Bhola.

Riad Hossain, port officer at the Bhola river terminal, said services would remain suspended until the weather improves.

According to official sources, the district recorded 132.6mm of rainfall in the past 24 hours.

In Monpura, UNO Likhan

- Flash floods, downpours submerge 80 villages in Cox's Bazar
- Parts of Patuakhali inundated due to record rainfall in 4 years
- Rising water level in Muhuri raises flash flood fears in Feni

Md Salauddin Ahmed, sub-divisional engineer of the Cox's Bazar Water Development Board, said parts of embankments in Moheshkhali and Kutubdia have been damaged by strong water surges, and repairs are underway.

Feni recorded 233mm of rainfall in 24 hours. Low-lying areas in the city, including Palashpur, Amantanji, Rupatoli, and Bottola, have been inundated.

Tajul Islam, sub-assistant engineer of the Water Development Board (WDB) in Barishal, said while most rivers in the division have swelled, the Meghna at Tajumuddin point and the Hizla river have crossed the danger level.

Officials said the inclement weather forced most schools in the district to suspend classes and examinations yesterday.

In Khulna, incessant rain since Monday afternoon has flooded most streets in the district headquarters. Daily wage earners have been hit hard.

"We suffered immensely during last year's floods. If such a situation recurs, I don't know how we will survive," said Balayet Hossain, an auto-rickshaw driver.

Life in Patuakhali town was also severely disrupted

Bonik said all four unions of the upazila have been submerged under up to two feet of water.

In Barishal, intermittent rain lashed the city since early yesterday. The local meteorological office recorded 83.1mm of rainfall in 24 hours till yesterday afternoon.

Fulgazi UNO Fahriya Islam said the swollen Muhuri river devoured part of the road connecting Fulgazi Bazar and Rajeshpur, and two shops were washed away.

A local BMD official said the Muhuri was flowing 137cm above the danger level, raising the risk of flash floods in adjacent low-lying areas.

Officials said the inclement weather forced most schools in the district to suspend classes and examinations yesterday.

According to the Khulna BMD office, the city recorded 90mm of rainfall in the past 24 hours.

The downpour caused widespread waterlogging in areas such as Tutpara, Royal Mor, Mistrirupa, and Ahsan Ahmed Road, forcing people to wade through flooded streets.

The rainfall is likely to continue for the next two days across Khulna and surrounding districts, the local met office said.

**স্থানীয় কার্যালয় স্থানান্তর**

**রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র স্থানীয় কার্যালয় ০৯ জুলাই ২০২৫ বুধবার থেকে নতুন ঠিকানায় স্থানান্তরিত হয়ে ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম শুরু করছে।**

**পুর্বের ঠিকানা**

রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি

স্থানীয় কার্যালয়

রূপালী ভবন

৩৪, দিলকুশা বা/এ, নীচ তলা

ও ৭ম তলা, মাতিখিল, ঢাকা-১০০০



**বর্তমান ঠিকানা**

রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি

স্থানীয় কার্যালয়

সাথারণ বীমা টাওয়ার

৩৭/এ, দিলকুশা বা/এ, নীচ তলা

ও ৭ম তলা, মাতিখিল, ঢাকা-১০০০

**সম্মানিত গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো**

**রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি**

উন্নত সেবার নিশ্চয়তা

## New US tariff brings fresh concerns

Dhaka must intensify negotiations while working on long-term resilience

We are deeply concerned by the imposition of a steep 35 percent tariff on Bangladeshi goods entering the US market from August 1. This marks a new phase in the trade war launched by President Donald Trump earlier this year. Although the 35 percent rate is a slight improvement from the 37 percent initially proposed, it is still far above the 20 percent that Dhaka had hoped to secure. In fact, Bangladesh is among the hardest-hit countries in the latest round of US trade actions that imposed duties ranging from 25 to 40 percent.

Over the past few months, much has been made of the likely impacts of tariff pressures on our apparel sector. True, the sector is still well-positioned in the US market. As a global leader in low-cost, basic to mid-range garments, Bangladeshi products remain attractive to American retailers. Since the "reciprocal" tariff announcement on April 2, a new cost-sharing model has reportedly emerged among suppliers, fabric manufacturers, and retailers. Each party is apparently bearing a portion of the tariff burden, thus preventing the extra cost from falling entirely on one segment of the supply chain. Moreover, although Vietnam secured a lower, 20 percent tariff from the US, a steep 40 percent tariff slapped on any transshipped goods routed through Vietnam—targeting China's rerouting strategies—could work in our favour. Vietnam's capacity limits, as well as India's, may also benefit Bangladesh.

That said, there is no denying the effect of a 35 percent tariff on our competitiveness. As an apparel manufacturer has told this daily, "it is a major blow for Bangladesh if it remains same." Our limited leverage in bilateral discussions with the US government is a reality we must acknowledge. However, that should not discourage us from continuing to push for a fairer deal. A Bangladeshi delegation currently remains in Washington for last-ditch talks, with the next discussion scheduled for July 9. Bangladeshi officials are hopeful that the latest tariff is not "a final decision," and that something good may come out of ongoing negotiations. President Trump's subsequent statement that the August 1 deadline is "not 100 percent firm" also provides a narrow but critical window of opportunity to reach a mutually beneficial outcome.

Naturally, the immediate goal is reducing the 35 percent tariff as much as possible, but we must also look at the bigger picture. To absorb such tariff pressures and thrive in a post-LDC, protectionist world, Bangladesh should use this crisis as an opportunity to address systemic barriers such as poor infrastructure, inconsistent energy supply, corruption, cumbersome tax regulations, etc. These longstanding issues must now be seen in the context of global competitiveness. We, therefore, urge the government to focus simultaneously on securing a better deal in Washington and laying the groundwork at home for a more resilient and diversified export economy.

## Where is the rule of law?

HRSS report paints a grim picture of human rights violations

The latest half-yearly report by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS) reveals a worrying trend in rights violations during the first half of the year. The rights group has reported an alarming rise in incidents of violence against women and children, including rape, as well as political killings, mob lynchings, assaults on journalists, custodial deaths, and attacks targeting minorities and religious shrines. In addition to these abuses, the report also highlights a sharp increase in crimes such as extortion, theft, snatching, robbery, and murder. Such persistent violations have shaken people's trust in law enforcement in post-uprising Bangladesh, where many had hoped the rule of law would be firmly upheld.

In the first half of the year, at least 1,042 women and girls were reportedly subjected to sexual violence, with an alarming 60 percent of victims being minors. Of the 476 documented rape cases, 292 involved minors. The persistence of these incidents—including the recent rapes in Cumilla and Bhola, the brutal rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl in Magura, and the death of a six-year-old in Munshiganj after a rape attempt—highlights deeper, systemic failures.

The sharp rise in mob violence during this time has also exposed a troubling state of the country's law-and-order situation. According to the report, 141 incidents across Bangladesh led to 67 deaths and 119 injuries. Data from Ain o Salish Kendra reveals that 179 individuals have been killed by mob attacks between August 2024 and June 23 this year. While these figures are deeply alarming, what is equally disturbing is the lack of proper response and accountability from law enforcement agencies.

During the first half of the year, at least 529 incidents of political violence were also reported, leaving 79 dead and over 4,100 injured. The HRSS also documented an alarming rise in custodial deaths and enforced disappearances—40 deaths in jail custody and 14 in law enforcement-related incidents. Journalists also faced mounting threats during this period, with 257 subjected to harassment or assault in 152 incidents. Additionally, legal action was taken against 92 journalists under the Cyber Security Act.

This situation must be reversed. We urge the government to ensure the rule of law across the country. Impunity for violence against women, child abuse, and increasing rape incidents must end, and swift action is needed to curb mob violence. However, restoring justice is not the government's responsibility alone. Political parties and civil society must also step up, as reversing the current trend requires a combined effort. The fundamental and constitutional rights of citizens must be protected through effective control of the law-and-order situation.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Catherine the Great assumes power

On this day in 1762, Catherine the Great overthrew Peter III and began her reign as the empress of Russia, leading her country into full participation in the political and cultural life of Europe and extending Russian territory.

# EDITORIAL

## How we could broaden our export base



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T.I.M. NURUL KABIR

Diversifying Bangladesh's export basket has been a high priority policy objective and a much-talked-about subject for many years. As the country prepares to graduate from the LDC status in 2026, accelerating export diversification initiatives and strengthening the country's export competitiveness have become urgent needs.

Challenges to export diversification include issues regarding trade policy regime, trade infrastructure, and other crucial business enabling factors. Despite these challenges, some of the priority sectors have been making significant contributions to Bangladesh's export earnings, including industries with high potential for higher-value products.

Thanks to the rise of RMG, Bangladesh's economy saw a significant structural transformation in the 1980s. Apparel exports have led our transformation from a primary goods exporting economy to a manufactured goods-exporting country, thus spurring economic expansion and poverty reduction. Over the decades, the country has achieved a notable industrial production base. Now its export portfolio remains highly concentrated in the RMG sector, which accounts for more than 80 percent of total exports.

The country's entry into the global apparel markets was facilitated by the multi-fibre arrangements (MFAs). Duty-free and quota-free market access particularly under the EU's Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) for LDCs, Relaxed Rules of Origin (ROOs), and supportive trade policy adopted by the government have been instrumental in gaining competitive advantage and sustaining export growth. After the MFA quotas were scrapped in 2005, Bangladesh was able to consolidate its export competitiveness on the basis of its cheap labour cost.

However, the overdependence on apparel exports means any adverse impact on the RMG industry would lead to a major setback for our economy. Export concentration in a single sector leaves it vulnerable to

the impacts of shocks affecting said industry, such as disruptions in supply chain or production, global demand fluctuations, and changing fashion trends.

As per statistics, knitwear garment products comprise 44.6 percent and woven garments 37.2 percent of Bangladesh's total exports, followed by footwear (2.3 percent), jute products (1.9 percent) and fish (one percent). According to the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) working paper titled "Fostering Export Diversification in Bangladesh," published in June 2024, the country's export structure is among



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

the least diversified in the world. Because the success of the RMG sector has not been replicated in other sectors, export concentration has become a long-standing challenge, signalling significant risk for long-term export sustainability. Moreover, Bangladesh's export items consist primarily of labour-intensive products with limited value addition.

Leather and leather goods industry is the second highest export-earning sector in Bangladesh. According to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), the total leather exports registered a 12.55 percent growth year-on-year in FY2024-25, amounting to nearly \$1.06 billion between July 2024 and May 2025. Noticeably, the export of leather goods registered a 6.11 percent decrease

and export of finished leather fell by 6.29 percent between July 2024 and March 2025. On the other hand, leather footwear exports rose by 26.08 percent during the first 10 months of FY25. This significant success of leather footwear exports indicates a shift towards the export of higher-value products.

The global leather goods market, valued at \$531.07 billion in 2025 to \$855.36 billion by 2032, according to Fortune Business Insights, a global market research and consulting firm. To increase the export competitiveness of Bangladesh's leather industry, it is essential to speed up green transformation of the tanneries to become eligible for the Leather Working Group (LWG) certification. Besides, SMEs that work with leather products must be given easy access to finance. A closer industry-academia integration is indeed necessary for creating skilled human resources for the leather industry.

On the other hand, Bangladesh has succeeded in developing the strongest performing pharmaceutical

the US.

Bangladesh is also among the top 10 producers of rice, jute, farm fish, vegetables and potatoes, among other harvests. The agriculture sector employs over 36.9 percent of the national workforce and contributes 11.2 percent to the GDP, according to government data. According to Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), the country produces over 70 million tonnes of agricultural products annually. Due to a lack of adequate processing and storage facilities, as much as 30 percent of the 40 million tonnes of vegetables and fruits produced in the country is lost after harvesting every year. So, agro-processing has the potential and the opportunity to build upon the country's agricultural strength. The agro-processing sector has high prospects for diversifying exports and reaching a growing global processed food market.

The agro-processing industry currently contributes 1.7 percent to GDP and 13 percent to the country's manufacturing value. Value-added food products such as frozen fish, spices, potato flakes, fruit juice, and dry food are exported across the world, including the EU, Middle East, and Japan. Given the projections showing a gradual growth of global food markets, there are significant opportunities for Bangladeshi suppliers to supply agro-processed products.

Light engineering is another potential industry that can contribute to export diversification. This industry produces machinery spares and small tools for automobiles, railways, mills and factories, textiles, agro-machinery, construction equipment, the shipbuilding industry, etc. The sector meets approximately 50 percent of the domestic demand for light engineering products, significantly reducing dependency on imports.

The sector's domestic market size is estimated at \$8.2 billion, as of FY2023-24. In 2022, light engineering product export reached \$795.63 million. Key export items include bicycles, industrial machinery, refrigerators, optical lenses, and batteries. Industry insiders say Bangladesh's share in the global market is less than one percent. With targeted export promotion and improved market access, this industry has significant potential to support export diversification.

Therefore, policymakers in the country can consider the potential of these sectors to urgently diversify the range of Bangladesh's exports.

## Lessons we must learn before aspiring to be like Singapore



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MD MEHEDI HASAN

Over the past 16 years of the Awami League-led government, many ministers and policymakers have consistently praised Bangladesh's development trajectory—often comparing the country to Singapore, Asia's renowned business hub. For instance, in February 2020, then Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal claimed that Bangladesh would surpass Singapore and Malaysia economically by 2024.

As a business journalist, I heard this comparison so often at government events that it became somewhat monotonous. Ironically, Kamal is no longer in the country, and a new political regime is in place. Under the interim government led by Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus, similar comparisons with Singapore have resurfaced.

Most recently, the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) Chairman Ashik Chowdhury stated at an international investment conference that Bangladesh would become a regional manufacturing hub and transform into "a country like Singapore" by 2035.

Such remarks, however, often feel detached from reality.

As of 2024, Singapore's GDP per capita stood at around \$85,000, compared to Bangladesh's \$2,700.

But beyond the numbers, Singapore is far ahead in terms of economic complexity, governance, innovation, and global competitiveness. The legacy of one of its former prime ministers, Lee Kuan Yew's leadership has made the city-state a beacon of human capital development, infrastructural excellence, and business-friendly governance. By contrast, Bangladesh continues to face chronic challenges—bureaucratic red tape, underdeveloped infrastructure, frequent traffic congestion, and an unpredictable regulatory environment that deters foreign investors.

Despite the overused comparisons, I must admit that they sparked a personal dream in me to one day see Singapore—the very symbol of efficiency and development our leaders often cite. That dream came true in the last week of June when I was selected for the 2025 International Trade Journalism Fellowship in Singapore, jointly organised by the National Press Foundation (USA) and the Hinrich Foundation (Singapore). I spent a week in the city and returned with unforgettable impressions—and a sobering perspective on where we actually stand.

Let me share some personal observations from that journey. My experience began at Hazrat

Shahjalal International Airport. Carrying a laptop in my luggage, I was stopped and asked to open my suitcase after scanning. I politely requested to avoid opening it, as it was tightly packed, but the officials insisted. After a pointless search, they let me go. The ordeal did not end there. Despite having a valid passport and a Singapore visa, I was held at immigration simply because I'm a journalist. They claimed to need "higher authority" permission. Although eventually cleared, I felt harassed and embarrassed. This experience raised a troubling question: how can a country with such a chaotic system aspire to become "the next Singapore"?

In sharp contrast, after a short three and-a-half-hour flight, I arrived at Changi Airport—one of Asia's largest transportation hubs. My first impression? Breathtaking. Immigration took no more than three minutes—fully automated, no human interaction required. We spent nearly three hours simply exploring the airport's beauty and organisation. The comparison with our own airport was painful. I kept thinking: why would any serious investor choose to come to Bangladesh?

In Singapore, the roads are wide, traffic is smooth, and everything follows order. Pedestrians have designated crossings. Vehicles obey traffic signals without needing police intervention.

I did not see any traffic police on the roads—because everything runs on automation. Public cleanliness is maintained meticulously. People do not litter. Smokers use designated zones. Road safety is taken seriously—no illegal vehicles like battery-run

rickshaws clogging the streets. One of the most impressive aspects was digital connectivity. I did not even need to buy a SIM card—public Wi-Fi was everywhere. I stayed connected via WhatsApp during my stay. The metro rail service throughout the city was just mind-blowing, and I visited most areas in Singapore using the metro rail with my contactless Mastercard. Above all, the sense of safety and order was reassuring. Surveillance is tight, and laws are strictly enforced—preventing illegal activities and ensuring peace in public spaces.

Having reported on business and economic issues for over a decade, I have witnessed how the Bangladeshi system often stifles enterprise through red tape, corruption, and inefficiency. It pains me to say this, but if we continue along our current path, it's not just that we won't become Singapore by 2035—we may not reach that level even by 2090.

Our policymakers must come down from the clouds and engage with reality. Mere optimism will not build an investment-friendly environment. We need serious, systemic reform.

Unfortunately, much of our development narrative is undermined by corruption, nepotism, lack of law enforcement, and policy inconsistency. Many of our so-called business elites are more focused on laundering money than investing productively at home. We may have numerous rules on paper, but enforcement remains elusive.

It's time we stop invoking Singapore in speeches and start drawing lessons from it in practice. Until then, these comparisons will only deepen public cynicism and push genuine reform further out of reach.

## The BRICS equation behind the Israel-Iran conflict



Dr Faridul Alam,  
a retired academic, writes from New York City, US.

FARIDUL ALAM

*"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world..."*

—W.B. Yeats, "The Second Coming"

Mainstream media coverage of the Israel-Iran conflict often pivots on proxies, retaliation, and regional instability. Analysts debate whether Tehran's reach into Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq crosses Israel's red lines or whether Israel's preemptive strikes serve as deterrence or provocation. But such readings obscure the deeper shift underway: the erosion of a US-led unipolar world order and the contested rise of a multipolar alternative. The latest escalation—particularly following direct US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities based on questionable intelligence—must be understood not merely in regional terms but as part of Washington's broader effort to derail BRICS+ and the geopolitical realignment it symbolises.

Between 2024 and 2025, BRICS expanded, joined by countries including Iran, the UAE, Egypt, and Ethiopia as members, and Vietnam as a partner country. BRICS+ now represents 44 percent of global GDP (by purchasing power parity) and 56 percent of the world's population.

What began as a rhetorical coalition has matured into a formidable bloc with institutional ambitions. Of late, Washington's renewed push to finalise a trade and security agreement with Vietnam is no coincidence. There is a method in the apparent madness: fragment BRICS from within, contain China's influence, and reassess US leverage over strategic trade routes and supply chains. In this light, the Israel-Iran conflict is not an isolated flashpoint but a calculated disruption—part of a wider effort to arrest the momentum of multipolarity before it takes structural root.

BRICS—initially Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—was long dismissed in the West as rhetorical. But in recent times, it has begun building parallel institutions to challenge Western dominance.

Among its most ambitious aims is de-dollarisation—reducing global dependence on the US dollar in trade and finance. This strikes at the foundation of America's economic and geopolitical power. Washington's leverage, enforced via sanctions and institutions like Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) and the IMF, is deeply rooted in the dollar's primacy. Iran's BRICS accession, therefore, is not symbolic; it is strategic. It signals a path for sanctioned states to break free from the architecture of Western economic coercion.

Long the poster child of US sanctions, Iran has survived through creative oil trade mechanisms and strategic ties with Russia and China. But BRICS membership gives Iran more than endurance—it grants legitimacy. With the option to trade outside the dollar system—especially with China, India, or Gulf economies—Iran gains leverage and economic insulation.

Equally important, BRICS offers a diplomatic umbrella. Tehran can now reframe itself not as a pariah, but as a pillar of Global South resistance to neocolonial order. And here lies the paradox for Washington: the more it tries to isolate Iran, the more it risks binding BRICS members closer together in mutual defiance.

Israel, while not a BRICS member, plays a pivotal role in defending US hegemony. Beyond being a regional ally, it serves as a forward base to project US power and trial strategies of containment in the Middle East, especially towards Iran.

Israel's targeted assassinations and airstrikes, often justified as preemptive defence, also serve a larger agenda: to provoke Iran into retaliating, thereby justifying its continued isolation and obstructing its integration into blocs like BRICS. The April 2024 assassination of high-ranking Iranian commanders in Damascus underscores this logic. It wasn't just a tactical strike; it was a

disruption of diplomacy itself.

Netanyahu's rhetoric—essentially issuing his own "fatwa" for regime change in Iran, echoed theatrically by Trump—reflects not confidence but desperation. The strategy is no longer about negotiation or deterrence but elimination. It is an attempt to stall the rise of a post-American global order.

The inclusion of Iran and major Gulf oil exporters into BRICS ruptured the illusion that US military and financial patronage ensured alignment. These states signalled an interest in diversifying their strategic options, posing a fundamental threat to American global dominance.

This is why the Israel-Iran conflict now functions as more than a regional war. It is a

facilities, Israel's campaign faltered until the US intervened with bunker buster bombs. This joint assault shattered the myth of Israeli self-sufficiency and signalled Washington's readiness to escalate beyond deterrence.

It also sends a chilling message to the Global South: efforts to create alternative global alignments will be met not just with economic sabotage, but with deliberate destabilisation. The US is signalling that the cost of challenging unipolarity is not merely financial, it is existential.

The Israel-Iran conflict is not simply about borders or nuclear enrichment; it is about who defines global legitimacy. For Washington, the goal may not be to "defeat" Iran outright but to bog it down, thereby weakening BRICS



US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met in Washington, DC on July 7, 2025, just over two weeks after the US president ordered the bombing of Iranian nuclear sites in support of Israeli air strikes.

PHOTO: REUTERS

disruption tactic, driving wedges into BRICS. The UAE and Egypt—though now members—remain heavily reliant on US defence systems. A full-scale conflict involving Iran forces these countries into a dilemma: support BRICS cohesion or retreat into the safety of US patronage.

The most recent flare-up began with Israeli strikes on Iran's nuclear sites. Lacking the munitions needed to breach Iran's fortified

coherence. A cornered Iran complicates unity within the bloc, keeps India cautious, China distracted, and Gulf states ambivalent.

Yet this approach is a double-edged sword. The more openly the US and Israel target Iran, the more they risk galvanising anti-Western sentiment across the Global South. The fragmentation they seek may ironically foster deeper BRICS solidarity, uniting states weary of Western double standards and

coercive diplomacy.

The 2025 BRICS Summit in Rio unfolded under intense geopolitical pressure. Intended to showcase an emerging multipolar consensus—emphasising economic cooperation, peace advocacy, and systemic alternatives to US dominance—it also exposed the fragility of that project. Brazil, as host, walked a diplomatic tightrope: championing Global South solidarity while safeguarding its deep economic ties with the US and EU. The absence of China's and Russia's top leadership created a symbolic vacuum, muting the bloc's collective challenge to Western hegemony.

Nonetheless, the summit reaffirmed BRICS's ambition to contest the Western monopoly over global economic governance. Delegates condemned the resurgence of protectionism, particularly the Trump administration's unilateral tariffs—policies framed as national security measures but seen as instruments of economic coercion, reinforcing a unipolar order that subordinates trade and financial systems to US strategic interests. In response, BRICS leaders emphasised the need to build alternative institutions aligned with the priorities of the Global South. This includes expanding the New Development Bank to reduce reliance on Bretton Woods institutions, and accelerating non-dollar trade settlement mechanisms to protect against the vulnerabilities of a dollar dominated system.

These initiatives reflect more than a rejection of Western conditionality. They assert economic agency against the weaponisation of interdependence that sustains US global influence. Yet the summit also revealed how internal divergences and external pressures—particularly military escalation in the Middle East—continue to strain BRICS's coherence. The bloc's ambition remains clear, but so too does its susceptibility to fragmentation, precisely the fault line Washington seeks to exploit.

Washington's efforts to slow the pace of multipolarity through regional destabilisation may offer short-term gains. But long-term, they risk deepening the legitimacy crisis of US leadership and driving more nations towards BRICS, not away from it.

To view this as a local flashpoint is to miss the larger stakes. This is a front line in the struggle over the future of international order. And despite its contradictions, BRICS is no longer just a symbol. It is a contender that now packs an unmistakable punch.

## Why global crises are pushing the world towards renewables



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SYED RAIYAN AMIR

It's hard to look at the news today without seeing energy in the background of almost every crisis. Whether it's the war in Ukraine, the standoff between Israel and Iran, or the slow militarisation of the Arctic, energy isn't just lurking in the background—it's right at the centre. The urgency to move away from fossil fuels and into renewables isn't just about climate change anymore. It's also about security, survival, and staying ahead of the next big disruption.

Let's take the Middle East as a starting point. The recent escalations between Israel and Iran are not just ideological or territorial; they're wrapped up in energy infrastructure, shipping lanes, and strategic dominance. The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow stretch of water that sees nearly 20 percent of the world's oil traffic, remains one of the most fragile arteries in the global energy system. Every drone strike, missile test, or naval drill adds more uncertainty. In *The Prize*, Daniel Yergin captures just how often oil has played the lead role in shaping military decisions, and that hasn't changed. If anything, it's

become more blatant.

The same applies to the Russian war in Ukraine. Russia's leverage over Europe wasn't just military but also about gas. Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy in *Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin* break down how Moscow used its energy exports as a blunt political tool. Europe learnt the hard way how dangerous dependency on a single supplier can be. That bitter experience jolted the EU into fast-tracking wind, solar, and hydrogen infrastructure, with the aim to stop being so easily cornered in addition to being pro-climate.

But it's not just big state actors. Energy tensions are flaring up in Africa, too. In *The Looting Machine*, Tom Burgis explains how foreign companies and domestic elites turned oil fields into conflict zones, making the argument that energy wealth often brings more guns than gold. As major powers like China and the US extend their presence in the continent to secure oil, gas, and rare earth minerals, the push for homegrown renewables has started to feel like a long-term exit strategy

from endless interference.

There's also a growing sense that fossil fuel politics are just too volatile to rely on. Meghan O'Sullivan, in *Windfall*, shows how the shale revolution reshaped global diplomacy, but even she notes that the US's new energy independence didn't reduce militarisation—it simply moved it elsewhere. Military ships now guard LNG routes, and US energy policy has begun to look more like energy defence. That's not a sustainable way to run the world, and policymakers know it.

So, beyond reducing carbon, the argument for renewables is also about getting out of the way of conflict. In *The Geopolitics of Renewables*, editor Daniel Scholten makes an important point: renewables are less centralised and harder to use as political leverage. You can't blockade the sun or sanction the wind. Countries that rely on solar panels and batteries don't have to strategise over pipelines or shipping routes. That's incredibly appealing at a time when supply chains are being disrupted and alliances are fraying.

But here's where it gets complicated. While the logic for renewables is strong, the path is anything but easy.

First, there's the issue of raw materials. You can't build solar panels, wind turbines, or electric cars without rare earth minerals like lithium, cobalt, and neodymium. And those are mostly found in countries with fragile governments or unstable politics. The push to extract more "green minerals" is causing new friction as well, often with local communities

who don't want their land turned into another extractive frontier.

There's also the supply chain problem. In *Cobalt Red*, Siddharth Kara details how the mining of cobalt in the Democratic Republic of Congo, much of it done under brutal conditions, feeds the global renewable energy boom. It's a sobering reminder that clean energy doesn't always mean clean practices. Transitioning to renewables might lower carbon, but it doesn't automatically fix exploitation or inequality. In fact, it could make them worse if left unchecked.

Then there's the geopolitical shift. As renewables grow, new energy powers are emerging, and that's unsettling for traditional players. Some experts argue that solar, wind, and electric vehicles will wipe out the fossil fuel industry faster than most people expect. But transitions that fast rarely go smoothly. Petrol states—countries whose economies are built on oil and gas—aren't going to fade quietly. In fact, many are doubling down on fossil exports while they still can. That desperation could lead to more aggression, not less.

Even democratic states are feeling the pressure. The US and its allies are now racing to build domestic renewable supply chains, often at high cost and with little room for error. In *The Power Surge*, Michael Levi explains how US energy strategy is full of contradictions: it wants to be green, independent, and dominant all at once. That kind of balancing act is hard to pull off, especially when politics at home are so polarised.

And what about the people on the ground?

The shift to renewables often comes with real economic pain for fossil fuel workers, especially in regions that depend on coal or oil. Experts warn that unless the energy transition is deliberately designed to be fair and inclusive, it could deepen inequality and fuel backlash. We have already seen glimpses of that in protests from miners in Poland to pipeline workers in the US.

There's also the question of grid stability. Renewable energy is intermittent: the sun doesn't always shine, and the wind doesn't always blow. In *The Grid*, Gretchen Bakke dives into the messy, technical challenges of keeping power systems running with high levels of renewables. Without massive investments in storage, smart grids, and demand management, blackouts could become more frequent.

So yes, the rush to renewables is necessary, but it's also messy, uneven, and politically charged. The idea that we can simply swap oil for solar and keep everything else the same is a fantasy. The transition will change who holds power, who gets rich, and who gets left behind.

But here's the thing: the status quo isn't working either. Wars over oil, gas diplomacy, and supply disruptions have already shown us how fragile and dangerous the current system is. Energy has always been tied to conflict. Maybe the best reason to go green isn't just the planet—it's to stop fighting over it.

In the end, renewables won't fix all our problems. But they might help us avoid a few of the worst ones. And right now, that feels like a future worth chasing.

ACROSS

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- 15 Some amount of
- 16 Had lunch
- 17 Scot's denial
- 18 Russian range
- 20 Composer of
- 23 Vacation spot
- 27 Trick
- 28 Some sheep
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## Jaya Ahsan's 'Putulnacher Itikatha' to release on August 1

Jaya Ahsan starrer *Putulnacher Itikatha* (*The Puppet's Tale*) is set for theatrical release on August 1. Directed by Suman Mukhopadhyay, the film also stars Abir Chatterjee and Parambrata Chatterjee. Based on Manik Bandopadhyay's iconic novel, the story has been slightly shifted to the late 1930s-40s for modern relevance.

The long-delayed project, first conceptualised in 2008, had its world premiere at the Rotterdam Film Festival earlier this year. Suman Mukhopadhyay was inspired by his father's stage adaptation and revived the film in 2022 after a 14-year gap.

Meanwhile, Jaya is busy promoting *Taandob* and *Utshob* and will next be seen in *Dear Maa* on July 18 and *Ajo Ardhangini* later this year.



## Afran Nisho and Redoan Rony unite for the survival drama 'Domm'

Afran Nisho and director Redoan Rony are collaborating for the first time on the upcoming film *Domm*, slated for release during Eid-ul-Fitr 2026.

Inspired by true events, the film explores the rise of an ordinary man, with both Nisho and Rony praising its emotional depth and performance-driven nature.

Nisho describes *Domm* as a survival-inspired story with a larger canvas than his previous works, emphasising its acting challenges as a key motivator.

The project also stars Chanchal Chowdhury, whose involvement was confirmed by Rony in December 2023.

*Domm*, produced by SVF Alpha-i Entertainment and Chorki, promises to be a gripping, story-centric film that blends emotional storytelling with powerful performances.



## BTS' V tops global music influencer list on Instagram

BTS member V, also known as Kim Taehyung, has been ranked the world's most influential music figure on Instagram, surpassing international stars such as Selena Gomez and Billie Eilish. The 2025 rankings were published by data analytics platform HypeAuditor.

Despite being inactive on social media for several months due to his military service and Blackpink's Lisa also listed in the which concluded last month, V Top 5.



secured the top position with over 68 million followers and an impressive engagement rate of 20.6 percent.

He currently ranks third overall among all Instagram influencers, trailing only Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.

V is now the most influential Asian celebrity on the platform, with fellow K-pop stars Jimin and Blackpink's Lisa also listed in the

## SCARLETT JOHANSSON becomes highest-grossing actor of all time

Scarlett Johansson has officially become the top-grossing lead actor at the global box office, with total earnings reaching \$14.8 billion, according to The Wrap.

This milestone follows the success of her latest film, *Jurassic World Rebirth*, which earned \$318 million globally in just six days. Johansson plays Zora Bennett, taking over the franchise from Chris Pratt.

Much of her box office success stems from her role as Natasha Romanoff in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), with over \$8.7 billion from films like *Avengers: Endgame* and *Infinity War*.

At 40, the actress surpasses Samuel L Jackson and Robert Downey Jr, achieving this feat with only 36 lead roles—demonstrating her strong bankability and global appeal.



## WHAT'S THE HAPS?

### 'Ali Mehedi: Made in Bangladesh'

Bangladeshi-born stand-up comedian Ali Mehedi, who codes by day and cracks up crowds by night, is set to present his laugh-out-loud stories this Friday.

He has performed at the New York Comedy Festival, Halifax Comedy Festival, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and made his TV debut on CBC Canada in 2024.

Ali will take the stage delivering sharp, heartfelt comedy about culture clashes, family drama, and life between borders. Tickets for this open-to-all event are priced at Tk 500.

DATE: FRIDAY | JULY 11  
TIME: 7:30PM ONWARDS  
VENUE: NAVEED'S COMEDY CLUB



## Jon M Chu to helm live-action 'Hot Wheels' film

Following the success of *Wicked: Part One*, director Jon M Chu is set to helm a live-action *Hot Wheels* movie for Warner Bros and Mattel. Based on the iconic toy line, the film will feature some of the "hottest and sleekest vehicles," though plot details remain undisclosed.

The script will be written by *Creed II* writers Juel Taylor and Tony Rettenmaier, with production by JJ Abrams' company Bad Robot and Chu's Electric Somewhere. Chu described the film as a chance to honour *Hot Wheels*' legacy while exploring bold new directions.

This project follows the success of *Barbie* and joins Mattel's lineup of toy-based adaptations. Chu is also working on projects including *Play Doh, Oh, the Places You'll Go*, and more.

# NEWS

## Next polls key to rebuild trust in police

FROM PAGE 12

Calling on journalists to ensure that "headlines" do not dilute the core message, he said: "Please be mindful while presenting news. I have seen many times that even if the report is positive, the headline or scroll carries a negative message. This confuses and disheartens the public. Please use captions that help people grasp the positive message."

Asked about the date of the next election, Nasir said it has not been finalised yet. All details, including the polling day, will be announced at least two months prior to the election.

Foreign observers who had termed

the past three national elections "credible" will not be allowed to observe the upcoming parliamentary election.

"Why should we accept observers who certified the last three elections as 'very good' and 'acceptable'?"

Meanwhile, a three-member delegation from Canada met the CEC. After the meeting, the CEC said that the Election Commission has contacted the European Union regarding the deployment of foreign observers for the election.

The EU has been requested to send observers from all 28 member states in a coordinated manner.

However, the CEC made it clear that biased observers will not be allowed under any circumstances.

"We will review them carefully. We will accept those who are experienced, defensible, reliable and have observed elections in various countries. Under no circumstances will we approve those who certified the last three elections."

Election commissioners Abdur Rahmehan Masud, Tahmidah Ahmad, Md Anwarul Islam Sarker and Abdul Fazal Md Sanaullah were present at the event.

RFED General Secretary Golam Rabbani moderated the event, which was presided over by its President Kazi Jebel.

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"Until we achieve a new constitution and meaningful reforms, I call upon you to join this movement. Together, we will build an egalitarian and democratic Bangladesh."

NCP Chief Organiser (North) Sarjis Alam, Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary, Joint Convener Nasrat Tabassum, and Senior Joint Member Secretary Tasnim Jara, took part in the rally.

During her speech, NCP Senior Joint Member Secretary Nahida Sarwar held a handful of soil from Abrar's grave in her right hand and said, "Dear people of Kushtia, this is soil from the grave of Shaheed Abrar Fahad -- the soil of Bangladesh. We must build this country as the Bangladesh of our martyr, Abrar. With this soil as our oath, we will build a new Bangladesh, Insha'Allah."

After concluding the rally, the central leaders departed for Meherpur at around 3:30pm.

delays, he admitted the gap between expectations and available resources. "We prioritised the critically injured during the first phase. So far, 806 severely wounded individuals have received the second phase funds. The remaining will be paid in stages. We're trying to resolve this quickly."

He added that the foundation has Tk 7 crore in its fund and is trying to support the injured and the families of martyrs.

Following the vandalism, the injured met Kamal Akbar for further discussions. It was agreed that the next round of payments would be disbursed this coming Sunday.

On the allegations of repeated

## Rubio to attend Asean meeting in first Asia trip

AFP, Washington

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will make his first trip to Asia since taking up his post, traveling this week to Malaysia for meetings with Asean allies, his office said Monday.

The trip, started yesterday, will see Rubio, who is also President Donald Trump's national security advisor, focus on US policy in Asia after months of Washington concentrating on the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East.

"In his first trip to Asia as Secretary of State, Secretary Rubio is focused on reaffirming the United States' commitment to advancing a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific region," spokeswoman Tammy Bruce said in a statement, using Washington's traditional wording aimed at curbing China's growing influence in the Asia-Pacific region.

Prioritizing and reaffirming

Washington's commitment to East Asia and Southeast Asia "is in America's interest," a senior State Department official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

"It promotes American prosperity and promotes American security," the official added.

As with any trip to Asia by a US official, China will be the elephant in the room amid concerns over its expansionary behavior in the South China Sea, which the United States deems to be provocative.

The visit also comes as many countries around the world are waiting for the next step in Trump's tariff wars. Sweeping levies announced in April were mostly suspended, as Washington engages in negotiations with friends and foes alike.

On Monday, Trump said he would impose 25 percent tariffs on key US allies Japan and South Korea and a handful of others, including

Southeast Asian nations Malaysia (25 percent) and Laos (40 percent), as of August 1.

Export-dependent Vietnam, which like Malaysia and Laos is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), is one of the few countries to already reach a tentative agreement with Washington that sets the high level of levies that Trump had threatened.

At a summit in late May, Southeast Asian leaders expressed their deep concern at Trump's protectionist offensive.

The senior US official said the issue was expected to be raised, and that Rubio would likely tell Asean that the United States wants to "rebalance" its trade relationships.

A deadline on the tariffs is due to expire today, with Trump suggesting levies would snap back into place on August 1 for any trading partners who do not make a deal.

## Nahid warns against 'serving Indian hegemony'

FROM PAGE 12

If people are with us, there's no need to flee to Delhi or stay in London."

He also urged the citizens not to support any party blindly in the next general election.

Before the Kushtia rally, NCP leaders visited the grave of Abrar Fahad in Kumarkhali upazila's Raydanga village, where they also met his parents. Abrar, a student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, was beaten to death by members of the now-banned Bangladesh Chhatra League on October 7, 2019.

During the rally, Nahid said, "The soil of Kushtia is stained with the blood of martyrs. It is here that Shaheed Abrar Fahad lies buried. We speak of Abrar -- the brilliant BUET student who was brutally tortured and killed overnight by the now-banned terrorist organisation Bangladesh Chhatra League in his dormitory for speaking

in favour of the country and against aggression and hegemony.

"We are the successors of Shaheed Abrar. We stand on the soil of Shaheed Yamin. From Shaheed Abrar to Shaheed Abu Sayed and Shaheed Yamin -- we carry forward the hopes and aspirations of the people of Bangladesh, and their longing for politics free from domination and aggression."

Last year, Rangpur's Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed was killed on July 16, and MIST student Sheikh Ashabul Yamin on July 18, during the quota reform movement that turned into a mass uprising and toppled the Awami League government.

Nahid said, "There was a time when people couldn't speak out against Delhi's dominance. But Abrar did -- he posted on Facebook about our rightful share of river water, our ports, and the rights of the people of Bangladesh. We will carry on the anti hegemony

struggle in his spirit.

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On the allegations of repeated

FROM PAGE 12

28 and June 21 this year.

Asked why the case names 35 while the Malaysian authorities mentioned 36, a senior ATU official said, "Our case is based on what we learnt during interrogation of the three deported Bangladeshis. We are not aware of what the Malaysian authorities have said."

KM Tariqul Islam, the ATU inspector investigating the case, said they have information that eight of the 35 accused, including the three deportees, returned home.

Another of the deportees, Mahfuj, returned on June 19, and the ATU arrested him from his home in Cumilla's Muradnagar upazila on July 7, Tariqul said.

Yesterday, Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Minhazur Rahman placed the four arrestees on a four-day remand after Inspector Tariqul produced them before the court, seeking a seven-day remand for each, said a court staffer.

According to the police forwarding report submitted to the court, primary interrogation revealed that the accused had been inspired by the ideology of

the banned militant outfit. They then aligned themselves with the outfit and had been involved in its activities for long while in Malaysia.

The report mentioned that the accused used Malaysian IP addresses to recruit members and spread propaganda through social media platforms operated by some Bangladeshis.

Intelligence findings further indicated that the group conducted oath-taking ceremonies, held religious discussions, and arranged secret virtual meetings via social media to promote the organisation's ideology and plans.

As active members of the organisation, the accused reportedly collected funds through donations and sent the money abroad using e-wallets and international money-transfer services.

Each member also paid an annual subscription fee of 500 Malaysian Ringgit to the group.

"Primary findings show they used various social media platforms, as well as messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram, to recruit new members. We have not received any official communication suggesting they were involved in militancy. Our foreign ministry has already issued a press release clarifying the situation. As far as we know, three individuals were deported due to overstaying their visas," he said after a visit to the export cargo village of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and the BADC cold storage facility in Dhaka.

## Injured protesters vandalise

FROM PAGE 12

occasions, but no funds were released.

Mamun Hossain, one of the injured, told reporters that a staffer tried to push them out, triggering a scuffle.

"There was no July Foundation before the uprising. It exists because of us -- the injured," he said, adding, "Yet, we're the ones being misled while desperately seeking support for our treatment."

Mamun is still undergoing treatment nearly a year after being shot in the head during the movement. "What guarantee do we have about our lives anymore?"

Nazmul Hossain, a third-year management student at Savar

## PBI allowed to interrogate

FROM PAGE 3  
Later, Tanvir drove Rumi to her residence around 7:00pm.

In the application, the IO said that on that night, the couple was killed at their rented apartment in Dhaka's West Rajabazar. After the death, Tanvir did not take part in their janaza even though he was informed. Moreover, he did not communicate with the victims' family members even once.

For this reason, he needs to be interrogated to gather vital clues about the murders, said the IO.

The magistrate also extended the deadline for submitting the probe report on the case until August 11. This marks the 120th extension of the deadline, according to case records.

Meanwhile, investigators have so far spoken to over 70 people, said a PBI official, requesting anonymity.

The agency also interrogated six individuals – sacked army official Ziaul Ahsan, former police officer Mashirul Rahman, ex-justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik, former navy officer Mohammad Sohail, and accused Humayun Kabir and Palash Rudra Paul.

Sagar, news editor at Maarsanga TV, and Rumi, senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed on February 11, 2012, at their rented apartment in Dhaka's West Rajabazar.

## Buet students

FROM PAGE 3  
urged the state to open 10th-grade technical posts to both diploma and BSc engineering graduates.

Citing the Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework (BNFQ), they noted that a BSc degree ranks higher (level six) than a diploma (level seven), questioning why BSc holders are ineligible for sub-assistant engineer posts.

They also called for a law and gazette notification reserving the title "engineer" for BSc engineering graduates only.



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

**Farmers transport straw on an engine-run three-wheeler to cattle farms and local markets in Rajshahi city to earn a living. Gollabazar remains the most profitable hub in the area for such sales. The photo was taken on Shibnodi Bridge in Tanore upazila yesterday.**

## Rape cases already

FROM PAGE 3  
attitudes towards women. Munima Sultana said while women have made significant contributions to development, the continuing rise in violence undermines their achievements.

Based on news reports, nearly 1,555 women and girls were victims of violence in the past six months, she said.

March saw the highest number of incidents, followed by a decline, though she noted this does not convey a positive trend.

Afruza Arman said analysis of data from the past year shows that girls, particularly those aged 2 to 18, are disproportionately affected by violence.

The rates of violence against girls are especially high in cases of child marriage, sexual abuse, rape, and gang rape, she added.

Among the rape cases reported during this period, 106 were gang rapes, and 17 victims were killed after the assault, according to the data presented at the meeting.

Murder was the second most reported form of violence, with 320 women and girls killed. There were also 51 cases of sexual harassment and 34 incidents of stalking.

In her welcome speech, Mahila Parishad General Secretary Maleka Banu said violence against women and girls is rising steadily and becoming more visible in public spaces.

Societal hostility towards women is being incited in various ways, she said.

"Although laws exist to protect women's rights, their implementation is often limited in practice," she said.

The organisation's Joint General Secretary, Seema Moslem, said through reporting, the media regularly reflects society's

attitudes towards women. She emphasised that the media is a crucial ally in preventing violence against women and urged women journalists to ensure accurate and sensitive reporting of such incidents.

Dr Fauzia Moslem, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, said the media and the women's movement must work together.

She stressed that unless gender inequality is addressed, violence against women will continue.

"Social change requires first changing oneself and then reforming institutional structures. To advance the women's movement, it is essential to understand global trends, for the media to be more sensitive, and for everyone to be united," she said.

Women journalists from various media outlets took part in an open discussion, moderated by Mahfuzia Jesmin, news editor at BSS and editor of the organisation's Publicity and Media Committee.

Journalists including Shahnaz Munni, Nadira Kiran, Rita Bhoumik, Ummul Wara Sweety, Zahida Parvez, Shahnaz Parveen, Sebika Debnath, Drihi Tara, Rafia Khanam Chowdhury, Jannatul Ruhি, Nasrin Geeti, and Selina Akter shared their views.

They noted that victims are often retraumatised by insensitive or inaccurate reporting. In many cases, coverage is either lacking or distorted.

The speakers also raised concerns about growing hostility towards women on social media, driven by misuse of technology.

They called on the media to improve sensitivity and urged the government to take action against distorted portrayals of violence on digital platforms.

Hawladar, who served as JP secretary general for 17 years, called the removals a conspiracy. "GM Quader is destroying the party. No responsible leader would act this way," he said.

## BNP won't

FROM PAGE 4

media against the name of BNP. People believe that this planned propaganda and artificially created social unrest are obstructing the path of democracy and are a far-reaching plan to delay the election," he said.

He also said BNP is taking prompt organisational actions against those found misusing the party's name to commit wrongdoings. "Those involved in misdeeds from within the party are not being spared under any circumstances," he said.

Many leaders and activists have already been expelled, relieved from the party, suspended from their posts, or served with show-cause notices, Rizvi said.

He also claimed that law enforcement agencies were playing a "suspiciously relaxed role", despite repeated requests from the party to take legal action against miscreants and instigators.

Since the interim government came to power, the police administration has not been very active. Rather, in some cases, it is clearly evident that some are deliberately stirring up trouble, he claimed.

## JP splits

deepen

FROM PAGE 3

remove leaders be repealed, calling it undemocratic. "No democratic party should have such an autocratic provision," he said.

He also accused GM Quader of seizing control when former chairman HM Ershad was gravely ill. "He has acted autocratically in every matter," Anisul said.

Chunnu alleged that GM Quader promoted 28 party members without consulting him, despite his role as secretary general. "When I was an MP, he was a private company manager," he said. "The only reason we accepted him as chairman is because he is Ershad's brother."

Chunnu insisted they would not leave the party and would attend the council. "We built this party. If our voices are ignored, we will take further steps."

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## Shrimp adulteration threatens health

FROM PAGE 4

July 2024 and May 2025, sources at the Department of Fisheries.

Earlier on November 29 last year, border guards seized and destroyed 1,122kg of adulterated shrimp and lobsters at Jhowdanga checkpost in Satkhira Sadar while those were being transported to different parts of the country. Md Arif Hossain, 22, a local trader, was jailed for three months.

Lipton Sarker, a Khulna FIQC inspector, said the fisheries department has tightened enforcement, increased awareness, and is working with law enforcers and the Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters Association to improve quality control.

According to the Department of Fish Inspection and Quality Control (FIQC) in Khulna, a total of 94 operations and mobile court drives were conducted between

July 2024 and May 2025, and saw the collection of Tk 8,85,000 in fines, destruction of 2,755kg of shrimp, and filing of one case.

According to authorities, seasonal traders are primarily responsible for such malpractices, and they usually collude with corrupt officials.

Meanwhile, BFFEA has formed a 22-member committee to monitor and prevent the supply of adulterated shrimp. However, their efforts are often undermined by lenient punishments, with offenders typically released after paying fines.

Consumption of adulterated shrimp poses serious health risks, including potential damage to liver and kidneys, according to Md Mizanur Rahman, deputy director of Khulna Medical College Hospital.

cancellations are needed, said Humayun Kabir, former BFFEA vice-president.

"Identifying adulterated shrimp is challenging. By the time laboratory tests are conducted, the damage is often already done. Strengthened oversight and accountability at all levels are essential," he added.

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social norms, and cause deep psychological harm," the CSWC warned.

Some incidents involved

blackmail

using explicit

videos of children as young

as eight and twelve.

The report also

highlighted at least one case

involving the use of artificial

intelligence to create fake

nude images, underscoring

the growing misuse of

emerging technologies.

While AI has enormous

potential, it is increasingly

being used to violate

personal safety, erode

emerging technologies.

The platform called for

urgent

coordinated

action

from the government, civil

society, and technology

companies to strengthen

laws, ensure swift

and exemplary

punishment for

perpetrators, protect

victims' privacy, and

increase public awareness.

change is slowly taking root.

Many of these women are now receiving training on their rights and various aspects of farming, helping them reclaim their agency.

Under the Community-based Resilience, Women's Empowerment and Action (CREA) project – funded by the Embassy of Sweden and implemented by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) in partnership with National Development Programme (NDP) – women are receiving training in farming, cattle and poultry rearing, leadership, dispute resolution, and social accountability.

Aktaree Begum, project coordinator of CREA, said women's groups have received two-day training sessions on agriculture, gender, human rights, child marriage, and dowry. "This helps women speak up and get involved," she said.

Women in these char areas say the training has made a difference.

"After the training, I speak up at home and know my rights," said Mukta.

"We're learning how to save and manage money," added Anowara.

## Offenders now weaponising AI

FROM PAGE 3

multiple forms of abuse. It observed a rise in multi-dimensional cybercrimes that are difficult to track and address.

The CSWC – a coalition of 14 rights organisations representing 41.3 percent of victims, followed by homemakers at 20.7 percent. The professions of 27.5 percent of victims could not be identified.

Over 70 percent of the documented cases involved multiple layers of abuse – ranging from rape and video recording

farmland is in women's names, and another 2 percent jointly. In char areas, it's even lower – around 4 percent. As a result, women's labour remains unrecognised and unprotected.

"We do all the work but have no say or identity. The land is not ours, so neither are the benefits," said Mukta Begum from Baradhu.

Meanwhile, while women are knowledgeable about the land and crops, they are excluded from decision-making.

"We just do as we're told. No one asks for our opinion," said Fatema Begum from Alokdia.

Hardly any women in these villages own the land they farm. The land is registered in the names of husbands or fathers-in-law, so women are invisible to the state.

Without land registered in their names, women are not officially recognised as farmers and cannot access Krishi Cards, subsidised seeds and fertilisers, training programmes, or official crop procurement schemes. They are also ineligible for agricultural loans.

National surveys show only about 10 percent of

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয় (সওজ)

সড়ক বিভাগ, মুনীগঞ্জ

দশকানি, পঞ্চগাঁও (মুকুরপুর)

মুনীগঞ্জ।

ফোন : ০২-৯১৮৪৭০১৯

E-mail: eemunrhd@gmail.com

তারিখ: ০৮/০৭/২০২৫

## নির্মিত দরপত্র পঞ্জিতে (LTM) ঠিকাদার তালিকাত্তুলি/লাইসেন্স নবায়ন সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি।

এতোরা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, মুনীগঞ্জ সড়ক বিভাগ, মুনীগঞ্জ কর্তৃক পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিভিন্নান্ত প্রক্রিয়া কর্তৃক নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, মুনীগঞ্জ এবং কার্যালয় অথবা উপ-বিভাগীয় প্রকৌশলী (সওজ), সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ, মুনীগঞ্জ/গ্রীনগ্রাম/কেরানীগঞ্জ/১ম সারি কার্যালয় উপ-বিভাগ, মুনীগঞ্জ এবং কার্যালয় অথবা আগামী ১৪/০৮/২০২

## INTERNATIONAL LAW

# International Law: A Shield for the Powerful or a Rule for All?

**This perceived hypocrisy is fuelled by the critique advanced by Third World approaches to international law (TWAIL), which posits that international law is not failing, but rather functioning as it was designed: as a system conceived by colonial powers to perpetuate a particular world order.**

MD. IMAMUNUR RAHMAN

A compelling exchange once took place between Shamini Chakrabarti, former president of the UK-based human rights organisation Liberty, and the eminent jurist Lord Thomas Bingham following his lecture on 'The Rule of Law'. Lord Bingham, a staunch defender of the principle, asserted that international law is, indeed, 'law'. Yet, as recent global events starkly demonstrate to us, for many the concept is a facade—a set of rules selectively applied and easily discarded by the powerful. This raises a critical question: in a world witnessing devastating conflicts such as the military operations in Gaza, and the recent strikes against Iran by Israel and the United States, is international law a universal principle, or an instrument of power?

The situation in Gaza presents a profound challenge to the core tenets of *jus in bello*, or international humanitarian law. Proponents of Israel's initial military actions ground their arguments in the right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. The principles of distinction (civilian vs combatant), proportionality, and precaution, enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, are not discretionary. The decimation of Gaza's hospitals, the use of starvation as a weapon of war through the prevention of humanitarian aid, and direct attacks on women, children, and aid workers are not mere collateral damage, but potential grave breaches of international law.

Many legal experts and international bodies argue that the sheer scale of civilian casualties and infrastructure destruction goes far beyond military necessity, constituting collective punishment—a practice explicitly forbidden by the Fourth Geneva



Convention. When UN agencies like UNRWA, the largest aid provider, are systematically dismantled, it signals a strategy that weaponises aid and directly contravenes the obligation of an occupying power to ensure the welfare of the occupied population.

Simultaneously, the recent military strikes against Iran by both Israel and the United States test the boundaries of *jus ad bellum*, the law governing the resort to force. The justification of pre-emptive or anticipatory self-defence against a future, non-imminent threat is not recognised by many states and

scholars in international law. Even if it were not a controversial doctrine, for such an action to be lawful, the threat must be instant, overwhelming, leave no choice of means, and allow no moment for deliberation. Critics argue that these strikes fail to meet this stringent Caroline test, a standard rooted in customary international law. They contend that without clear evidence of an imminent attack—a high bar that many scholars believe has not been met—these actions represent a dangerous expansion of pre-emptive action that threatens to

normalise unilateral military force. This fundamentally undermines Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. When a permanent member of the Security Council like the US engages in such actions without Council authorisation, it corrodes the very system it is mandated to uphold.

This perceived hypocrisy is fuelled by the critique advanced by Third World approaches to international law (TWAIL), which posits that international law is not failing, but rather functioning as it was designed: as a system conceived by colonial powers to perpetuate a particular world order. From this perspective, the selective application of legal principles is a feature, not a bug. The swift mobilisation of international mechanisms to address conflicts in Ukraine or East Timor stands in stark contrast to the decades long paralysis concerning Palestine. Legal definitions that seem clear, such as what constitutes an 'occupation' under Article 42 of the 1907 Hague Regulations, become mired in semantic debate, and actions deemed illegal by the Security Council, such as the expansion of settlements under Resolution 2334, continue with impunity. This dissonance leads to the conclusion that the legal framework itself is a tool wielded by the powerful to legitimise their violence and perpetuate dominance.

In the face of systemic failure and institutional inaction, the oppressed are left with a bitter question: what recourse remains when the law itself becomes an instrument of their subjugation? Western discourse routinely ignores UN General Assembly Resolution 37/43, which affirms the Palestinian people's 'inalienable right' to 'self-determination, national sovereignty, and return'. This is not rhetoric or incitement, but an accurate legal recognition—when the international order fails to uphold its own principles, resistance becomes a sanctioned response to oppression. The struggle, therefore, is not merely for the enforcement of existing law, but a struggle against a rigged legal order that appears to have forsaken its promise of universal justice.

*The writer is Assistant Professor and Chair in the Department of Law at Z.H. Sikder University of Science and Technology.*

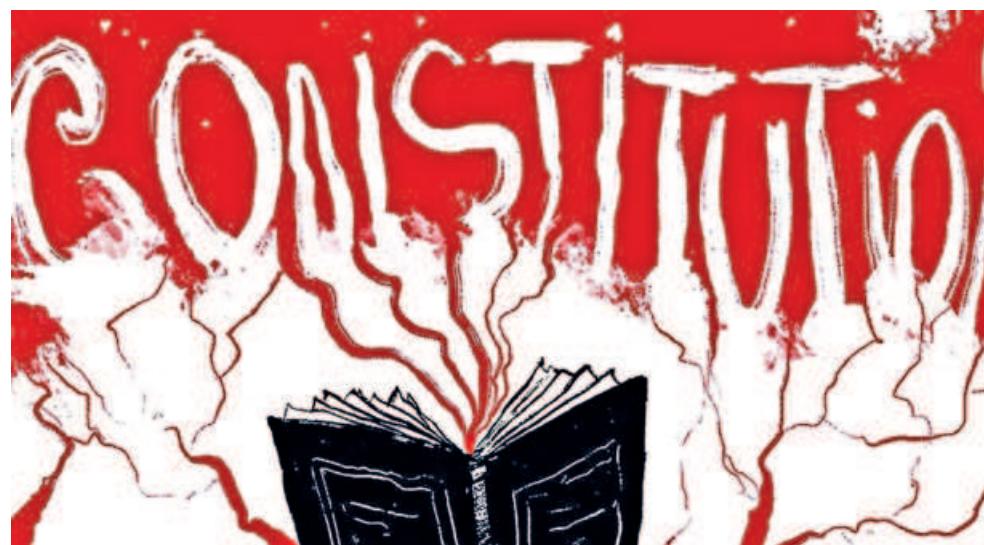
## CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

## The principle of proportionality and fundamental rights

MD. RABIN MIAH

Recently, the Constitution Reform Commission (CRC) has made certain reform proposals to be brought to the Constitution. Two main reforms are central to the CRC's proposal relating to fundamental rights. First, the CRC advocates for the justiciability of socio-economic rights, recognising them as enforceable legal rights subject to "progressive realisation" based on available resources. Judicial oversight would ensure that the state demonstrates reasonable efforts in fulfilling these rights.

Second, the CRC proposes a general balancing test for all fundamental rights restrictions, replacing rigid limitations with a more adaptable framework. This approach fosters stronger judicial scrutiny of governmental actions, promoting a rights-respecting legal order reflecting contemporary



Traditionally, Bangladesh's judicial system relied on the Wednesbury Unreasonableness Test (WUT) for administrative review, as established in *Associated Provincial Picture Houses Ltd v Wednesbury Corporation* (1948). This test sets a high threshold for judicial intervention, limiting scrutiny to cases where a decision is so unreasonable that no rational authority could have made it. Critics argue that WUT grants excessive deference to governmental discretion, inadequately protecting fundamental rights. Proportionality offers a more structured and rigorous alternative, requiring courts to assess if administrative actions are proportionate to their objectives rather than merely avoiding extreme unreasonableness.

Despite its advantages, Bangladesh has been hesitant to formally adopt proportionality. For instance, in *Shah Abdul Hannan v Bangladesh* (2010), the Supreme Court of Bangladesh (SCOB) relied on WUT to review a government policy on natural resource exploration. The court ruled that intervention was warranted only in cases of unreasonableness, arbitrariness, bad faith, procedural impropriety, or constitutional/statutory violations. It emphasised on the non-justiciability of certain executive actions, invoked the Public Trust Doctrine to protect public resources, and upheld the separation of powers by avoiding interference in complex policy matters.

However, several landmark cases have implicitly used the doctrine of proportionality in Bangladesh. In *Aruna Sen v Government of Bangladesh* (1974), the court scrutinised the connection between detention grounds and the Special Powers Act's objectives, effectively applying proportionality's suitability and necessity components, while emphasising procedural fairness and ensuring detention

was not arbitrary or excessive. In *Sheikh Abdus Sabur v Returning Officer* (1988), the court assessed the reasonableness of classifications and their link to legislative objectives, implicitly incorporating proportionality by balancing these objectives with equality guarantees and ensuring no disproportionate infringement on democratic rights.

In Bangladesh, courts often engage in proportionality-like analysis without formal adoption, balancing rigid rules and subjective discretion. This approach reflects a growing judicial commitment to structured rights protection while maintaining deference to democratic governance. Hence, the proposal of the CRC may further strengthen the enforcement or application of this principle.

While proportionality has gained traction globally, particularly post World War II, it also faces some criticisms. One concern is stricto sensu balancing, which some argue allows the courts excessive discretion in weighing competing rights, potentially undermining democratic governance. Critics contend that proportionality risks judicially rebalancing constitutional provisions in ways that intrude on legislative authority and may erode constitutional rights by making them too easily subject to limitation through balancing exercises.

In Bangladesh, the future of proportionality depends on judicial engagement and potential formal recognition. Courts already apply proportionality-like reasoning under "reasonableness" doctrines, but clearer adoption would improve legal consistency and better protect fundamental rights. This trend aligns with efforts to strengthen judicial oversight and ensure governmental accountability.

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constitutional trends. The general balancing test has five parts and one of them is the principle of proportionality. The current piece will attempt to delve deeper into the jurisprudence of this principle.

The proportionality doctrine employs a four-pronged test to determine the justifiability of such restrictions. It examines: (1) Proper Purpose—the restriction must pursue a legitimate objective; (2) Rational Connection—a demonstrable link must exist between the restriction and its stated objective; (3) Necessity—the least restrictive means must be used; and (4) Proportionality Stricto Sensu—a careful balancing of the importance of the objective against the harm to the right.

Another critical feature of proportionality is the concept of "limits on limitations," which prevents governmental overreach in restricting rights. This comprehensive analysis ensures that limitations are not arbitrary or excessive.

**Constitutional Reform Courts already apply proportionality-like reasoning under "reasonableness" doctrines, but clearer adoption would improve legal consistency and better protect fundamental rights. This trend aligns with efforts to strengthen judicial oversight and ensure governmental accountability.**

## LAW LETTER

## Tortious remedies for the rape survivors

JANNATUL FERDOWS

A prominent human rights organisation Ain o Shalish Kendra reported that there were 4,787 incidents of reported rape cases in Bangladesh from January 2020 to September 2024. This implies that nearly one woman was raped in every nine hours in Bangladesh. According to legal experts, even this horrific rape data is quite underrepresented because many cases go unreported as the survivors fear stigma, get discouraged by close ones, or harbour general distrust in the justice system. In these circumstances, in addition to giving punishments to the convict, tort remedies can be a pivotal tool as they focus on the victim and make the convict accountable for rehabilitation of the victim.

The current justice system for rape victims primarily focuses on retributive justice, which refers to punishing the perpetrator proportionate to the crime committed. But this process largely overlooks the rehabilitation of the victims. In Bangladesh, it becomes extremely difficult for rape victims to live through social stigma and social misperceptions. This is even more evident when the woman is underprivileged or lives in a rural area. Moreover, rape causes serious physical and mental harm and needs speedy treatment, which also involves excessive financial burden. However, the current justice system fails to address these issues. In Bangladesh, the legal framework addressing rape is regulated by sections 375, 376 of the Penal Code 1860 and Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000 (WCRPA). Section 9 of the WCRPA provides death penalty as the maximum punishment for rape. In some cases, the victim also receives minimal financial compensation.

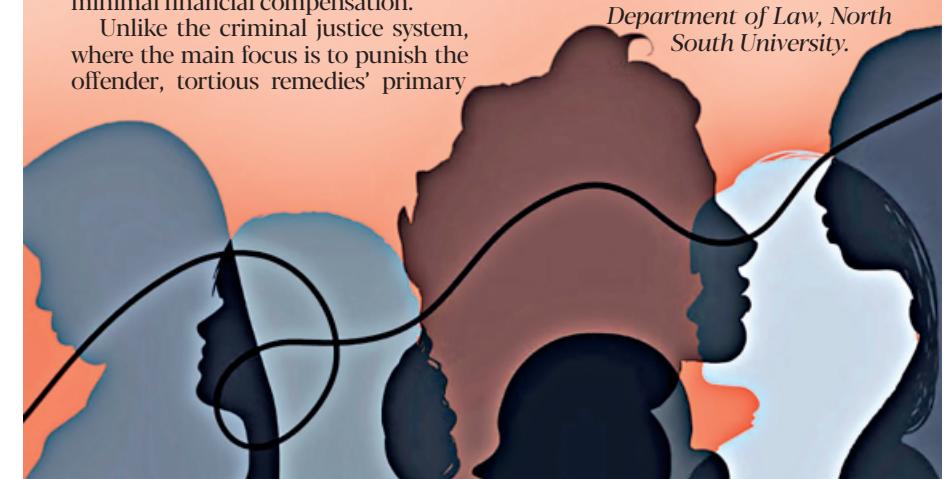
Unlike the criminal justice system, where the main focus is to punish the offender, tortious remedies' primary

focus is on compensating the victim for the harm caused in every way possible and for future support and betterment of the victim. There are several remedies under tort law e.g., compensatory damages and punitive damages. The best tort remedies that would be ideal for rape victims are compensatory damages covering medical bills, therapy costs, and lost earnings due to trauma, and also acknowledging the emotional distress, pain, and suffering of the victim. Punitive damages aim to deter similar incidents from taking place again.

In the case of British American Tobacco Bangladesh Company Ltd v Begum Shamsun Nahar (66 DLR (AD) 80), the fact was that the victim was sexually assaulted, and the company, instead of remedying the situation, fired her. The victim sought damages from the company in the amount of Taka 2,50,38,000.00. This is the first tort law-based case against sexual offence in Bangladesh, demonstrating the potential of tort remedies in addressing sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Beyond merely punishing the convict, monetary reparation allows victims to rebuild their lives. It provides the financial support needed to recover from the harms sustained, access necessary resources, and move forward with both strength and independence.

In the socio-economic context of Bangladesh, where rape is considered a shame for the victim and embarrassment for her family, where financial constraint causes women to have an early marriage, be deprived of education, and so on, tort remedies can play an important role in addition to the ordinary remedies within the criminal justice system.

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## Mistakes made, more time demanded

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh batters failed to ascend to the task of chasing down Sri Lanka's 285 in the series-deciding third ODI in Pallekele on Tuesday, falling to a 99-run loss while conceding the series 2-1.

The defeat saw Bangladesh remain without an ODI series win on Lankan soil, and another consistent aspect was the lack of impetus in terms of a batting plan to chase down a big total.

After defeat in the first ODI, the team plan was to allow left-handers to play more deliveries against the likes of Wanindu Hasaranga and Maheesh Theekshana, but on Tuesday, it was the Lankan pacers who did most of the damage.

Tanzid Tamim and Najmul Hossain Shanto failed to apply themselves against Asitha Fernando and Dushmantha Chameera, and the lack of big partnerships, even after batters have gotten themselves in, was evident in the latter part of the innings.

Tawhid Hridoy and Parvez Hossain Emon notched a 42-run stand before the latter threw away his wicket trying to



PHOTO: AFP

go for a big one. Hridoy and skipper Mehidy Hasan Miraz's 43-run stand of 45 deliveries did take pressure off, but once Miraz threw away his wicket after a 25-ball 28, the writing was on the cards.

"I think the wicket was excellent, we discussed about playing positively. If we

get the chance, we should bat deep, and then in the last 10 overs we can go harder. But I think we made mistakes. We didn't get partnerships in the middle, and from the openers," Miraz said at the post-match presentation.

Hridoy managed a 78-ball 51, but the

innings could not be justified by another batter taking the responsibility to build the innings. Shamim Hossain, asked to fill the big shoes left by veteran players in the recent past, did not rotate strike alongside Hridoy as the pressure told on the rest of the batting lineup.

This was Bangladesh's third consecutive bilateral ODI series defeat, but Miraz still insisted that "more time to the young side" would "pay off one day."

### BRIEF SCORES

**Sri Lanka:** 285-7 in 50 overs (Mendis 124, Asalanka 58; Miraz 2-48, Taskin 2-51)

**Bangladesh:** 186 all out in 39.4 overs (Hridoy 51; Fernando 3-33, Chameera 3-51)

**Result:** Sri Lanka won by 99 runs, take series 2-1.

**Player of the match:** Kusal Mendis

**Player of the series:** Kusal Mendis

## Pak stars left out for Bangladesh T20Is

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan on Tuesday left out injured all-rounder Shadab Khan and fast bowler Haris Rauf from the fitness hit squad for Bangladesh T20Is this month.

Shadab, vice captain of the team in a 3-0 home win over Bangladesh last month, has undergone a shoulder operation and is recuperating in England.

Rauf injured his hamstring during a T20 League game in the United States on Sunday while another pacer, Hasan Ali, is out due to his commitment in county cricket in England.

Pakistan continues to leave out former captains Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan, and spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi as selectors said they want to try some new players in build up to the World Cup, to be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka next year.

Azam and Rizwan were last part of the T20I squad in South Africa last year, while Shaheen featured on the New Zealand tour in March this year.

Salman Agha will lead the side in Bangladesh where the matches will be played in Dhaka on July 20, 22 and 24. Also left out are pacers Naseem Shah and Mohammad Wasim who both continue to regain full fitness after injuries.

It left the selectors to choose uncapped pacers in Salman Mirza and Ahmed Daniyal, 28, who both performed well in Pakistan Super League this year.

Spinning allrounder Mohammad Nawaz returns to the squad after last playing for Pakistan in January 2024.

### SQUAD

Salman Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza, Sufiyan Muqeem

## What happened to Tigers' batting all-rounders?

ASHFAQ UL ALAM

In an ideal world, having five bowling options with a quota of 10 overs each should be sufficient to bowl the required 50 overs in an ODI innings.

Unfortunately, cricket, just like the real world, is far from ideal and more often than not teams need one or two extra bowling options to get the job done.

For years, even decades, this has not been an issue for Bangladesh. Having an all-rounder of the calibre of Shakib Al Hasan, who could come into the side as a bowler and a batter, meant the Tigers practically played with 12 players in every game.

Bangladesh cricket also never had a shortage of batters who could roll their arm over when required.

From players like Alok Kapali, Aftab Ahmed and Mohammad Ashraful in the early 2000s to the likes of Mahmudullah Riyad, Naem Islam and Nasir Hossain more often than not, there were a few bowling options ready in hand in case any of the frontline options had a bad day.

From having a plethora of such handy part-time options, who could at least do the job in favourable conditions, the Tigers now find themselves scraping from the bottom of the barrel in search of a reliable sixth bowling option.

In the ODI series against Sri Lanka, Bangladesh had seemingly gone into the first ODI without a sixth option before captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz handed the ball to Najmul Hossain



Shanto, someone who had bowled only seven times in his previous 48 ODI appearances.

Shanto, with his wonky off-spin, conceded 32 runs in four overs but claimed the wicket of Janith Liyanage, his second-ever scalp in ODIs.

After the defeat in the first match, Bangladesh management went back to the drawing board and in the next game replaced the experienced Litton Das for batting all-rounder Shamim Hossain.

Before the second one dayer, Shamim had just played four ODIs for the Tigers, was not brought into the attack in two of those and bowled just one over each in the other two games without any success.

But Shamim rose to the occasion in Colombo, bowled a nine-over spell which cost just 22 runs and also fetched a wicket -- playing a pivotal role in the series-leveling win.

In the series-decider in Pallekele yesterday, Shamim's figures of 1-30 in four overs does not look nearly as impressive. But the 24-year-old deserves credit for his second spell as he conceded just 15 runs from the 44th and the 46th overs and also claimed the prized wicket of Kusal Mendis on 124, effectively shaving off a few runs from Sri Lanka's eventual total of 285-7.

Still, however impressive Shamim may have been in Sri Lanka with the ball, it would be imprudent of the management to call off the search for a sixth bowling option just now as once his novelty wears off, chances are the opposition will target him for easy runs.

But the bigger problem right now is that other than Shamim, Soumya Sarkar is the only name in the current white-ball setup who could play that batting all-rounder's role. Promising players like Mosaddek Hossain and Afif Hossain failing to live up to their potential has created this void, one that Bangladesh is trying to fill with Shamim at the moment.

## Mbappe set for PSG reunion

AFP, East Rutherford

Kylian Mbappe will come up against Paris Saint-Germain for the first time since leaving the French club a year ago as Xabi Alonso's Real Madrid revolution gets its biggest test yet in Wednesday's Club World Cup semifinal.

Mbappe should be remembered as a PSG legend, having spent seven prolific campaigns there and eventually departing as their all-time top scorer with 256 goals in 308 games.

But his legacy was a little tainted by the manner of his departure, the sense among many that for the last half of his time in Paris, he was just waiting for the right moment to move to Madrid.

Mbappe's latter years at PSG turned a bit ugly, with the player lodging an official complaint over the way he was treated by PSG in the summer of 2023. However, one of Mbappe's lawyers told AFP this week that the France captain had withdrawn a complaint of moral harassment against his former employers.

All of that should have been behind Mbappe long ago, given the way his first season at Real has gone on a personal level.

The 26-year-old, a World Cup



winner in 2018, scored 43 goals in 56 matches for his new club across all competitions up to the end of the campaign in LaLiga, a remarkable tally.

However, Mbappe has endured frustration at the Club World Cup, not featuring at all during the group stage due to a stomach bug which led to him requiring hospital treatment.

In his absence, young forward

Gonzalo Garcia has made the step up in impressive fashion, starting all five matches in the United States and scoring four goals.

The last of those was the opener in the 3-2 quarterfinal win over Borussia Dortmund at the MetLife Stadium on Saturday, but it was Mbappe who got what was ultimately the deciding goal.

"He is still not perfect, not 100 percent, but he is getting better

every day," Alonso said of Mbappe after that match.

"Now he will have three days to keep progressing and feeling better ahead of the semifinal."

It is hard to imagine Mbappe not getting his first start of the tournament against PSG, the club who won the Champions League in the season following his departure after so many years of disappointment in Europe with him in the team.

PSG reached the last four with a 2-0 win over Bayern Munich in Atlanta in the last eight -- despite having Willian Pachá and Lucas Hernandez sent off -- and need not fear Real.

"It doesn't matter who we play in the semifinals. All that matters is that we are there and that we want to get to the final," said PSG coach Luis Enrique.

Alonso has just taken over as Real coach after an outstanding spell with Bayer Leverkusen and has already displayed great tactical flexibility, flitting between a back four and a three-man central defence at the tournament.

It will be fascinating to see which system he opts for here, and if Mbappe starts as he prepares to play against PSG for the first time since July 2017, when he was still a thrilling teenager at Monaco.

## Second-string SA sweep Zim

REUTERS, Bulawayo

South Africa completed an innings and 236-run victory over hosts Zimbabwe on the third day of the second Test on Tuesday to convincingly sweep the two-match series at Queens Sports Club.

South Africa rested most of the team that won the World Test Championship against Australia at Lord's last month, but still proved too strong for their neighbours as they won last week's first Test by 328 runs.

South Africa, who were put into bat and declared their first innings on 626-5, bowled Zimbabwe out for 220, having enforced follow on after skittling out the hosts for 170 in first innings.

South Africa seamer Corbin Bosch took 4-38 to clean up the tail.

Takudzwanashe Kaitano (40), Nick Welch (55), and skipper Craig Ervine (49) offered resistance in a clash best remembered for the decision by South Africa stand-in captain Wiaan Mulder (367\*) not to chase down the highest score in a Test innings.

## SAFF U-20 WOMEN'S C'SHIP Teams arrive in Dhaka today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh is all set to host the SAFF U-20 Women's Championship at the Bashundhara Kings Arena from Friday, with all the three foreign teams expected to land in Dhaka today.

South Lanka are scheduled to be the first team to arrive before Bhutan and Nepal are expected to arrive in the after afternoon before checking in at Holiday Inn.

All match officials -- two match commissioners, four referees and as many assistant referees -- are also scheduled to touch down in Dhaka today.

The tournament was initially supposed to be held with five teams but two-time champions India withdrew in the last moment. Bangladesh are believed to be the favourites as they feature eight to 10 players who recently played in the successful AFC Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers in Myanmar.

Even though the Bashundhara Kings Arena hosted the club's AFC Cup matches and matches of Bangladesh men's national team, the venue is going to host an international tournament for the first time, with hosts Bangladesh taking on Sri Lanka in the opening match on Friday.

The teams will play against each other twice in double-leg round robin format, with the top finishers to be adjudged champions.



Two players jostle for the ball while others look on during the first day of the four-day trial of under-17 players at the National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. The trial is being held with an eye on October's SAFF U-17 Championship.



Carlos Alcaraz swept into the Wimbledon semifinals for a third successive year as the defending champion demolished Britain's Cameron Norrie in a Centre Court masterclass on Tuesday. Alcaraz needed just 99 minutes to thrash Norrie 6-2, 6-3, 6-3 in his most commanding performance in this year's tournament.

PHOTO: AFP

## MONSOON, DEPRESSION OVER BAY Thousands suffer in coastal districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Torrential rain triggered by an active monsoon and a depression in the Bay of Bengal yesterday left thousands stranded in the country's low-lying coastal districts.

People suffered due to waterlogging in Cox's Bazar, Patuakhali, Feni, Bhola, Barishal, and Khulna, report our local correspondents. Flash floods were reported in Ukhia of Cox's Bazar.

According to Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) officials, the active monsoon has been causing heavy to very heavy rainfall in Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, and Barisal divisions over the past few days.

"The country will experience heavy rainfall in many places today. However, rainfall is likely to decrease in the next two days. The intensity will rise again from Saturday [July 12] and continue for three to four days," said Dr Abul Kalam Mallik, a meteorologist at BMD.

BMD has also issued a landslide warning for people living in the hilly areas of Chattogram division.

In Cox's Bazar, heavy rain submerged

**“**  
Rainfall will decrease in the next two days. The intensity will increase again from Saturday [July 12] and continue for three to four days.

ABUL KALAM MALLIK  
Meteorologist at BMD

more than 80 villages, leaving thousands stranded. According to BMD, the district recorded 694mm of rainfall over the past seven days.

Among the six upazilas of the district, Teknaf has been hit the hardest. Around 40 villages were flooded, marooning nearly 50,000 people, according to local officials.

Several villages in Whykong, Hnila, Teknaf Sadar, and Sabrang Baharchhara

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5



People wade through almost waist-deep water on foot or rickshaws and vans in front of the fire service office on Shaheed Shahidullah Kaiser Road in Feni yesterday after torrential rain flooded several upazilas of the district.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## New species of flying reptile found

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Researchers have discovered a new species of pterosaur - a winged reptile that lived alongside dinosaurs 200 million years ago.

Scientists at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History uncovered the fossilised jawbone of the creature in 2011, and have now identified it to be the oldest known species of pterosaur in North America.



Unearthed at a remote bonebed in Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona, its jawbone was preserved in volcanic ash 209 million years ago.

The new species would have been small enough to comfortably perch on a person's shoulder. The remarkable fossil was unearthed by Suzanne McIntire, who volunteered in the museum's FossilLab for 18 years.

"What was exciting about uncovering this specimen was that the teeth were still in the bone, so I knew the animal would be much easier to identify," McIntire said.

Because the tips of the teeth were worn down, the team concluded that the pterosaur likely fed on the site's fish, many of which were encased in armour-like scales.

The team named the new pterosaur species *Eotephradactylus mcintireae*. The name means "ash-winged dawn goddess" and references the site's volcanic ash where the fossil was found.

This part of northeastern Arizona was positioned in the middle of Pangaea and sat just above the equator 209 million years ago.

### 'MILITANCY' LINKS Cops sue 35 Bangladeshi expatriates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police's Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) has filed a case against 35 Bangladeshi expatriates for their alleged links to an internationally banned militant outfit.

These Bangladeshi reportedly collected funds for the outfit while staying in Malaysia, according to ATU officials.

The ATU lodged the case with the Airport Police Station under the Anti-Terrorism Act on July 5.

The development came to light after three of the 35 -- Nazrul Islam Shohag, Mohammad Redwanul Islam, and Jahed Ahmed -- were deported by the Malaysian authorities and later arrested by the ATU at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on July 3.

Earlier, the Malaysian police disclosed through a media briefing that they had arrested 36 Bangladeshi expatriates on allegations of collecting funds on behalf of the militant outfit.

However, the ATU case names 35 individuals, stating that they were detained by the Malaysian authorities between April

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

## Gaza ceasefire in sight, needs time

Say Israeli officials; 78 Palestinians killed as Israeli attacks intensify across enclave

AGENCIES

Gaps in Gaza ceasefire talks under way in Qatar between Israel and Palestinian group Hamas can be bridged but it may take more than a few days to reach a deal, Israeli officials said yesterday.

The new push by US, Qatari and Egyptian mediators to halt fighting in the battered enclave has gained pace since Sunday when the warring sides began indirect talks in Doha and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu set out to Washington.

Netanyahu met on Monday with US President Donald Trump, who said on the eve of their meeting that a ceasefire deal could be reached this week.

"I don't think there is a hold up. I think things are going along very well," the US leader told reporters when asked what was preventing a peace deal.

Earlier, the Malaysian police disclosed through a media briefing that they had arrested 36 Bangladeshi expatriates on allegations of collecting funds on behalf of the militant outfit.

However, the ATU case names 35 individuals, stating that they were detained by the Malaysian authorities between April

will travel to Doha this week to join discussions there, White House press secretary Karoline Levitt told reporters on Monday.

The ceasefire proposal envisages a phased release of hostages, Israeli troop withdrawals from parts of Gaza and discussions on ending the offensive entirely, reports Reuters.

Palestinian sources said on Monday that there were gaps between the sides on the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Netanyahu meanwhile ruled out a full Palestinian state, insisting Israel would "always" keep security control over the Gaza Strip, reports AFP. "Now, people will say it's not a complete state, it's not a state. We don't care," Netanyahu said.

Gaza's health authorities yesterday said that 78 people were killed in Israeli strikes across the Palestinian territory since dawn, reports Al Jazeera.

On the ground, Israel intensified deadly attacks across the Gaza Strip, as five of its soldiers were killed and 14 wounded in an explosion in the besieged territory's north.

Israeli minister Zeev Elkin, who sits in Netanyahu's security cabinet, said that there was "a substantial chance," a ceasefire will be agreed. "Hamas wants to change a few central matters, it's not simple, but there is progress," he told Israel's public broadcaster Kan yesterday.

Trump voices confidence that a deal can be reached

Five Israeli soldiers killed in combat in north Gaza

Netanyahu rules out a full Palestinian state

## Nahid warns against 'serving Indian hegemony'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

National Citizen Party Convenor Nahid Islam has warned against "serving Indian aggression and hegemony", saying his party will stand with the people to resist any such activities.



"We have long resisted Indian hegemony. If any political party or group tries to serve that hegemonic force again, we will resist. The people of Bangladesh will rise against it," he said at a rally in Kushtia town yesterday.

"We have boldly raised the slogan: 'Not slavery, but freedom!' We freed ourselves from the chains of India, just as we did from those of West Pakistan. In the Bangladesh of the future, we will stand tall with dignity and build a new state."

The rally was part of the NCP's nationwide July campaign.

Earlier, around 2:30pm, despite heavy rain, NCP leaders and activists began their July march on Kushtia's NS Road.

At another rally in Meherpur's Gangni municipal town, NCP Chief Organiser (Southern Region) Hasnat Abdullah said that the party would engage in people-centric politics and will always stand by the people.

"If people are with us, we are ready to live and die in this 56,000 square mile land. We do not want to rely on any foreign power -- be it Rawalpindi, Delhi, or America."

The true source of power is the people.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

## Next polls key to rebuild trust in police, admin

Says CEC AMM Nasir Uddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The upcoming national parliamentary election is an opportunity to restore the image of the police and the administration, said Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday.

"We have fought for 15 years to establish the right to vote -- now is the time to fulfil our responsibility," he told reporters at an event organised by the Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy (RFED) at the Election Commission headquarters in the capital.

The elections in 1991, 1996 and 2001 prove that free and fair polls are possible in Bangladesh, he said.

He went on to urge the administration, police and other law enforcement agencies to regain the public's trust by performing their duties well.

"Only when voters can go to polling stations without any hindrance, cast their votes for their preferred candidates freely and return home safely on their own, will we be able to say that voting rights have truly been established."

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Fatigued and running a fever for three days, Tania leans on a fellow patient while waiting in a queue of over 50 people at the Mohakhali DNCC Covid-dedicated hospital yesterday. Like many others showing overlapping symptoms of dengue and Covid-19, she had been waiting for hours to get tested.

## Injured protesters vandalise the July Smriti office over delayed aid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of people injured during the July uprising vandalised the office of the July Smriti Foundation in Dhaka's Shahbagh yesterday, claiming they had long been denied the financial assistance they were promised.

The incident took place after the protesters, some still undergoing treatment at the nearby Bangladesh Medical University, gathered in front of the foundation office expecting the disbursement of the second phase of aid.

Having waited for several hours, they were informed by the foundation's Chief Executive Officer Lt Col (retd) Kamal Akbar that the funds would not be disbursed that day.

Enraged, the protesters locked the office and confronted the foundation staff. Tensions flared, and soon an altercation led to vandalism on the premises.

Witnesses said 20 to 25 of those injured in July were present at the time. They alleged that false assurances of a second-phase payment had been made on multiple

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1