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BB looking for new investors for Nagad

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Shrimp adulteration threatens health, exports

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Arming Ukraine prolongs war, says Kremlin

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Mbappe set for PSG reunion

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## 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

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### 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.

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**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."

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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

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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

