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## BNP struggles to rein in the rogues

Launches drive to weed out unruly leaders, activists

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Despite repeated warnings from the top leadership and disciplinary measures, the BNP appears to be failing to maintain control over its rank and file, with leaders and activists across the country allegedly involved in crimes ranging from extortion to rape and murder.

With the next general election on the horizon, the party is now preparing to launch what it calls a “cleanup drive” to axe rogue elements from its ranks.



**Whenever something happens, the BNP's name is immediately dragged into it. Many such incidents later turn out to be false.**

**Salahuddin Ahmed,**  
Standing Committee member

At the same time, BNP leaders argue that the party is being unfairly blamed in several cases.

Over the past 11 months, 349 incidents of political violence took place across the country, leaving 87 people dead and 3,929 injured, according to rights group Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK). BNP and its affiliated organisations were linked to 323 of these incidents, which claimed the lives of at least 77 BNP men and injured 3,653 others.

The party's affiliated bodies Jubo Dal, Swechhasebak Dal, and Chhatra Dal have recently expelled five activists in connection with the brutal killing of Lal Chand alias Sohag, a scrap metal trader who was attacked in broad daylight in front of Sir Salimullah Medical College Mitford Hospital.

The murder, allegedly tied to extortion and rivalry over control of the local scrap trade, sparked outrage. Five suspects have been arrested so far.

Other recent high-profile cases include an attack on a police station in Lalmonirhat, the rape of a woman in Bhola's Tazumuddin upazila, the harassment of a former chief election commissioner, and the assault of two women at a Dhaka restaurant and bar. All of these made national headlines and drew criticism across social media.

In Lalmonirhat, BNP activists reportedly attacked the Patgram Police Station and forcibly took away two men who had been sentenced by a mobile court. The party later removed the joint convener of the Patgram municipal unit of Jubo Dal and a former upazila BNP member for their alleged involvement.

When contacted, Patgram upazila BNP President Shapikar Rahman admitted the challenge of controlling such a large organisation. “The BNP is a big party. We cannot say that everyone is innocent. We are giving instructions at the district level for leaders and activists not to get involved in criminal activities, yet these are being violated,” he said.

The party also took action against those involved in the Bhola rape incident. BNP's Bhola district unit Member Secretary Raisul Alam, however, said the party is not responsible for the crimes committed by individual members. “We are not encouraging any of these incidents.

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Protesting the brutal murder of Lal Chand, alias Sohag, a scrap trader, the Students Against Discrimination brought out a torch procession from Shahbagh last night. The procession ended at the Central Shaheed Minar premises.

PHOTO: STAR



**Is the govt backing the wrongdoers?**

**Asks Tarique**

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday questioned whether the government is being lenient on the killers of a scrap trader in front of Mitford hospital due to what he said its silent support for such incidents of mob violence.

He also questioned why the government had not arrested the killers despite having video evidence.

On Wednesday, Lal Chand, alias Sohag, 39, was dragged from his Old Dhaka shop in broad daylight and beaten to death near the gate of Sir Salimullah Medical College

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JUSTICE FOR SOHAG

## Students, people rally nationwide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Protests continued on university campuses and around the country yesterday, calling for justice for Lal Chand, alias Sohag, who was brutally murdered in Old Dhaka on Wednesday.

Political parties, student organisations, and general students took to the streets in the capital as well as Nilphamari, Rangpur, Narsingdi, Barishal, Gopalganj, Magura, Cumilla, Pirojpur, and Chattogram, among other districts.

Students held protests at Dhaka University, Jagannath University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, North South University, Brac University, East West University, and other campuses.

At least 15 leaders from various units of Chhatra Dal, Jubo Dal, and Swechhasebak Dal resigned from their posts, citing BNP's failure to uphold positive politics and maintain party discipline as reasons.

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul said the government is committed to ensuring swift justice, while Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said all those responsible will be brought to justice.

On Wednesday, Sohag was dragged out of his Old Dhaka shop in broad daylight and beaten to death near the gate of Sir Salimullah Medical College Mitford Hospital. His body was crushed with large chunks of concrete. Later, his battered and broken body was left on the street as onlookers watched in horror.

Allegations run rife that Jubo Dal men were involved in the killing.

Students Against Discrimination, from a press conference in front of the National Museum in Shahbagh,

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## RMG sector on edge as tariff talks make no headway

Bangladesh faces squeeze from rivals

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Uncertainty over the garment industry has deepened as Bangladesh's inconclusive trade talks in Washington stand in stark contrast to favourable deals for its regional rivals.

Bloomberg News reported that the US is working toward an agreement with India that could reduce its proposed tariffs to below 20 percent, while Vietnam has secured an early, favourable deal.

The diverging outcomes threaten to create a multi-tiered tariff landscape in Asia, placing nations like Bangladesh at a serious disadvantage in the US market. The uncertainty is already rippling through the supply chain, with US retailers pausing orders from Bangladesh ahead of the peak Christmas season.

The impasse for Dhaka centres on two key US demands: a 35 percent

tariff set to take effect on August 1, and a difficult 40 percent local value-addition requirement for goods to qualify as “Made in Bangladesh”. The latter is a major challenge for the woven sector, which imports over 70 percent of its fabric from China.

“Work orders have been put on hold by buyers,” said Ramzul Seraj, managing director of Elite Garments Ltd, an exporter to the US.

A Reuters report on Friday revealed that suppliers to Walmart have also delayed or suspended some orders with garment manufacturers in Bangladesh.

This contrasts with the situation for its competitors. On July 2, President Donald Trump announced a 20 percent tariff rate for Vietnam, the primary rival in global garment trade. Now, India appears poised to do even better. If finalised, Bloomberg

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**Bangladesh needs to improve efficiency by reducing the cost of doing business to be more competitive.**

**MASRUR REAZ,**  
chairman, Policy Exchange

SOHAG MURDER

## Action taken against those involved

Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said legal action has been initiated against those involved in the killing of Lal Chand alias Sohag.

Five people have been arrested over the brutal murder, which took place in Old Dhaka's Mitford area on Wednesday, he told journalists during a briefing after inspecting the living conditions of police personnel at the Mill Barracks area in Dhaka.

The case, filed by the victim's sister Manjuara Begum, names 19 individuals and mentions 15 to 20 unnamed others.

Of the named accused, Mahin was detained by Dhaka Metropolitan Police just after the incident on Wednesday. Following up on his information, Robin was arrested early Thursday with a weapon

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This home in Majhirghat of Shariatpur's Zajira upazila was destroyed by sudden erosion on July 7, putting the Padma Bridge's main protection embankment at risk. The Water Development Board later dumped sandbags along the banks and prevented the erosion from spreading further. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: JAHID HASSAN

## Cops gathering info on polls candidates

Say initiative to ‘avert unrest’ during election

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The Police Headquarters has launched a nationwide drive to collect information on potential candidates to ensure the upcoming general election is peaceful and violence-free.

The data collection began last week, with all police stations instructed to submit structured reports covering 11 key areas for each likely candidate. These include criminal background, police records, and the potential to incite unrest.

Based on the findings, law enforcers will assess security needs in each constituency and identify candidates who may pose risks.

Experts have warned that “uncoordinated surveillance by multiple agencies” could lead to misuse if not handled carefully.

A senior official at the PHQ, requesting anonymity, said, “We are gathering information to help shape election security strategies. It will allow us to identify areas requiring heightened security and assess which candidates or their supporters are more likely to instigate violence.

“This proactive approach is aimed at preventing any form of violence or irregularities before they occur.”

The initiative has been categorised as highly urgent. In a letter sent to all police stations, a copy of which The Daily Star has seen, the PHQ instructed officers to submit the information in table format, detailing each

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## THE JULY THAT ROCKED BANGLADESH

JULY 13, 2024

### Protesters announce march towards Bangabhaban

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

On July 13, 2024, the Students Against Discrimination announced a fresh set of protest programmes, shifting their strategy from blockades to processions and symbolic marches. At a press conference held at Dhaka University, the organisers declared that students would march towards



Organisers of Students Against Discrimination movement hold a press conference in front of the Dhaka University Central Library on July 13, 2024, announcing fresh programmes to press home their demand for quota reform in government jobs.

PHOTO: FILE/COURTESY OF PROTHOM ALO

the Bangabhaban the following day to submit a memorandum to President Mohammed Shahabuddin.

Alongside this, students across the country would continue boycotting classes and examinations and submit memorandums to their respective deputy commissioners, urging them to forward the demands to the president.

Hasnat Abdullah, a student of Dhaka University and one of the coordinators of the movement, addressed the media, stating, “Tomorrow, we will march towards Bangabhaban. Students in districts will submit memorandums to their DCs as part of the coordinated programme.”

Another organiser, Nahid Islam, criticised the government for its

inaction and attempts at repression. “The government is making plans and preparations to suppress our movement. We have been protesting peacefully. It should have resolved the crisis through dialogue with students from the beginning. If anything goes wrong, the government must bear full responsibility,” he said.

Amid these announcements, student leaders also turned their attention to Cumilla, where tensions had escalated following police firing on protesting students on July 11, 2024.

Student coordinator Sarjis Alam, speaking at the press briefing, said, “Today, we—student representatives from Dhaka University, Jagannath

University, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, and the Seven Colleges—visited Cumilla University. What happened there overshadowed all other incidents.”

He added that they had gone there to hear directly from the protesting students and observe the situation firsthand. “We held a nearly two-hour-long meeting with police officials at the office of the superintendent of police. We made it clear that the students’ concerns must be addressed, not silenced.”

In another development, police filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station against unnamed protesters, accusing them of vandalising police vehicles and assaulting law enforcers during the Shahbagh demonstration on July 11. The case was filed by Khalilur Rahman, a driver with the transport department of Rajarbagh Police Lines.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) additional commissioner of the Detective Branch, Harun Or Rashid, said the police were investigating whether infiltrators were attempting to hijack the movement and steer it in a different direction.

Inside the ruling party, concerns appeared to be growing. During informal discussions held at the Awami League president’s political office in Dhanmondi, some leaders reportedly acknowledged a growing wave of public support for the student protests. They warned that any further police crackdown would only deepen anti-government sentiment.

### Man sent to jail over attack on Chandpur Khatib

Victim transferred to hospital in Dhaka  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was sent to jail yesterday over the machete attack on a Khatib inside a mosque in Chandpur on Friday.

A Khatib is an Islamic cleric who delivers khutbahs (religious sermons) before Jummah prayers.

The victim, ANM Nurur Rahman, was attacked inside Mollahbari Jame Masjid in Professor Para of Chandpur Sadar shortly after prayers ended on Friday, said Md Bahar Mia, officer-in-charge of Chandpur Sadar Model Police Station.

He said one Billal Hossain was reportedly angered by remarks made by the Khatib during an earlier sermon, which is why he attacked Nurur Rahman after Jummah prayers that day.

At the time, only a few people were present inside the mosque as the prayers had just ended. Billal attempted to flee but was caught by locals. Meanwhile, the injured Khatib was rushed to Chandpur General Hospital, the OC added.

After police were informed, they rescued Billal from the enraged crowd and took him into custody. Nurur Rahman’s elder son Afnan Taki filed an attempted murder case against Billal with Chandpur Sadar Model Police Station yesterday morning.

“After receiving the complaint, we sent him to court,” the OC said.

Contacted, Chandpur Court Police Inspector Shahidullah said the court sent the accused to jail after recording his statement.

“We sought a seven day remand for the accused. But he has voluntarily confessed to his offence, and so the court has sent him to jail,” said Abdul Quader, assistant public prosecutor.

Meanwhile, the victim was transferred to Dhaka’s Holy Family Hospital on Friday night, and his condition has shown slight improvement, said Nurur’s younger son Raihan.

## BNP struggles to rein in the rogues

FROM PAGE 1

In a large party, there will always be a few bad people, but the party cannot be held responsible for their crimes,” he said.

### MEASURES FAILING?

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said the party has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for breaches of discipline. “We, as a party, have decided in principle to take drastic action whenever a party member is involved in any disciplinary violation. Where possible, we are also handing them over to the law. Additionally, we call upon the government to deal with these matters strictly,” he told The Daily Star.

Activists of the BNP and its affiliated organisations allegedly became involved in a string of violent and criminal incidents at the local level following the ouster of the Awami League regime through a mass uprising in August last year.

In response, the BNP claims to have taken disciplinary action like expulsion against more than 5,000 members, ranging from central leaders to grassroots activists. But those measures seem to be inadequate.

According to a report released last week by Human Rights Support Society, at least 529 incidents of political violence took place across the country between January and June this year, leaving 79 people dead and over 4,124 injured.

Of these, 302 incidents resulted from BNP’s internal feuds, which left 2,834 injured and 54 dead. Over 140 of the other incidents involved clashes between BNP activists and members of other parties.

The report found most of the violence occurred over establishing local dominance, taking revenge, disputes over party committees, extortion, and grabbing land or property.

Prof Dilara Choudhury of Jahangirnagar University’s political science department said, “The BNP is not solely responsible for such incidents.” She pointed to the country’s fragile law and order situation as a contributing factor.

Despite the party’s tough rhetoric, she noted, the BNP often targets only those

directly involved in misconduct while ignoring the local leaders under whose watch such activities occur.

Echoing this, writer and political analyst Mohiuddin Ahmad said the problem is hardly unique to the BNP. “The condition of all major political parties is more or less the same,” he said.

“Whichever party is in power, or appears likely to come to power, tends to attract a group of miscreants. Everyone knows this; it’s not even an open secret anymore. And without them, the party doesn’t function and can’t be run.”

### NO CHAIN OF COMMAND?

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman has repeatedly asserted that the party is taking the strongest possible action against members involved in wrongdoing.

“The BNP is the only party that does not stay in denial—that is, if someone from our party is involved in wrongdoing, we take action against them,” he said during a virtual address from London on February 22.

Days later, at an extended party meeting on February 27, Tarique instructed leaders to stay away from criminal activities. During that same session, at least 105 party leaders spoke of ongoing issues within the organisation, including extortion, land grabbing, and tender manipulation.

But the warnings appear to have had little effect. Between March and June this year, 35 BNP members were killed and 1,105 injured in 409 incidents of internal conflict, according to rights group ASK.

The continued unrest points to a deeper organisational problem, namely, the absence of a functioning chain of command, say analysts.

“Tarique Rahman has taken responsibility and is now leading the party. But distance is a factor. He is leading from afar,” said Mohammad Mojibur Rahman, a teacher at Dhaka University.

“While he issues stern warnings in his speeches, I believe that if he were present in the country and able to directly control the chain of command, such incidents would have been less frequent.”

Face-to-face interaction, he added, plays a critical role in maintaining party discipline. “Direct communication matters to both leaders and activists as it helps ensure a proper chain of command. I wouldn’t say there’s no control at all, but managing such a large organisation is never easy.”

Mojibur warned that continued internal unrest, if left unchecked, could erode public trust and negatively impact the party’s prospects in the upcoming national election.

### ‘CLEANUP CAMPAIGN’

BNP leader Salahuddin said the party has launched a “cleanup campaign” to get rid of its rogue members, spanning from district leadership down to the grassroots.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Salahuddin described how the social fabric was damaged during the Awami League rule, where state power was maintained through a culture of fear. “That toxic culture has seeped into every tier of society. Those same elements may have infiltrated various political parties or may be used by someone or the other. This cannot be changed overnight.”

To address this, he said, strict instructions have been issued to scrutinise the party ranks carefully and to identify anyone involved in misconduct. “For this, we are conducting a survey from the grassroots level.”

He also alleged exploitation of political blame games. “Whenever something happens, the BNP’s name is immediately dragged into it. Many such incidents later turn out to be false,” he said.

Pointing to a perceived double standard, Salahuddin added, “You don’t really see anyone speaking out the same way about incidents like the killing of a Jubo Dal activist in Khulna or the stabbing of an imam inside a mosque.”

On accusations levelled at the BNP without inquiry, he cited the Muradnagar incident as an example. “On the first day, it was alleged that BNP was involved. Investigation showed that the incident was actually a dispute between two brothers, and one of them was affiliated with the Chhatra League.”

political organisations is a welcome sign.

Meanwhile, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret’d) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury defended law enforcers. “If police were inactive, arrests wouldn’t have happened in last two days,” he said, referring to the Mitford murder.

“There may have been some delays in action, but we acted after verifying information,” he said, urging people to contact police instead of taking law into their own hands.

Meanwhile, Rapid Action Battalion Director General AKM Shahidur Rahman said the elite force is focused on regaining public trust following criticism during last year’s political unrest. “Gaining public trust is the main task,” he said at a press briefing in Karwan Bazar.

Omar Faruk, a professor at the Department of Criminology and Police Science at Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, said prolonged political misuse of the police has deeply damaged the institution.

“For 15 years, police have been used politically. That damage is hard to reverse,” he told The Daily Star. “Police still don’t behave like they should in a democratic country.”

He added, “I have spoken to several officers. They believe the police are going through a crisis period, and once it’s over, the situation will be under control, gradually.”

However, he said the government has to arrange training or counselling programmes to help officers adapt to the situation.

He also said curated efforts are needed to rebuild the trust between the force and the people.

## Students, people rally nationwide

FROM PAGE 1

said every murder in the country is backed by political patronage and added that without political shelter, incidents of murder, attack, and lawsuits would not be happening.

Rashidul Islam, president of SAD, accused many BNP leaders of collaborating with the Awami League during autocratic regimes to protect their businesses, saying that no new fascism will be allowed to take root in Bangladesh.

Later around 7:30pm, leaders of SAD brought out a torch procession from Shahbagh, which ended at the Central Shaheed Minar premises with a brief rally.

Addressing the gathering, the leaders called upon people across the country to unite and resist extortion and anarchy carried out by political groups.

Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Jote also held a separate protest rally and brought out a procession on the DU campus at 4:00pm from TSC.

Leaders of various student bodies under the left-leaning alliance addressed a brief rally after the procession.

Meanwhile, Chhatra Dal held protest rallies at different campuses, including Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, and Jagannath University, demanding exemplary punishment of the perpetrators.

Chhatra Shibir’s Dhaka city (south) unit held a protest in front of Mitford Hospital, while its Chattogram city unit took out a procession from Muradpur intersection and ended at GEC intersection.

## RMG sector on edge

FROM PAGE 1

reported, the arrangement would place India on a short list of trading partners that have secured preferential deals with the Trump administration, which has shocked other nations with higher tariffs.

The developments are compounding existing economic anxieties. Faruque Hassan, managing director of the Giant Group, warned of a slowdown in US consumer spending due to high inflation. “It will ultimately impact Bangladeshi exports to the US,” he said.

Despite the headwinds, industry leaders in Dhaka are projecting cautious optimism. Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said he is “very much hopeful that a level playing field of tariff will be ensured,” citing the “positive discussion” that took place.

Khan indicated that the BGMEA will sit with the government upon the return of Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin, who led the delegation in Washington, to determine the industry’s next steps. “Bangladesh has the capacity to cater to the work

orders,” Khan said, suggesting that while business may decrease, there is “no reason to panic.”

Industry analysts and business leaders argue that Bangladesh is caught in a difficult position: it’s facing a trade issue and geopolitical pressure from Washington.

According to Masrur Reaz, chairman of the think tank Policy Exchange, the conditions set by the US Trade Representative are exceptionally difficult to fulfil. He contends that while Bangladesh focused on the commercial aspects of the tariff issue, the negotiations are influenced by a broader US policy to reduce reliance on Chinese raw materials in the global value chain.

“Even if the Trump administration lowers the tariff for Bangladesh, the rate may not be significantly lower than Vietnam, India, and Pakistan,” Reaz said. He suggested a “market-based solution,” such as sharing the tariff burden among fabric suppliers, manufacturers, and retailers. In the long term, he added, “Bangladesh needs to improve efficiency by reducing the cost of doing business to be more competitive.”

Mostafa Abid Khan, a former

public safety practically nonexistent.”

Islami Andolan Bangladesh Nayebe-e-Ameer Syed Muhammad Faizul Karim, while speaking at a programme in Barishal, called the nature of the murder “more atrocious than the killings carried out under Awami fascism.”

“The people of Bangladesh are now much more aware. Just as they ousted Awami fascism through the July uprising, they will also overthrow these new fascists.”

Hefazat-e-Islam, in a statement, said the BNP, which claims to uphold the ideals and principles of patriotic President Shaheed Ziaur Rahman, must immediately bring its affiliated organisations under control and stop the politics of extortion and violence.

“On the other hand, the interim government must urgently carry out fundamental reforms within the police force to improve law and order. If law and order deteriorate, the interim government cannot avoid responsibility.”

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said some parties are trying to blame the BNP by giving this incident a political dimension.

“We took quick action, expelled those involved, and condemned the incident. Then why are you holding a procession? It’s just to get political benefits

“It’s the responsibility of the law enforcement agencies to uncover the truth of this incident,” he said while inaugurating a free medical camp at Uttara.

member of the Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission, described the situation as a “double bind,” where it is nearly impossible for Dhaka to accept all of the US conditions, yet the threatened 35 percent tariff would be devastating for exports.

“The buyers are already suspending work orders,” said Shams Mahmud, managing director of Shasha Denims. He highlighted the immediate financial risk for local suppliers, who fear being left with raw materials purchased through back-to-back letters of credit if orders are cancelled.

Faisal Samad, managing director of Surma Garments, calculated the direct impact, saying business costs would increase by at least 27 percent if the tariffs are not lowered, making it impossible to operate profitably. While negotiations are not over, he said buyers are already demanding greater value addition for future business.

For many, the goal is simply to achieve competitive parity. “If the tariff for Bangladesh is fixed at the level of India, Vietnam, and Pakistan,” Mahmud said, “then it would be a win-win situation.”

During the event, family members of the victims called for justice and demanded that those responsible for the killings be held accountable.

Tarique urged the families of the martyrs to raise their voices over the delays in the trials of those responsible for the killing of their loved ones.

He also asked them to remain vigilant against those trying to delay justice.

The BNP leader assured that if his party returns to power, it will prioritise ensuring the trials of those who killed innocent people during the mass uprising and democratic movement.



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## Govt mulls a Tk 7,340cr flood control dam in Feni

Says Adviser Faruk-E-Azam

UNB, Feni

The government is taking steps to implement a Tk 7,340 crore project to build flood control embankments along the Muhuri, Kohua, and Silonia rivers in Feni through the Bangladesh Army, said Disaster Management and Relief Ministry Adviser Faruk-E-Azam yesterday.

The project and will require top-level technical expertise and flawless



Heavy rains have submerged large areas of Feni. The photo was taken in Fulgazi upazila recently.

PHOTO: STAR

execution, he said while visiting flood-hit areas in Fulgazi upazila.

The adviser said the current embankments in the region are inadequate for tackling such large-scale floods.

"We need stronger embankments. The proposed project will be implemented with proper technological support and under appropriate authority," he said.

"Natural disasters can't be prevented, but the government is fully prepared to

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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Cargo ships remain anchored in the Bhairab river at Noapara in Jashore due to poor navigability during low tide yesterday. The vessels wait for high tide to resume movement, causing delays and driving up transport costs. These ships arrive from different parts of the country, carrying coal, cement, stone, fertiliser, food grains, and other industrial and agricultural goods.

## Man robbed, stripped by muggers

STAR REPORT

Muggers went so far as to strip a man of his shirt in Dhaka's Shyamoli on Friday, after they had snatched his valuables.

The shocking incident was caught on CCTV, which has gone viral on social media.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Imaul Haque, OC of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police

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## People's aspirations still unfulfilled

Speakers tell seminar, call for steps to curb political, economic criminalisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of several political parties yesterday said the national aspirations of the people remained unfulfilled not only after the Liberation War but also following the July uprising.

Speaking at a seminar, they said despite various victories achieved through movements

over the past century, social inequality continues to plague the country.

They called for urgent steps to curb political and economic criminalisation, hold timely elections based on consensus, and improve law and order to uphold people's aspirations for a democratic Bangladesh.

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## Absence of polls worsens law and order

Says Fakhrul, seeks quick probe into Sohag murder

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday blamed the absence of elections for the worsening law and order situation in the country and the rise in killings, saying criminals are taking advantage of the lack of an elected government.

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## Woman faked bomb threat to stop son's affair: Rab DG

STAR REPORT

A woman issued a fake bomb threat on a Biman Bangladesh Airlines' Dhaka-Kathmandu flight in an attempt to prevent her son from travelling with his extramarital partner.

Rab Director General and Additional IGP AKM Shahidur Rahman disclosed the information at a press briefing in Karwan Bazar yesterday

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20-storey building built at projected cost of Tk 160cr

Funding halted in 2016

Project lack Rajuk, ministry clearance

Construction stopped after external work finished

## 'Dhaka Tower' lies abandoned for 8 years

DIPAN NANDY

A 20-storey government high-rise in the heart of Old Dhaka has remained abandoned for the past eight years due to administrative irregularities, missing documents, and suspended funding.

Built at a projected cost of Tk 160 crore, the Dhaka Zilla Parishad's "Dhaka Tower" was intended to generate revenue through the rental of shops and commercial spaces -- a plan that never materialised.

Construction began in 2011 with a five-year completion target. However, six years later, after the external structure had been completed, it emerged that the project lacked mandatory approval from the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk). It also did not have the necessary administrative clearance from the

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The Daily Star  
STELLAR WOMEN  
SEASON 2

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২০২৫ সালের এস.এস.সি./সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ সকল ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের

অভিনন্দন

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক-এর শিক্ষাবৃত্তি থেকে নিষ্ঠাময় জীবনের যুগ্ম প্রচেষ্টার সেতুবন্ধন

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক তার শিক্ষাবৃত্তি কর্মসূচির আওতায় দেশের বিভিন্ন শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক, স্নাতক ও স্নাতকোত্তর পর্যায়ে অধ্যয়নরত মেধাবী ও আর্থিকভাবে অসচ্ছল ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদেরকে বৃত্তি প্রদান করে আসছে। এই ধারাবাহিকতায় ২০২৫ সালের এস.এস.সি./সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ মেধাবী শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে আর্থিক সহায়তা প্রত্যাশী নিম্নবর্ণিত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের কাছ থেকে অনলাইনে বৃত্তির জন্য দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে:

বৃত্তির জন্য আবেদনের যোগ্যতা:

শিক্ষার স্তর	ন্যূনতম সিজিপিএ (চতুর্থ বিষয় ব্যতীত) সকল ক্ষেত্রের জন্য		
	সিটি কর্পোরেশন এলাকার অন্তর্গত স্কুল/শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান	জেলা শহর এলাকার অন্তর্গত স্কুল/শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান	গ্রামীণ/অনগ্রসর অঞ্চলের অন্তর্গত স্কুল/শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান
এস.এস.সি./সমমান	৫.০০	৫.০০	৪.৮৩

বৃত্তির পরিমাণ ও সময়কাল:

শিক্ষার স্তর	সময়কাল	মাসিক বৃত্তি (টাকা)	বার্ষিক অনুদান (টাকা)	
			পাঠ্য উপকরণের জন্য	পোশাক পরিচ্ছদের জন্য
এইচ.এস.সি.	২ বছর	২,৫০০/-	২,৫০০/-	১,০০০/-

বৃত্তির অন্যান্য নিতিমালা:

- যে সব ছাত্র-ছাত্রী সরকারী বৃত্তি ব্যতীত অন্য কোন উৎস থেকে বৃত্তি পাচ্ছেন, তারা ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক-এর শিক্ষাবৃত্তির জন্য যোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হবেন না।
- গ্রামীণ/অনগ্রসর এলাকায় অবস্থিত শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে উত্তীর্ণ ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের জন্য বৃত্তির শতকরা ৯০ ভাগ নির্ধারিত থাকবে এবং মোট বৃত্তির শতকরা ৫০ ভাগ ছাত্রীদের প্রদান করা হবে।
- আবেদনকারীকে চতুর্থ বিষয় ব্যতীত প্রাপ্ত জিপিএ অবশ্যই সঠিকভাবে উল্লেখ করতে হবে। অন্যথায় আবেদনটি প্রাথমিক পর্যায়েই বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
- ২০২৫ সালের এস.এস.সি./সমমান পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ, আগ্রহী ও উপরোক্ত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদেরকে অনলাইনে [app.dutchbanglabank.com/DBBLScholarship](http://app.dutchbanglabank.com/DBBLScholarship) -এই ঠিকানায় নিম্নোক্ত সংযুক্তিসহ আবেদন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে:
  - আবেদনকারীর পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙিন ছবির স্ক্যান কপি
  - আবেদনকারীর পিতা ও মাতার পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙিন ছবির স্ক্যান কপি
  - এস.এস.সি./সমমান পরীক্ষার নম্বরপত্র ও প্রশংসাপত্রের স্ক্যান কপি

আবেদনকারীদের জন্য কিছু গুরুত্বপূর্ণ তারিখ:

আবেদনের শেষ তারিখ: ৬ আগস্ট ২০২৫

ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে প্রাথমিকভাবে বাছাইকৃত প্রার্থীদের তালিকা প্রকাশ: ২৫ আগস্ট ২০২৫

প্রাথমিকভাবে বাছাইকৃত প্রার্থীদেরকে ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক এর উপরোক্ত ওয়েবসাইট থেকে 'Primary Selection Letter' এবং 'প্রদত্ত নির্দেশিকার' প্রিন্ট কপিসহ সকল কাগজপত্রের সত্যতা যাচাইয়ের জন্য ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংকের যেকোন শাখা/মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং অফিসে উপস্থিত হওয়ার তারিখ: ২৬ আগস্ট ২০২৫ থেকে ১৫ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫

চূড়ান্ত ফলাফল প্রকাশ: ওয়েবসাইট ([app.dutchbanglabank.com/DBBLScholarship](http://app.dutchbanglabank.com/DBBLScholarship)) -এর মাধ্যমে ফলাফল জানানো হবে।

- সরাসরি/ডাকযোগে/কুরিয়ারযোগে কোন আবেদন গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।



ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক  
আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী



## ‘Focus more on developing economy and industrial base’

Say speakers; Greater M’singh Samity honours 181 for excellence in various sectors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Greater Mymensingh Samity Dhaka yesterday honoured eminent individuals from six districts of the greater Mymensingh region for their outstanding contributions across various sectors.

The event, held at the Officers Club on Bailey Road in Dhaka, celebrated achievements across a wide range of fields. Freedom fighter Abdus Salam, president of the Greater Mymensingh Samity Dhaka and adviser to the BNP chairperson, presided over the programme.

“Through this felicitation, we are not only honouring these individuals, we are also sending a message to future

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



A section of awardees at a programme organised by the Greater Mymensingh Samity Dhaka yesterday. The event was held to honour eminent individuals from six districts of the greater Mymensingh region for their outstanding contributions across various sectors.

PHOTO: STAR

## 40 acres of WDB land grabbed in Ctg

Grabbers include former lawmaker, ex-CCC mayor; WDB to start eviction drive soon

SIFAYET ULLAH

An influential group has allegedly occupied around 40 acres of land belonging to the Water Development Board (WDB) in Chattogram’s Kattali and Halishahar areas, constructing various types of structures and disrupting the land’s intended use for forestation.

According to WDB documents obtained by The Daily Star, the occupied land now houses a stadium, truck terminals, garages, and tin shed structures.

The list of alleged encroachers includes former Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) mayor Mohammad Manjur Alam, his nephew and former member of parliament Didarul Alam, former CCC councillor Nisar Uddin Ahmed Manju, Abu Hashem, and several others.

During a recent visit to the area, this

correspondent observed that a mini stadium – formerly named Sheikh Russel Mini Stadium – was constructed in 2021 on WDB land acquired by the agency in 1970. Truck terminals and garages were also seen on adjacent land.



Jamal Uddin, a local garage owner, said the lands along the Patenga Outer Ring Road gradually turned into truck terminals and garages after the road opened in 2022, as port-centric traffic increased along the route.

As per the WDB list, former mayor Manjur Alam built a mini stadium, former Awami League lawmaker Didarul Alam allegedly occupied seven acres to establish a vehicle terminal, and former CCC councillor Nisar Uddin Ahmed



Manju reportedly constructed vehicle garages on about one acre of land.

Asked about the construction, Manjur Alam said, “I acquired it from the person who was occupying it and built a

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

## Yunus sending Haribhanga mangoes to Modi

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is sending the famous Haribhanga mangoes to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a gesture seen as a sign of the interim government’s willingness to normalise ties with its largest neighbour.

“One thousand kilogrammes of Haribhanga mangoes are being sent to New Delhi. We have prepared the list of dignitaries from the Indian Prime Minister’s Office, diplomats, and other officials,” an official of the Bangladesh High Commission told The Daily Star last night.

“We hoped to deliver the mangoes to the dignitaries concerned in a day or two,” the official added.

Besides Modi, the interim government is also sending mangoes to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



## Internal letter misinterpreted as complaint against police

ISPR clarifies

STAR REPORT

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday issued a clarification regarding the recent circulation of an internal Army Headquarters letter on social media, which has been misrepresented by some quarters as a complaint against the police.

In a press release, the ISPR said the letter in question was an administrative communication seeking information about incidents where army personnel were allegedly harassed by members of the police.

It was prepared solely in response to a request from the National Independent Inquiry Commission formed to investigate the 2009 BDR carnage in Pilkhana.

To avoid any misinterpretation or unintended consequences, Army

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

## ‘Direct polls to reserved seats for women in JS’ Speakers demand at rally



UNB, Dhaka

Women’s rights activists yesterday demanded direct elections to the reserved seats for women in the Jatiya Sangsad, urging political parties to ensure meaningful representation and end the system of nomination that often sidelines women’s leadership.

The call came from a rally and public gathering held at the Central Shaheed Minar, organised by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## ‘Dhaka Tower’ lies abandoned for 8 years

FROM PAGE 3

Ministry of Local Government. More troublingly, the original design was reportedly altered without following due process.

Following these revelations, the Ministry of Local Government halted funding in 2016. Since then, construction has come to a standstill, and critical project documents have mysteriously gone missing from the Dhaka Zilla Parishad office.

Rajuk’s Chief Town Planner Ashraful Islam said, “To my knowledge, this building does not have any approval. However, if they now follow the proper procedure and submit a fresh application, and if the building is deemed usable, then we can discuss the matter in a board meeting.”

When The Daily Star visited the site on July 1, security guards denied entry, saying prior permission was required. From outside, this

correspondent observed alien algae growing across sections of the neglected structure, with visible signs of decay due to lack of maintenance. Four security guards are currently stationed at the site.

According to the project brief, the ministry was to finance 30 percent of the construction, while the remaining 70 percent would be covered in advance payments. One floor was earmarked for the Zilla Parishad’s office, with

the remainder planned for shops, a community centre, and chambers for legal professionals.

However, ministry officials said the project never underwent a feasibility study, a mandatory requirement for large-scale constructions, especially in congested Old Dhaka. They also noted that no approval was sought from the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), which is mandatory for projects exceeding Tk 50 lakh.

“There is no clarity on how the project’s budget was fixed at Tk 160 crore, and no proper justification was documented,” said one ministry official, requesting anonymity.

Sources said the Zilla Parishad had collected approximately Tk 60 crore in advanced payments from businesspeople who booked space in the building. These investors are now left in the lurch.

“I’ve lost money, and I don’t know if this building will ever be completed,” said one investor, also requesting anonymity due to fear of repercussions.

The construction firm,

Toma Construction Ltd, reportedly received Tk 60 crore in payments but is still owed around Tk 65 crore.

Meanwhile, the disappearance of original project files has raised serious concerns. Officials claimed a syndicate involving members of both the Zilla Parishad and the Local Government Ministry orchestrated the removal of documents. Those who served in key positions between 2010 and 2016 are believed to have knowledge of the incident.

Notably, Hasina Doula, then president of the Savar Upazila Awami League, served as administrator of the Dhaka Zilla Parishad during that period.

Chief Executive Officer of Dhaka Zilla Parishad Md Mamun Khandaker confirmed that project documents had indeed gone missing. However, no formal complaint or general diary was filed with the police.

“We’ve written to the ministry, urging measures to protect the building from encroachment. We’ve also retrieved a copy of the original design from LGED and requested the Anti-Corruption Commission to investigate the irregularities,” he told The Daily Star.

An LGED survey found the building structurally usable, though with some conditions, he added.

FROM PAGE 3

Station, confirmed the incident. He said the police have contacted the victim and asked him to visit the station to file a complaint.

The incident took place on Road 2 in Shyamoli around 6:00am. “We are reviewing CCTV footage to identify and apprehend the culprits,” the OC said.

The video shows that around 6:00am, a man was walking with an umbrella when three individuals on a motorcycle approached him from behind. One of them



PHOTO: SCREENGAB

got off the bike behind him, while the other two blocked his path. Of the three, two were wearing helmets and one was shirtless.

Brandishing machetes and sharp weapons, the

two muggers then forcibly took everything the man was carrying, including cash. They also stripped him of his shirt and shoes before fleeing the scene on the motorcycle.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**

**শিল্প মন্ত্রণালয়**

**বিসেসইসি অধিশাখা**

৯৯, মতিবিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০

[www.moind.gov.bd](http://www.moind.gov.bd)

নং-৩৬.০০.০০০০.০৯২.১৮.০২৪.২৫-৭৯

তারিখঃ ২৬ আষাঢ়, ১৪৩২  
১০ জুলাই, ২০২৫

**বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

**বাণিজ্যিক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ব্যক্তি (শিল্প)-২০২৫ নির্বাচন**

বাণিজ্যিক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ব্যক্তি (শিল্প) নির্বাচন নীতিমালা-২০২৪ অনুযায়ী “সিআইপি (শিল্প)-২০২৫” নির্বাচনের লক্ষ্যে জাতীয় শিল্পনীতি-২০২২ এ প্রদত্ত সংজ্ঞানুযায়ী বৃহৎ শিল্প (উৎপাদন ও সেবা), মাঝারি শিল্প (উৎপাদন ও সেবা), ক্ষুদ্র শিল্প (উৎপাদন ও সেবা), হাইটেক শিল্প, লজিস্টিকস খাত, পর্যটন খাত, মাইক্রো শিল্প ও কুটির শিল্প-এর আগ্রহীরা কোন একক শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বত্বাধিকারী, লিমিটেড কোম্পানির ক্ষেত্রে চেয়ারম্যান অথবা কোম্পানি পরিচালনা পর্ষদ কর্তৃক যথাযথভাবে মনোনীত কোন উদ্যোক্তা পরিচালক এবং পার্টনারশিপ ফর্মের ক্ষেত্রে শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানের ব্যবস্থাপনা অংশীদার এর নিকট হতে নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

২। আবেদনকারীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশি নাগরিক হতে হবে। আগ্রহী আবেদনকারীগণকে শিল্প মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট [www.moind.gov.bd](http://www.moind.gov.bd) হতে নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম সংগ্রহ করে পূরণকৃত ফরমে প্রদত্ত তথ্যের যথাযথ প্রমাণকসহ আগামী ১৫.০৭.২০২৫ তারিখ হতে ১৫.০৮.২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালীন শিল্প মন্ত্রণালয়ের বিএসইসি শাখায় (কক্ষ নং-৫৩২) সরাসরি/ডাকযোগে প্রেরণ করতে হবে। নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পরে কোন আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না। অসম্পূর্ণ আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

৩। বাণিজ্যিক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ব্যক্তি (শিল্প) নির্বাচন নীতিমালা-২০২৪ অনুযায়ী শেয়ার কেলেংকারির সাথে জড়িত, ঋণখেলাপি, করখেলাপি, বৌজদারি মামলায় সাজাপ্রাপ্ত এবং সাজা ভোগের পর পাঁচ বছর অতিবাহিত হয়নি এমন কোন ব্যক্তি; বিগত পাঁচ বছরের মধ্যে কোন শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানকে যদি সরকারের রাজস্ব হ্রাসের কোন ঘটনায় জরিমানা করা হয়, তাহলে উক্ত প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রতিনিধি এবং কোন শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানের বেতনভুক্ত কর্মকর্তা সিআইপি (শিল্প) নির্বাচনের লক্ষ্যে আবেদন করতে পারবেন না।

৪। আবেদনকারীকে অবশ্যই ‘বাণিজ্যিক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ব্যক্তি (শিল্প)’ নির্বাচন নীতিমালা-২০২৪ ও ‘জাতীয় শিল্পনীতি-২০২২’ অনুসরণ করতে হবে। এ ক্ষেত্রে কোনো ব্যত্যয় ঘটলে আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। আবেদনকারী তার আবেদনপত্রে কোন মিথ্যা বা অসত্য তথ্য প্রদান করলে বাণিজ্যিক গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ব্যক্তি (শিল্প) নির্বাচন নীতিমালা-২০২৪ এর ৫(৩) মোতাবেক আবেদনকারী পরবর্তী ৩ (তিন) বছর সিআইপি (শিল্প) নির্বাচনের জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবেন না।

৫। আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের পর আবেদনপত্রে উল্লিখিত তথ্যাবলীর পরিমার্জন/সংযোজন/বিয়োজন সংক্রান্ত কোন আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবেনা।

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Memo No. 42.01.5200.166.07.004.25-1165 Date: 10-07-2025

**e-Tender Notice No. Lal-01/2025-26**

An e-Tender package has been invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of the following works.

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Package No. (Lot No.) & description	Location of the works	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing & opening date & time
1	1131150	Lal/Outsourcing/24-25 Selection of Outsourcing Manpower Supply Firm for engaging of Driver (Vehicle) 01 No. Security Guard (Chowkider) 2 Nos. Cleaner = 02 Nos. Get Operator 05 Nos. and Khalashi = 03 Nos. (Total 13 Nos.) for Lalmohirhat WD Division, BWDB, Lalmohirhat by Outsourcing Process during the year 2025-26 & 2026-27	Lalmohirhat	27/07/2025 & 10:00	27/07/2025 & 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to banking hours as stated in IFT notice in e-GP web Portal.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) (01762625528-31) (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

পানি-৬২/২০২৫-২০২৬ (৭)খত

**Shunil Kumar**  
Executive Engineer  
Lalmohirhat WD Division  
BWDB, Lalmohirhat

জিডি-১৫৬৬





US Department of State employees clap for recently laid-off employees as they leave the Harry S Truman Federal Building in Washington, DC, on Friday. More than 1,300 State Department employees were fired Friday in a downsizing ordered by President Donald Trump and touted as cutting bloated government -- but which critics predict will hamstring US influence around the world.

PHOTO: AFP

# Gaza truce talks faltering over troop withdrawal

Say Palestinian, Israeli sources; at least 79 more killed in the Palestinian territory; US citizen killed in West Bank settler attack

AGENCIES

Talks aimed at securing a ceasefire in Gaza are stalling over the extent of Israeli forces' withdrawal from the Palestinian enclave, Palestinian and Israeli sources familiar with the negotiations in Doha said yesterday, as the continued Israeli offensive in the Palestinian enclave killed 79 more.

The indirect talks over a US proposal for a 60-day ceasefire are nonetheless expected to continue, the sources said, despite the latest obstacles in clinching a deal.

A Palestinian source said that Hamas has rejected the withdrawal maps which Israel has proposed, as they would leave around 40 percent of the territory under Israeli control, including all of the southern area of Rafah and further territories in northern and eastern Gaza.

Two Israeli sources said Hamas wants Israel to retreat to lines it held in a previous ceasefire before it renewed its offensive in March.

The Palestinian source said matters regarding aid and guarantees for ending the war were also presenting a challenge, and added that the crisis may be resolved with more US intervention.

The White House said on Monday that Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff, who played a major role in crafting the latest ceasefire proposal, will travel to Doha this week to join discussions there.

Delegations from Israel and Hamas have been in Qatar since Sunday in a renewed push for an agreement which envisages a phased



release of hostages, Israeli troop withdrawals and discussions on ending the war entirely.

Meanwhile, the Israeli offensive in Gaza yesterday killed 79 Palestinians, including 30 aid seekers, hospital sources said.

The new deaths of aid seekers add to nearly 800 similar deaths in the last six weeks, according to the United Nations, with Israel's army saying it issued new instructions to troops following repeated reports of fatalities.

Since October 7, 2023, Israel's military offensive has killed more than 57,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza health authorities, displaced almost the entire population of more than 2 million people, sparked a humanitarian crisis and left much of the territory in ruins.

The United Nations yesterday warned that dire fuel shortages in the Gaza Strip had reached "critical levels", threatening to dramatically

increase the suffering in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

The deaths came as Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz published a picture of the ruins of Gaza, saying, "After Rafah, Beit Hanoun".

Rafah, Gaza's southernmost city that borders Egypt, has been almost destroyed by the Israeli army. Beit Hanoun is a major city in the northern part of the enclave, which is now under heavy siege by Israeli forces.

The violence also spilled into West Bank yesterday where a Palestinian American man was beaten to death by settlers in the Israeli-occupied territory and a second man was shot dead.

US citizen Sayafollah Musallet, 20, also known as Saif, was severely beaten in the incident on Friday evening in Sinjil, north of Ramallah, the ministry said. Hussein Al-Shalabi, 23 was shot in the chest.

## Trump visits Texas flood zone

REUTERS, Kerrville

Donald Trump defended the state and federal response to deadly flash flooding in Texas on Friday as he visited the stricken Hill Country region, where at least 120 people, including dozens of children, perished a week ago.

During a roundtable discussion after touring Kerr County, the epicentre of the disaster, Trump praised both Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem for their response.

Authorities have faced mounting questions over whether more could have been done to protect and warn residents ahead of the flooding, which struck with astonishing speed in the pre-dawn hours on July 4, the US Independence Day holiday.

## Action taken against those involved

FROM PAGE 1

in his possession. The DMP also arrested another accused Titon Gazi early yesterday. On Friday, Rab detained accused Alamgir and "Chhoto" Monir.

"Our detective teams are working on the ground, and we are committed to ensuring that all those responsible are brought to justice."

Describing the killing as a "very distressing incident", he called on all segments of society to work together to curb the rising trend of intolerance.

"We have become increasingly intolerant. Even minor incidents are provoking extreme reactions. [Stopping] This is not solely the responsibility of law enforcers -- teachers, parents, university faculty, doctors, and others must step up too."

The home adviser rejected claims of police inaction, saying law enforcers took prompt measures.

"If they had been inactive, these arrests wouldn't have happened within two days," he said, citing other examples of swift police response. "We are not sitting idle. In some cases, there may be brief delays, but action is taken immediately once the information [of any incident] is verified."

Jahangir urged the public not to take the law into their own hands and to inform police immediately in the event of any incident.

Meanwhile, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul in a Facebook

post yesterday said the government is committed to ensuring swift justice in the case.

He wrote that the case would be transferred to a Speedy Trial Tribunal, and proceedings would be conducted under section 10 of the Speedy Trial Tribunal Act, 2002, to ensure justice as soon as possible.

Also yesterday, Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Hasib Ullah Gias placed accused Titon on a five-day remand after police produced him before the court seeking a seven-day remand, according to a court staffer.

Defending himself in court, Titon was quoted as saying, "Please watch the viral video carefully. I did not hit or assault anyone ... I was just standing there."

After the judge left the courtroom, the accused was heard telling someone that one Monir had called him to the scene.

Earlier in the day, another accused, Tarek Rahman Robin, gave a confessional statement in an arms case before a magistrate. As he was detained with weapons in his possession, a separate arms case was also filed against him.

Meanwhile, plaintiff Manjuara's daughter Bithi alleged that police excluded three names while preparing the first information report.

She said that around a week before her uncle Sohag was murdered, three people -- Roni, Kaiyum

Molla, and another man -- had come to his office and threatened to kill him.

Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, denied the allegation, saying those names were not mentioned when the case was filed. "Those who were actual suspects were listed in the FIR."

On the other hand, three BNP-affiliated organisations -- Jubo Dal, Svecchhasebak Dal, and Chhatra Dal -- have also questioned the exclusion of the three names from the police-prepared FIR.

Jubo Dal President Monayem Munna told reporters, "Those directly involved in the incident -- who are clearly seen in the CCTV footage -- have surprisingly not been named in the case. Those who delivered the fatal blows have still not been arrested. We don't understand why."

Condemning the murder, he said, "We are deeply concerned about the overall law and order situation in the country. The entire nation is shocked after witnessing this brutal and barbaric act. I strongly condemn and protest this savagery."

Sohag was laid to rest beside his mother's grave yesterday morning in Barguna's Sadar upazila. Shortly after, a human chain was formed in front of the Barguna Press Club, demanding justice for him.

(Our Patuakhali correspondent contributed to this report)

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■ The application fee is Tk. 4050 (including online processing fee). The application must be submitted online by **Wednesday, July 30, 2025**. For detailed application procedure, please visit: **www.iba-du.edu** or **https://www.admission.iba-du.edu**

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## Sohag’s murder signals a deeper crisis

### BNP must cleanse itself of criminal elements

We are horrified by the gruesome murder of 35-year-old Sohag, a scrap metal trader in Mitford, in broad daylight before many bystanders. A group of 8 to 10 men dragged Sohag out of his shop and mercilessly beat him with sharp and blunt weapons, stripping and then bludgeoning him with concrete slabs. A video of this horrific killing is circulating on social media. So far, four individuals have been arrested. One of the suspects, Mahmudul Hasan Mohin, is allegedly associated with Jubo Dal, while five other suspects are associated with various other wings of the party. According to Sohag’s wife, her husband had been targeted because he had refused to pay the Tk 2 lakh extortion money by Mohin to continue his business. This murder demonstrates how criminal elements linked to political parties continue to operate with impunity, perpetuating the legacy of extortion and violence from the previous regime. Only the perpetrators’ affiliations have changed.

We are deeply disturbed to see reports of various kinds of crimes, including extortion, assault, vandalism, rape and murder, being committed by individuals connected to the BNP. Even though the BNP has expelled those accused of these crimes, and in some cases has asked the police to file cases against them, such brutality continues, with the latest being the macabre killing of Sohag. Violent infighting has also plagued the party. Since August 5, at least 77 party members have been killed due to internal feuds (according to Ain o Salish Kendra).

Why can’t one of the largest parties in the country control its affiliated organisations? It seems nothing has fundamentally changed in the mindsets of these groups. The BNP has declared that it will not tolerate any kind of crime committed by its members. But just expelling individuals every time they commit a crime, especially when the crimes are widely publicised, will not address the real problem: a culture that tacitly accepts some criminal behaviour from members in exchange for loyalty. This has been our political culture for far too long, and we have seen its frightful manifestations during the last Awami League regime.

These incidents should be a wake-up call not just for the BNP, but for all political parties: this culture of intimidation and violence by members or associates must end. This can only happen from within each party, with strict enforcement of codes of conduct for its leaders and activists.

Law enforcement must act against politically connected criminals like Mohin before—not after—public outrage. Waiting for a viral video or a sensational killing to act reflects a dangerous complacency. The government should also investigate the allegation that the names of three prime suspects have been excluded from the case filed in relation to Sohag’s murder.

Unless the BNP firmly establishes a chain of command, clamps down heavily on any wrongdoing by its members, and purges itself of all criminal elements, it risks losing the support of the people. Ending political criminality is not just a party’s responsibility, it is crucial for a democratic transition.

## Govt must be bold with reforms

### World Bank’s new assessment report should be taken seriously

The World Bank, in its latest assessment report, has warned that political volatility and global trade challenges may derail Bangladesh’s reform agenda and hinder its recovery from the ongoing economic slowdown. In June, the bank approved a \$500 million development credit for Bangladesh under certain conditions and pledged an additional \$500 million, tied to the interim government’s commitment to fast-track key reforms ahead of the upcoming general election. However, the country is already grappling with serious challenges due to the imposition of a steep 35 percent tariff on Bangladeshi goods entering the US market from August 1. In fact, Bangladesh ranks among the hardest-hit nations in the latest round of US trade measures, which include duties ranging from 25 to 40 percent. The situation is deeply concerning and requires well-thought-out strategies for recovery.

Bangladesh’s economy is already under serious pressure due to declining investments and reduced demand from international markets. Citing the “trade tensions between major economies and further escalation of tariff rates,” the World Bank has estimated that a 5 percentage point decline in exports could shave 1.3 percentage points off real GDP growth and deplete the country’s foreign reserves by \$1.7 billion. Real GDP growth fell to 3.97 percent in the fiscal year ending June 2025, down from 4.22 percent the year before—the slowest in over a decade. Private sector credit growth also dropped significantly, reaching just 6.8 percent in February 2025, the lowest rate in 30 years. Despite current challenges, the World Bank projects that GDP growth could rise to 4.9 percent in FY26 and 5.7 percent in FY27, provided political stability improves and investment rebounds.

Bangladesh must also take strong steps to bring inflation under control. Between July 2024 and April 2025, inflation rose to an average of 10.3 percent, driven by supply chain disruptions, high energy costs, a weakening taka, and the lingering effects of major floods and political unrest—among other factors, according to the World Bank. However, inflation eased to 8.48 percent in June, marking its lowest level in nearly three years. The World Bank predicts a further decline in the coming years, assuming robust domestic consumption and more stable global prices.

Since taking office, the interim government has undertaken various key economic reforms to improve transparency and governance. Bangladesh Bank has introduced stricter rules for banks, requiring disclosure of real ownership, tighter controls on insider lending, and better tracking of bad loans. A major ordinance passed in May separates tax policy formulation from tax administration to reduce political interference and boost revenue. While public investment management has also come under reform, the government is further expected to ensure full audit coverage of public revenues. The successful implementation of these reforms, as well as ensuring political stability, are crucial for steering the country towards a robust economic recovery.

# Lessons from the Israel-Iran war for Bangladesh



Alauddin Mohammad is joint member secretary of National Citizen Party (NCP) and executive director at Institute of Policy, Governance and Development (IPGAD).

ALAUDDIN MOHAMMAD

What’s going on between Iran and Israel isn’t just another Middle Eastern conflict that we can watch from afar and think it doesn’t concern us. Because it does. Not directly, not yet. But the way the West spins it, the tools they use to shift regimes, and the internal vulnerabilities that make such regime shifts possible—all of that is a warning wrapped in a real-time geopolitical lesson.

Iran’s problem isn’t just Israel. The war has laid bare something deeper: an internal brittleness. And that’s what we need to look at. If your home is divided, if your agencies don’t speak to each other, if data leaks like a broken tap, then no foreign policy in the world can save you. This is where Bangladesh stands at a crossroads. Not because we’re next in line for a war, but because we’re vulnerable in a different, quieter, more dangerous way.

In *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States*, Trita Parsi makes it painfully clear how regime vulnerability often begins from within. Iran didn’t lose key commanders because its borders were breached. It lost them because its systems were. As Parsi notes, “internal competition among security agencies and lack of coherent oversight” allowed foreign actors to manipulate and assassinate with almost surgical precision. The West didn’t need to invade—they walked in through Iran’s own back doors.

This is something we in Bangladesh need to take seriously. We often speak of “foreign interference”, but when you get right down to it, the most dangerous enemy is the one within. Intelligence silos, political infighting, divided civil-military relations, are the kinds of gaps that get exploited. And that’s the real takeaway: before we even think about foreign policy, we need to clean house.

Let’s not pretend the West isn’t still playing its old games. But they’ve updated their software, so to speak. It’s no longer about boots on the ground—it’s about hearts and minds, hashtags and headlines. William Blum’s classic *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* gives a deep dive into the mechanisms of regime change, from Guatemala to Libya. The methods shift, but the pattern remains: identify division, fuel dissent, apply pressure, then step back and let it burn.

What makes this even more



Crowds gather in Tehran on June 28, 2025, for the funeral procession of Iranian military commanders, nuclear scientists and others killed in Israeli strikes.

PHOTO: REUTERS

dangerous now is that with social media, surveillance capitalism, and hyper-connected systems, it’s easier than ever to destabilise a country without ever firing a shot. Blum documents how often “human rights” or “democracy promotion” are used as soft fronts for deeper strategic goals. The script is predictable: paint the regime as corrupt, amplify internal conflict, freeze their access to global systems, and watch the legitimacy crumble from the inside.

Bangladesh is not exempt. We are already experiencing soft pressures—from conditional loans to global labour narratives to digital data regulation. This is not paranoia; this is historical pattern recognition.

If there’s one thing Iran lacked, besides internal unity, it was a clear, codified doctrine that linked its civilian institutions, military, and intelligence in a fluid, responsive way. And Bangladesh? We’re in an even worse spot. We have pieces—a few national strategies, a security wing here, an IT ministry there—but no integrated doctrine that acts as the spine of national defence and strategic projection.

So, here’s a rough sketch of what that doctrine could look like. Call it the National Cohesion and Strategic

Intelligence Doctrine (NCSID). At its core, it would weave together four key sectors—intelligence, strategic communication, digital sovereignty, and civil-military integration.

**Intelligence synchronisation bureau:** This would act as a coordination hub linking military intelligence, border security, digital surveillance, and political intelligence.

This isn’t about turning Bangladesh into a surveillance state. It’s about developing a smart, flexible framework that ensures we aren’t caught napping while others draw up the map of our future.

Bangladesh needs unity, not just as a slogan but as an operating principle. In *Killing Hope*, Blum describes how external players consistently succeed

## We must never again allow freedom to be lost



### AN OPEN DIALOGUE

Dr. Abdullah Shibli is an economist and employed at a nonprofit financial intermediary in the US. He previously worked for the World Bank and Harvard University.

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

As we celebrate the first anniversary of the July uprising, we must remember the spirit and the sacrifice that led to this historic event. To strengthen our newfound freedom and to solidify our onward march, we must remain ever vigilant and nip in the bud any attempt to insinuate a family-based dynasty, once and for all.

The nation is now bracing for some interesting developments in the nation-building process, one that was derailed during the last two decades. Our march towards democracy has been repeatedly thwarted by our elected representatives, most notably in 1974-75, 2005-06, and following the 2014 elections. In Bangladesh, elections bring up good memories and some bad ones. Our history books need to remind the new generation that after we gained independence, only four of Bangladesh’s 12 elections have been considered to be “free and fair”. The rest have frequently been mired in violence, protests, and allegations of vote rigging.

Is the country ready for elections, and another trial with an elected government? Social media is awash with appeals to the interim

government (IG) and especially to Prof Yunus to stay longer. Thus wrote Prof Adil Khan of the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, in “Bangladesh: Then and Now” (*South Asia Journal*, May 7, 2025). Prof Khan is cautious, though, and adds that this view emanates from “the personal accounts of people who report that these days they encounter fewer hassles to get jobs such as those relating to the issuance of passports, land registration works, etc, done, which until recently were unthinkable.”

I have also heard that the younger generation is disengaged from the political process. The results of a national survey conducted by SANEM earlier in May this year were published last week. SANEM Executive Director Selim Raihan said that this survey aimed to capture the perspectives of young people aged 15-35 and came to the conclusion that 83 percent of the youth show no interest in politics.

Our thought leaders need to ask: why this disinterest? It is also tempting to ask: can we not ask the IG to stay longer? Have we lost faith in the current crop of political leaders

and the political system?

In this context, I read with interest an op-ed published in this newspaper written by Bobby Hajjaj. He alluded to a mood of disenchantment, a summer of discontent, and painted a picture of doom and gloom. His disillusionment is probably triggered by the ongoing round of discussions on the various consensus-building efforts and the electoral process.

However, there is no reason to be disheartened by the “slow” progress of reforms and the jockeying for power. We have achieved some important goals. To mention a few: “The mass upheaval toppled the (Hasina) regime and untangled Bangladesh from the shackles of an external entity’s hegemonic control of the country,” as Adil Khan wrote. The efforts of the IG have placed a number of interesting ideas on the table: a term limit on the prime minister’s position, the role of the caretaker government, proportional representation in parliament, and the creation of an appointments commission for constitutional/statutory bodies.

We can see the optimism among the intellectuals. In an interview aired on the BBC on July 9, Professor Mushtaq Khan of SOAS, University of London, who is in Bangladesh now, unequivocally expressed his sense of relief at the progress achieved in the last year in the realms of politics, economics, and press freedom. However, when asked to comment on a BBC documentary which aired a verified recording where the former prime minister can be heard

ordering the police to shoot at young demonstrators on the street, Khan urged the IG to work on the criminal case as “a warning for the future that such acts cannot happen with impunity.”

A puzzle that remains unsolved is why, even in this day and age, rulers use force to resolve any differences, either with their own citizens or with their neighbours. Why did the ruling party resort to killings, arrests, and torture to cling to power? In a paper entitled, “Might Unmakes Right: The Catastrophic Collapse of Norms Against the Use of Force”, Yale Law School Professors Oona A Hathaway and Scott J Shapiro (*Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2025) conclude that often those wielding power feel that might is right and they can justify any use of force by bending the rule of law.

The nation must take a vow never again to allow the tragedy that befell us during last July and August. The “never again” creed signifies a moral obligation to learn from past tragedies, particularly the Holocaust and other genocides, and to actively work towards preventing similar atrocities and defending human dignity in the future.

At this juncture, the IG just needs to complete the reforms and ensure free and fair elections. The new PM has to keep the candle of freedom and reforms alight, and promise to fight tooth and nail to never let the culture of corruption that bedevilled the last few decades even raise its head.



# What the SANEM poll reveals and what it does not



Md Rubaiyath Sarwar is managing director of Innovision Consulting.

MD RUBAIYATH SARWAR

The South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM), in collaboration with ActionAid Bangladesh, recently released a survey that focuses on the youth’s perception of jobs, education, and the changing political scenario post-July 2024. Although the survey has a clearly defined scope, the results of the poll are being widely misinterpreted in the media, particularly the fact that the poll does *not* tell us anything about the voting intentions of the youth!

SANEM sampled 2000 youth in the age group of 15-35 years with an urban-rural distribution of roughly 50:50. Male to female distribution is roughly 54 percent to 46 percent. SANEM sampled two districts per division and two upazilas per district. This means they sampled 16 districts and 32 upazilas. The presentation provided by SANEM does not tell us about the distribution of samples in the districts and upazilas. It was an in-person survey. Every fifth household was sampled.

We need to unpack certain aspects of SANEM’s methodology before explaining how much of this survey can be used to explain whom the youth will vote for if an election were to take place now. The scope of SANEM’s survey is beyond the youth’s electoral preference. However, as the media has primarily picked up on the electoral preference and a fair degree of misinterpretation is going on, it is important to bring a few points to light.

First, the methodology does not explain whether a ward or a village in the selected upazila was chosen as a primary sampling unit (PSU). It is important to know how many houses were sampled per ward or village, as there is a group effect. We assume that the samples from a ward generally tend to behave similarly due to homogeneity in socio-economic aspects.

Second, there is no explanation of how the 16 districts and the 32 upazilas were selected. The list signals that it was purposively decided. Most of these districts that were selected generally tilted between BNP and



FILE PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

The July-August uprising was led by the youth, yet SANEM survey reveals many are apathetic towards the country’s politics.

Awami League. There is a possibility that the constituencies that fell under the PSUs, drawn by the survey, are either pro-BNP or pro-Awami League. As such, the survey results might not have fully grasped the youth’s perception regarding the influence of religion-based politics. A much larger sample size with nationwide coverage will be required to capture all types of constituencies in a fully randomised scenario. Therefore, it is necessary to understand whether the upazilas were randomly or purposively selected and the rationale behind their selection.

Third, we need to know how the total sample of 2000 was derived, at what confidence interval, and how it was distributed among the district and the upazila. At the very least, the sample size does not seem to be proportionally distributed according to the population of the targeted respondents (youth aged 15-35). The margin of error of the key statistics provided in this survey is also unknown. SANEM may publish a full report, with answers to all these

not follow it closely, and 39 percent said they follow occasionally. It thus appears that there is enthusiasm to vote, but not much awareness about the unfolding political scenario. Is it not a core finding of this study that, despite July being termed as the youth uprising, the youth of the country is apathetic towards politics? The media has completely ignored this finding.

Also, around 14 percent or 280 respondents are not yet registered to vote. If we discount

respond to the question about voting share in the election?

This brings us to the most important aspect of this study that most of the media and political analysts missed. The survey did not ask “whom will you vote for, if an election happened now?” The survey question was “what percentage of the vote (out of 100 percent) will each of the political parties get in the upcoming election?”

Clearly, this response does *not* reveal whom a respondent will vote for! Rather, it asks respondents to predict the vote distribution in the next election.

The prediction made by all surveyed respondents has been averaged, and based on that BNP will get 38.76 percent of the total vote, Jamaat-e-Islami will get 21.45 percent of the total vote, NCP 15.84 percent, Awami League (if allowed to participate) 15.02 percent, other religion-based parties will have 4.59 percent, Jatiya party will have 3.77 percent and the rest 0.57 percent.

Again, we do not know the underlying distribution of the respondents’ predictions. Did most of the respondents think BNP would get around 39 percent? Or was there a very diverse array of predictions? We do not know!

Assuming that the youth surveyed are truly representative of the broader population, what this survey claims to have discovered is youth’s (aged 15-35) prediction about the voting distribution in the upcoming election. This does not reveal young people’s voting preferences.

The survey, however, imparts a message, notwithstanding the methodological limitations described above. The poll shows that young people think NCP will perform strongly as a young party in the next election. It also shows that they believe Awami League still holds considerable strength.

Post July 2024, Bangladesh has entered a new era. The series of opinion poll surveys, such as this one by SANEM and ActionAid Bangladesh and the one previously done by Innovision and the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, are positive signs. They usher in the possibility of data-driven decision making. These are early days for large-scale opinion research in Bangladesh, and the methodologies will evolve. While that happens, the media and the political analysts must be careful in analysing the poll results and the methodology. Otherwise, as it has happened in the case of SANEM polls, the results will be misinterpreted.

# The tariff turbulence is hitting Southeast Asia



Tamanna Tabassum is assistant professor at the Bangladesh Institute of Governance & Management (BIGM).

TAMANNA TABASSUM

The tariff upsurge initiated by US President Donald Trump, notably against China, has been viewed as a protectionist strategy to safeguard American jobs and trade deficits. Like a stone thrown into a pond, the US tariffs have sent ripple effects far beyond the borders of the US. The economies of the Global South are the most affected, including many countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, with emerging markets, export dependencies, and developing infrastructures. The tariff turbulence, created due to the imposition of high tariffs by Donald Trump on China, has disrupted the economic stability and development trajectories of countries in ASEAN. These economies are not bystanders in global trade tensions; they are intensely involved in global pricing and the global value chain. Nevertheless, Southeast Asian economies are now being squeezed by Chinese exports on one hand and US tariffs on the other. Chinese goods that were originally targeted for the US markets now

have to find new markets because of the US imposition of high tariffs on Chinese exports. And the obvious markets are in Southeast Asia. Therefore, when titans clash, the tariff turbulence hits ASEAN.

According to an article co-authored by former Indonesian Minister of Trade Mari Pangestu, Southeast Asia is about to be hit by a tsunami of cheap Chinese goods. A high influx of Chinese goods into the Indonesian market will adversely affect the job market as well as the manufacturing industries of Indonesia. China has a massive comparative advantage in textile manufacturing industries due to its substantial technological command, which makes it almost impossible for Indonesian textile industries to compete with China. For instance, the dumping of cheap Chinese fabric in Indonesia is often cited as one of the main reasons behind the decline and subsequent closure of Indonesian textile giant Sritex on March 1. Thus, Indonesia faces

the biggest challenge in its domestic market from the dumping of Chinese goods.

US tariffs on Chinese goods will also have a hostile impact on Malaysia’s solar panel manufacturing industry. Although the US was initially a stronghold of solar module manufacturing, things changed in 2010 when China acquired a comparative advantage, leading to the shutdown of many US solar panel manufacturing plants. The Biden administration has tried to support this industry through subsidies and announced tariffs on solar panel imports from Southeast Asia of up to 271 percent, citing anti-dumping and anti-subsidy grounds. These tariffs have been increased further under the Trump administration. As a result, many of China’s leading solar manufacturing companies are closing or cutting back the operations of their plants in Malaysia. China has also announced the shutdown of solar panel manufacturing operations in Thailand and Vietnam. Experts say that Chinese exports have already put some Malaysian industries out of operation, and US tariffs will have a further detrimental impact. Some of the tariff exemptions can partially protect semiconductors, which are Malaysia’s largest export category to the US. Nonetheless, new tariffs will still negatively impact many other Malaysian industries such as furniture, textiles, rubber, plastics, etc.

According to Chinese customs data, China’s largest export market in 2023 was ASEAN, with an annual value of \$523.7 billion.

Since the Chinese economy is not growing as fast, China needs to increase its exports and investment in ASEAN. However, rising Chinese exports are exerting significant pressure on ASEAN’s domestic manufacturers. Thus, the relationship between China and ASEAN is becoming more complex.

Southeast Asian countries are also experiencing high imports of various low-cost Chinese products through Chinese e-commerce giants such as Temu, Shein, and apps like Lazada, owned by Alibaba, which compete extensively with local manufacturers. The range of Chinese commodities that Malaysian consumers can buy has been growing. Apart from the consequences of US tariffs on China, challenges such as overcapacity of Chinese manufacturers, the slowdown of the Chinese economy, and reduced consumer spending in ASEAN have led to increased exports of Chinese products to significant parts of Southeast Asian markets.

To address this situation, Indonesia, ASEAN’s largest economy, is strengthening its anti-dumping legislation. Moreover, the Indonesian government is looking to impose duties of up to 200 percent on Chinese imports. It has already banned e-commerce firm Temu over fears that its small enterprises could be destroyed. Meanwhile, Temu suspended operations in Vietnam in December 2024, amid a crackdown on e-commerce platforms. In Thailand, 58 products, including steel and

furniture, have been identified as targets for anti-circumvention duty. To manage low-cost imports and protect local manufacturers, Thailand introduced a seven percent VAT on imported goods below \$40. This has led to a 20 percent reduction in imports in this category, particularly from China.

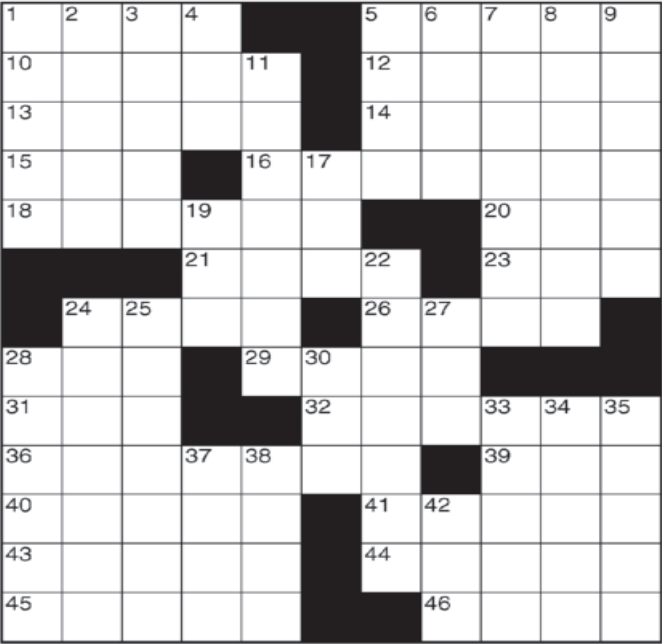
In 2024, the US overtook China as Southeast Asia’s largest export market. However, access to US markets is under greater threat under the current Trump administration. US decisions may give global companies more reasons to increase investment in Southeast Asia due to their stable and growing domestic markets, increasing income per capita, and business-friendly atmosphere towards all parties. According to World Bank and IMF projections, ASEAN as a whole is likely to grow faster than China over the next three years due to its growing economies. Moreover, ASEAN economies have attracted Chinese overseas investment for a variety of reasons, including proximity, FTAs, historical relations, and Chinese support regarding new technology, capital, and trading partnership. Despite the advantages, a high influx of Chinese goods into the Southeast Asian market will heavily affect local manufacturers, resulting in large-scale job losses and the shutdown of local infant industries, leading to trade friction with China. Therefore, with pressure from both superpowers (the US and China), should Southeast Asia be optimistic about its economic growth in 2025?

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**  
1 Dance unit  
5 Disinfectant’s targets  
10 Salon worker  
12 Clarifying words  
13 Brighten  
14 Singer Ronstadt  
15 Suffer  
16 Frying mess  
18 Shred  
20 Really impress  
21 Son of Seth  
23 Young man  
24 Mint product  
26 Effortless  
28 Take in  
29 Cut  
31 Maximum amount

- 32 Player at the plate  
36 Serving aid  
39 According to  
40 Blender speed  
41 Matt of movies  
43 Borders  
44 Sacked out  
45 Monopoly cards  
46 Midmonth day  
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1 Work byproduct  
2 Shire of “Rocky”  
3 Glorify  
4 Parrot or puppy  
5 Arizona river  
6 Throw off  
7 Some tuxes

- 8 Stepped aside  
9 Caught  
11 Bristles at  
17 Old hand  
19 Kayo count  
22 “Folly” (Alaska)  
24 Conspire  
25 Blow up  
27 Six-legged worker  
28 Put a limit on  
30 Presidential nickname  
33 Broken  
34 Skip the ceremony  
35 Talks crazily  
37 Prepared to drive  
38 Hardy heroine  
42 Clay, later



7-6

## YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

S	A	V	A	G	E		A	F	A	R
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# ‘SHOOT ME, I BARE MY CHEST’

Film and exhibition honouring Abu Sayed premieres at Drik

The global premiere of the film and exhibition, *Shoot Me, I Bare My Chest—A Counter-Forensic Investigation into the Killing of Abu Sayed*, took place on Friday, July 11, at DrikPath Bhobon.

The initiative explores the killing of Abu Sayed, a student activist at Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, who was tragically killed during a protest on July 16, 2024. His death became a pivotal moment in the July Uprising, which ultimately led to the downfall of Sheikh Hasina’s government.

While the official narrative initially claimed that Abu Sayed was killed by protesters using bricks and firearms, in-depth counter-forensic investigations led by Drik Picture Library in Bangladesh and Forensic Architecture in the UK have uncovered a radically different story.

Through meticulous analysis combining interviews, photogrammetry, heat maps, satellite imagery, and photographic and video evidence, the investigation challenges the official account—revealing police responsibility and the use of excessive force against protesters.

The event was moderated by Dr Shahidul Alam, photographer, activist, and managing director of Drik. Speakers included Jumanah Bawazir, advanced researcher, Forensic Architecture; Tasneem Khalil, editor-in-chief, Netra News; Nicholas Alistair Masterton, researcher of technology, Forensic Architecture; Goljar Rahman Ador, photojournalist at Kaler Kantho, Rangpur; Asaduzzaman Arman, staff cameraman at NTV, Rangpur; Tawhidul Haque Siam, student and university correspondent from Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur; and Parvez Ahmad Rony, network coordinator and photojournalist, Drik.

The exhibition is curated by ASM Rezaur Rahman.

The findings of this counter-forensic investigation expose major inconsistencies in the official story, implicating deliberate actions by law enforcement and contradicting claims that protesters were responsible for the violence. The exhibition and film offer a powerful, thought-provoking investigation into the political dynamics surrounding Abu Sayed’s death, while shedding light on broader implications for justice and truth.

The film and exhibition will remain open to the public until July 26, every day from 3pm to 8pm on Level 2 of DrikPath Bhobon.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DRIK/RAHAT KARIM

## Blackpink returns with first new track in three years

Just days after debuting their fresh new song *Jump* live in South Korea, Blackpink officially released the studio version and its cinematic music video last Friday — and it has since topped iTunes charts in 47 countries.

The track, their first in almost three years, features contributions from writers like TEDDY, Diplo, and Zikai, with production by Diplo, 24, and others.

Blending bold guitar riffs, dynamic rhythms, and powerful vocals, the song highlights each member’s unique style while exploring new sonic territory.

According to YG Entertainment, the music video was filmed in Korea with Grammy-winning director Dave Meyers to reflect Blackpink’s evolving artistic



identity.

The group’s next global tour is scheduled for July 12–13 at SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles, following their concert comeback in Seoul.

Their last album, *Born Pink*, was released in 2022.

## Nawshaba’s Tollywood debut set for Durga Puja release

Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed’s much-awaited Tollywood debut *Kando Kolkatei (The Calcutta Case)* is finally set for release this Durga Puja.

Directed by Anik Dutta and featuring Abir Chatterjee in the lead, the film was completed in 2022 but faced delays until Friends Communication recently confirmed its theatrical premiere with a motion poster.

Inspired by Feluda, the story blends mystery and nostalgia, with Nawshaba portraying a Bangladeshi woman tracing her roots in Kolkata. “The project feels magical,” she shared, recalling how an unexpected message from the director led to her casting. The film holds special meaning for Nawshaba, as her late father was a Feluda fan. The actress was recently seen in the web series *Kanagoli*.



## Shama Rahman and Afzal Hossain headline rain-drenched cultural evening



(L) Afzal Hossain and Shama Rahman during their performance. (M) The ensemble that enchanted the evening. (R) Chanchal Chowdhury, Zahid Hasan and Afzal Hossain share a light moment.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

DOWEL BISWAS

As Dhaka shimmered beneath days of rainfall, a quiet enchantment stirred inside the Sheraton Ballroom last Friday; however, this wasn’t just another evening of performances. *Badol Diner Prothom Kodom Phul*, hosted by MW Magazine Bangladesh, unfolded more like a dream shared between memories and monsoon.

Rabindra Sangeet artiste Shama Rahman and veteran actor-director Afzal Hossain held the room in rapt attention, drawing on monsoon moods, Tagorean longing, and the stillness that lives between songs and poems.

An hour after guests from all over Dhaka had gathered, the room lights dimmed by 6pm, and thunder rumbled

from hidden speakers. The emcee, Sarah Alam, appeared with an umbrella in hand, depicting an image straight from a Jibanananda Das poem.

Monsoon, that perennial muse of Bengali art, returned in full spirit. The scent of wet earth, the shimmer of distant rivers, the melancholy of old letters and long-forgotten songs—all emerged through the evening’s tapestry of voice and verse.

Rumana Chowdhury, editor and publisher of MW Magazine, captured the essence best. “The joy of getting drenched as a child, the thrill of stormy winds, the image of a *kodum* in hand while drifting into imagination... these are invitations to unlock the chest of memory,” she said. “This event was built from that feeling.”

Shama Rahman began with *Badol Diner Prothom Kodom Phul*, the quintessential Rabindra Sangeet that feels less like a song and more like monsoon itself. Afzal Hossain followed with Tagore’s *Ashaar*, recited like a letter drawn out from rain-stained pages. The dialogue between them—through poetry and song—was deeply emotional, subtle, and unhurried.

The musical selections were deliberate. Jibanananda’s *Pochis Bochhor Pore*, Sunil Gangopadhyay’s *Okhane Ke, Keu Na Batas*, and Rabindranath’s *Aji Jhorer Rate* and *Megher Por Megh Jomeche* were delivered with restraint, allowing each syllable to sink.

Midway through, Afzal turned to Shama and asked, “How did it all begin?” “It was my mother,” Shama replied.

“Her love for Rabindra Sangeet drew me in. I started at seven, and I’ve never stopped learning.” The simplicity of her answer mirrored the honesty of her voice.

The crowd included some of Dhaka’s cultural and corporate figures: Mahfuz Anam, Monirul Islam, Anisul Haque, Chanchal Chowdhury, Arifin Shuvo, and Afsana Ara Bindu, among others. Yet the atmosphere remained warm, personal, and unaffected by formality.

Rumana Chowdhury described the programme as “a response to the silent tug of memory,” one where a single tune or storm wind could awaken a season from deep within.

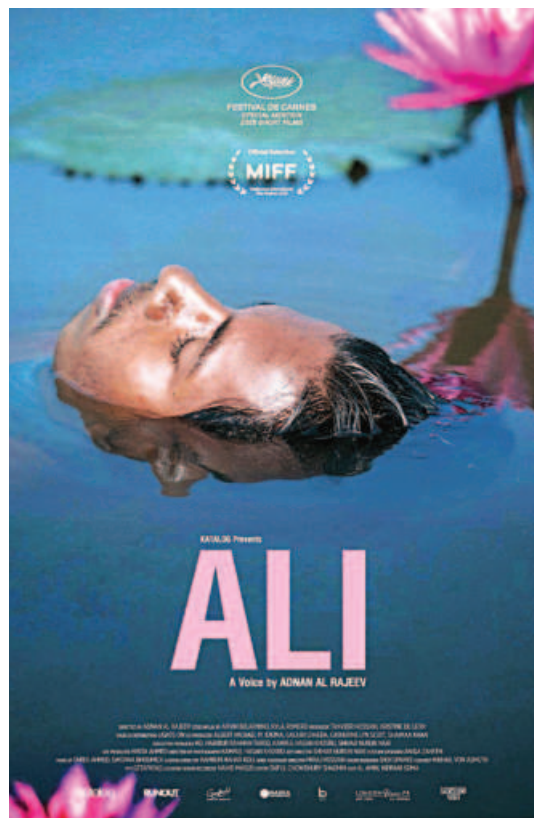
The event will be broadcast on Maasranga Television at 10:30pm tonight (July 13).

## Adnan Al Rajeev’s ‘Ali’ heads to Melbourne International Film Festival

Adnan Al Rajeev’s short film *Ali*, which made history as the first Bangladeshi short to compete in the Main Competition at the 78th Cannes Film Festival and win a Special Mention, is now heading to Australia.

The film has been officially selected for the 73rd Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF), marking its Australian premiere. Bangladeshi producer Tanvir Hossain confirmed the news, calling the MIFF selection another major achievement following Cannes.

The film will be screened on August 8 at 6:30pm and August 18 at 9:15pm. This international recognition continues to position *Ali* as a landmark project in Bangladeshi cinema, expanding its reach to global audiences.





## Cops gathering info on polls candidates

FROM PAGE 1  
candidate's party affiliation, political position, criminal and police history, educational background, and other identifiers. Officers were also asked to verify and include each candidate's parents' names, address, phone numbers, and national identity numbers.

According to police sources, the drive will continue until the election and will cover not only candidates but also their close associates and party workers. The data, compiled by the Special Branch at each station, is being sent to the PHQ for use in constituency-specific security planning.

The information will help determine where additional deployment is needed, whether to increase mobile patrols, and if police or Rapid Action Battalion presence should be enhanced. It will also guide individual security measures for candidates.

An officer-in-charge of a Dhaka district police station,

speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "A secret cell has been formed to work on this.

"We received a list of possible candidates for the upcoming election around five days ago. We are now conducting investigations and cross-checking data as per instructions."

At least six other OCs confirmed the development. However, no PHQ official would comment on record, citing the matter as top secret and confidential.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam said police are also preparing a list of individuals involved in asserting territorial dominance, particularly in Dhaka.

He made the remarks after visiting the Dhaka District Police Lines and the Traffic and Driving School at Mill Barrack in Old Dhaka yesterday.

"Political parties also have an important role to play in improving the overall law

and order situation. Their cooperation is essential in this regard," he said.

Speaking to The Daily Star, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said, "If it [data collection drive] is routine work, then it is okay. But if it is done with any dishonest intention, then there is cause for concern."

Contacted, Dr Tawhidul Haque, associate professor at the Institute of Social Welfare and Research at Dhaka University, said, "Law enforcers can take various steps to ensure a peaceful election.

"However, the initiative may not be well-intentioned, as it effectively places candidates under surveillance. Such steps must be taken with caution to prevent misuse."

He added that candidate information should be maintained solely by the Election Commission. "If a candidate commits any wrongdoing, there are legal provisions to take action.

But if multiple agencies collect information without proper coordination, it could become a tool for abuse."

**COPS TO BE TRAINED FOR POLLS**  
The PHQ has also initiated a first-of-its-kind training programme for police personnel across the country ahead of the upcoming general election.

Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said the training is part of the election preparedness plan.

"The election date will be announced by the Election Commission, not by us. However, we aim to complete all preparatory work by December," he told reporters after inspecting the living conditions of police personnel at Mill Barrack in Dhaka.

Enamul Haque Sagar, assistant inspector general at the PHQ, said, "Initially, the training will be provided to officers in Dhaka and will then be gradually expanded to other districts."

## Fuel to engines cut off

FROM PAGE 12  
faced resistance from BSF personnel."

The BSF official said the Bangladeshis hurled stones at the BSF personnel, prompting the Indian border guards to retaliate with sound grenades. As the group refused to retreat, BSF opened fire, injuring Shafiqul.

He was rushed to Doharabazar Upazila Health Complex, where he succumbed to his injuries around 2:30am, Zakaria added.

In Thakurgaon, Md Rasel was shot dead by the BSF along the Minapur border of Haripur upazila early yesterday, said BGB sources.

According to BGB and local sources, BSF members from Parial camp under BSF-87 Battalion opened fire on a group of 7-8 people who illegally entered Indian territory. Rasel was critically injured but the other members of the group reportedly escaped unhurt.

Rasel succumbed to his injuries while being taken to a local hospital in India, said

Abdullah Al Moin Hasan, BGB 42 Battalion CO in Dinaipur.

BGB held a flag meeting with BSF at the zero line yesterday evening.

At the meeting, BSF admitted to the shooting, stating that a patrol team from Parial camp opened fire around 4:00am when the group illegally crossed the border.

The BGB official said he strongly protested the killing, terming it a clear violation of border protocols.

"We told them [BSF] that the BSF can detain individuals, who cross the border illegally, and later hand them over to BGB for legal action instead of resorting to lethal force," he said.

The BSF will hand over Rasel's body today (Sunday), he said.

Rasel's father Niaz Uddin said his son went out on Friday evening and did not return. On Saturday morning, the family was informed that Rasel had been shot dead by BSF.

[Our correspondents from Sylhet and Thakurgaon contributed to the report.]

## BSF shoots

FROM PAGE 12  
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The BSF official said the Bangladeshis hurled stones at the BSF personnel, prompting the Indian border guards to retaliate with sound grenades. As the group refused to retreat, BSF opened fire, injuring Shafiqul.

He was rushed to Doharabazar Upazila Health Complex, where he succumbed to his injuries around 2:30am, Zakaria added.

In Thakurgaon, Md Rasel was shot dead by the BSF along the Minapur border of Haripur upazila early yesterday, said BGB sources.

According to BGB and local sources, BSF members from Parial camp under BSF-87 Battalion opened fire on a group of 7-8 people who illegally entered Indian territory. Rasel was critically injured but the other members of the group reportedly escaped unhurt.

Rasel succumbed to his injuries while being taken to a local hospital in India, said

## Direct polls to reserved

FROM PAGE 4  
The organisation's president Fauzia Moslem presided over the event, which ended following procession towards Paltan Mor.

Fauzia said the struggle for women's political empowerment has been ongoing since 1972. "We are in search of our own identity. The time is now to ensure women's participation in decision-making. The women's movement is a societal movement, and society stands with us," she said.

Fauzia stressed that the demand for direct elections to women's reserved seats will eventually gain public support.

"Democracy cannot move forward by leaving anyone behind," she said, advocating for one-third representation of women in Parliament through direct elections.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad General Secretary Maleka Banu echoed the demand for direct electoral participation.

Shahida Parvin Shikha, general secretary of Nari Shramik Kendra and a national council member of Mahila Parishad, emphasised that the fight is not against men, but for democracy.

"Democracy is incomplete without women's political empowerment. We demand direct election, not nomination, for reserved seats," she said.

Rabeya Khatun Shanti, secretary of the platform, said, "The capabilities of today's women in decision-making are fruits of the women's movement. In today's humanitarian crisis, it is crucial to focus on increasing women's representation in Parliament."

Rina Ahmed, head of the Training and Research Sub-Council, raised concerns about rising violence against women. She urged

the women's commission to press the government for direct elections to reserved seats.

Rehana Yunus, its Dhaka metropolitan secretary, and Anwara Begum, central committee member, also spoke.

The gathering saw participation from representatives of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), Karmojibi Nari, Nari Shramik Kendra, and Mahila Parishad leaders and organisers from Dhaka, Tongi, Belabo, and Narayanganj.

## 40 acres of WDB land

FROM PAGE 4  
stadium there for the local youth and teenagers... The facility was completely non-commercial. I did it out of social responsibility to promote sports in the area."

Attempts to contact Didarul Alam and Nisar Uddin for comment were unsuccessful, as their mobile phones were switched off.

Sources said they have been in hiding since August 5, following the fall of Hasina's government.

Sowkat Ibne Sahid, executive engineer of WDB Chattogram, said a list of land grabbers has already been prepared. "Most of the land along the Chattogram city protection embankment and adjacent road has already been occupied. For

## Govt mulls

FROM PAGE 3  
deal with the aftermath," he said.

The adviser visited Ali Azam High School flood shelter in Fulgazi and Azmiri Begum Girls High School shelter in Munshirhat. He inspected a river erosion point along the Muhuri River at Dakkhin Sripur Purbopara.

The overall flood situation in Feni has started to improve with water levels gradually receding.

The low-lying areas in Chhagalnaiya, Feni Sadar, and Daganbhuiyan remain submerged, leaving nearly 40,000 people across 30 villages waterlogged.

various reasons, we were previously unable to reclaim these lands. However, the ministry has recently issued directives in this regard," he said.

"We have already taken several steps, including requesting budget allocations for eviction drives and seeking the deployment of executive magistrates. We hope to reclaim these valuable lands soon and bring them back under our control," he added. Borno Hoque, sub divisional engineer of WDB, said public announcements are being made via loudspeakers, urging the removal of illegal structures. He said eviction drives will follow and that the WDB plans to plant trees after recovering the land.

## Internal letter

FROM PAGE 4  
Headquarters promptly cancelled the effect of the letter, the statement added.

"A vested quarter is deliberately misrepresenting the issue to create misunderstanding and distrust between the Bangladesh Army and the Bangladesh Police," said the ISPR statement.

The statement further noted that both forces [army and police] have

## Focus more on developing

FROM PAGE 4  
generations," said the organisation's secretary-general Nasir-Ud-Doula during his welcome speech.

A documentary showcasing the history, heritage, and success stories of the six districts was presented at the event.

In its commemorative souvenir, the Samity listed a total of 181 honourees selected for their excellence and impact. The list included 56 from Mymensingh, 33 from Kishoreganj, 30 from Tangail, 26 from Jamalpur, 20 from Sherpur, and 16 from Netrokona.

Several of the honourees who attended the event also addressed the gathering. Among them, Bangla Academy President Abul Kashem Fazlul Haq said Bangladesh must focus more on developing

## WHO sends Saima

FROM PAGE 12  
daughter of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, for fraud, forgery and misuse of power, said the report published on Friday.

WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus notified staff in a brief internal email that Saima Wazed would be on leave from Friday and that WHO Assistant Director-General Dr Catharina Boehme would "serve as the Officer in Charge" in her place.

Boehme would reach the SEARO office in New Delhi on Tuesday, Tedros added.

The charges against Saima Wazed stem from her bid to be appointed regional director.

She took office in January, 2024 but her campaign was shadowed by claims that her mother used her influence to ensure her daughter's election.

The ACC investigation into these claims began in January.

According to the formal charges, Saima Wazed is alleged to have provided

The bureau said the investigation was ongoing, and that additional evidence and information had been "sought from the stakeholders".

Boeing said in a statement it would "continue to support the investigation and our customer", adding "our thoughts remain" with those affected by the disaster.

Air India said it was "working closely with stakeholders, including regulators."

"We continue to fully cooperate with the AAIB and other authorities as their investigation progresses," it said in a statement on X.

The UN's International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) stipulates that states heading an investigation must submit a preliminary report within 30 days of an accident.

US and British air accident investigators have taken part in the probe.

Suresh Mistry, who lost his daughter Kinal in the crash, told AFP his family was still coming to terms with the loss.

false information about her academic record during her campaign for regional director, violating Section 468 of the Bangladesh Penal Code (forgery for the purpose of cheating) and Section 471 (forging a document).

The ACC also alleges she misrepresented her qualifications by claiming an honorary role at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, which the university disputes, to secure her WHO position. The charges were detailed by ACC Deputy Director Akhtarul Islam, the report said.

Saima Wazed is also accused of having misused her power and influence to collect about \$2.8 million from various banks for the Shuchona Foundation, which she used to head.

The ACC case did not provide complete details on how the money was then used. Those charges include: allegations of fraud and misuse of power under Sections 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property); as well as Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act of 1947.

Since the charges were laid, Saima Wazed has been unable to travel properly in the SEARO region as she faces arrest in Bangladesh, Health Policy Watch said in its report.

Sheikh Hasina fled the country last August during the mass uprising.

## No party

FROM PAGE 12  
and everything and rebuild Bangladesh."

Nahid said the party did not agree, and instead, it demanded polls within months.

"We are still saying our door is still open for reforms, not for power sharing. If this door closes, people will never forgive you."

The rally was moderated by NCP Chief Organiser (north) Sarjis Alam, and also addressed by, among others, Joint Convener Tasnim Jara, Chief Organiser (south) Hasnat Abdullah, Joint Chief Organiser (south) Mejbab Kamal, and Satkhira NCP member Moniruzzaman.

## Swiatek crushes

FROM PAGE 12  
title could have been as easy.

She dropped only two games in her semi-final against Belinda Bencic and was even more ruthless in the final, clinching victory with a backhand winner.

Swiatek, who reached the final of the grass-court tournament at Bad Homburg two weeks ago, has looked increasingly strong while the top seeds tumbled at the All England Club.

She lost just one set in her run to the final.

But US 13th seed Anisimova was expected to prove a stern test after ousting world number one Aryna Sabalenka in the semi-finals.

Anisimova made a nervous start in hot conditions on Centre Court.

She was broken in the first game, soon slipping 2-0 behind and the signs looked ominous.

She appeared to have found her feet in her next service game but the tenacious Swiatek refused to give ground and recovered to move 3-0 ahead when Anisimova double-faulted.

At 4-0 down Anisimova was facing a first-set wipe-out but she was powerless to halt the rampant Swiatek, who sealed the first set 6-0 in just 25 minutes.

The American won just six points on her serve in the first set and committed 14 unforced errors.

An increasingly desperate Anisimova could not stem the tide in the second set, double-faulting again in the third game to give her opponent game point and then netting a backhand.

The crowd got behind her but to no avail as Swiatek kept up her level, serving out to win and celebrating before consoling her devastated opponent.

## People's aspirations

FROM PAGE 3  
The seminar, titled "Unfulfilled National Aspirations and the July Uprising", was organised by Bangladesh Jatiya Samajtanrik Dal (Bangladesh Jasod) at Jatiya Press Club.

A one-minute silence was observed at the beginning of the programme in remembrance of those killed during last year's July uprising.

Presiding over the event, Bangladesh Jasod President Sharif Nurul Ambia said the country has failed to uphold the guiding principles laid out after the Liberation War.

"Over the past 53 years, we have not been able to establish people's fundamental rights. On the contrary, those rights have been violated," he said.

Referring to last year's uprising, he said, "Many have become disheartened. We must ensure the success of this uprising. We cannot allow it to fail under any circumstances."

BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, speaking as the chief discussant, said the July uprising was rooted in the people's long-standing struggle to reclaim ownership of the state.

"The core principle of the constitution is the people's ownership. It was for this ownership that people made such sacrifices during the July uprising. We do not want division over this ownership," he said.

Stressing that all change must come through elections, he said, "We must move forward towards elections based on whatever level of consensus is reached. The people's aspirations can only be restored through elections. Democracy must prevail not only in politics but also in the economy."

Addressing political pressure groups, he said, "Why do you want to destroy the electoral process? Remain as a pressure group if you wish, or else come to parliament through elections and bring the change or reform you want."

Nagorik Oikya President Mahmudur Rahman Manna said people aspire to a prosperous country where all citizens can enjoy a better life, but no real prospects of achieving such

a life are currently visible.

He criticised the interim government for "failing to implement" any reforms in the past year. "With the limited time remaining, no reforms are realistically possible. After one year, we are left having to admit that a credible election is what the country truly needs."

In the keynote speech, Bangladesh Jasod Standing Committee Member Mushtaq Ahmed said the same struggle that birthed the country continues today. "Governments come and go, mass movements and uprisings erupt time and again, blood is shed, cries of the oppressed echo -- yet none of it has brought us true democracy. The cycle of exploitation remains unbroken," he said.

Saiful Haque, general secretary of Biplobi Workers Party, said the July uprising aimed to reduce inequality, yet no commission has been formed on that issue. "There is no visible sign of reducing inequality in society," he added.

"At this moment, what needs to be done is to ensure visible and effective justice, implement urgent reforms, involve the people, and move towards building consensus to fulfill the aspirations of a democratic Bangladesh," said Saiful.

Communist Party of Bangladesh General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince said political criminalisation cannot be addressed without tackling economic criminalisation.

"With great regret, I must say that although 11 commissions have been formed, not a single one is dedicated to eliminating inequality," he said. "You've heard about the white paper on economic criminalisation, but those in power say they don't have time to read it."

He added, "To realise the spirit of the mass uprising, we must use this month to speak of the people's aspirations, reach out to the public, and build public opinion. But if we stray from the path of democracy, we risk triggering unintended consequences."

Gono Forum General Secretary Subrata Chowdhury, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies Executive Director Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed, and Rashtro Shangskar Andolan President Hasnat Qaiyum also spoke at the seminar.

## Woman faked bomb

FROM PAGE 3  
morning following the detention of three individuals including the woman and her daughter-in-law.

The threat prompted a three-hour security sweep of flight BG-373, which made an emergency landing on Friday. No explosives were found on board.

He said the false alarm was made via an anonymous phone call claiming there was a bomb on the aircraft.

Preliminary investigations revealed that

the caller was the mother of a man named Imon. She, along with Imon's wife, made the call following advice from one of Imon's friends, in an attempt to prevent him from flying to Kathmandu with his lover," said the Rab chief.

Rab and army personnel conducted a joint operation at a residence in Uttara, detaining three individuals -- Imon's wife Tahmina, his mother, and a man named Imran.

All three are currently in Rab custody for further questioning.

PRAYER TIMING	
JULY 13	
Fazr	Zohr
Asr	Maghrib
Esha	
AZAN 4-10 12-45 5-00 6-55 8-17	
JAMAAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION	



## A comprehensive approach to obesity in heart failure patients

Obesity and heart failure (HF) often go hand in hand, and addressing this connection is crucial for improving patient outcomes. Here is a breakdown of the diagnosis, evaluation, and management of obesity in individuals with heart failure:

**Diagnosis:** While Body Mass Index (BMI) is a common measure for obesity, it is not always the best indicator, especially for those with a BMI under 35. In such cases, other methods like waist circumference or body composition can provide a clearer picture of a person's weight-related health risks.

**Risk assessment and evaluation:** People with obesity may have lower levels of natriuretic peptides, which are commonly used to diagnose heart failure.



This can make it harder to diagnose HF in those with obesity, especially if symptoms like shortness of breath or fatigue are present. Additionally, conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnoea, and atrial fibrillation are often linked to obesity, and addressing these can help improve heart failure treatment.

**Management**

- **Lifestyle changes:** Weight loss and exercise can improve heart function, but making these changes is not always easy or sustainable.
- **Medications:** For people with heart failure and obesity, medications like GLP-1 antagonists (semaglutide and tirzepatide) have shown promise in reducing weight and improving symptoms. However, careful monitoring of kidney function and other treatments is essential.
- **Surgery:** Bariatric surgery may help reduce heart failure symptoms, but it carries risks, so it's vital to manage heart failure carefully before and after the procedure.

Overall, managing obesity in heart failure patients requires a balanced approach, combining lifestyle, medication, and sometimes surgery, under careful medical supervision.

Source: Journal of the American College of Cardiology



## Home remedies for dengue viral infection

DR ABDULLAHEL AMAAN & DR KHAINOOR ZAHAN

Dengue, an Aedes mosquito-borne viral infection, has been a crucial public health concern during the monsoon in our country for its worrying statistical value. Individuals who have recovered from primary infection from one serotype of dengue virus get a lifelong immunity against the same serotype, but the risk of developing severe dengue would be higher following infection by any other serotypes (secondary infection).

Severe dengue is potentially fatal. Severe dengue, characterised by vascular leakage due to disruption of the endothelial cell layer in the vascular system, is preceded by thrombocytopenia (rapid fall in platelet count), indicating disruption of thrombopoiesis. These processes in the pathogenesis indicate the requirement of both immunomodulators and antivirals for treatment. Despite its life-threatening complications, there is still no specific antiviral medication available for dengue infection.

However, researchers continue to actively pursue identifying potent compounds with promising anti-dengue activities via in-depth understanding of

dengue pathogenesis. Medicinal plants, which are known to possess both immunomodulatory and antiviral activities, have long been considered as potential alternatives for the management of viral fever worldwide.

Among all the potential medicinal plants considered for dengue treatment, papaya has been studied extensively. Papaya is used to treat several digestive disorders, as it has its antimicrobial, antimalarial, antihelminthic, liver-protective, and immunomodulatory effects. Several compounds, such as papain, flavonoids, L-tocopherol, ascorbic acid, and others present in papaya leaves, possess therapeutic properties. The antioxidants present in papaya leaves exhibit anti-tumour and immunomodulatory effects. Metabolites in papaya leaf extract such as carpaine and quercetin are known to possess anti-malarial and anti-dengue activity. Carpaine is the principal alkaloid component contained in the papaya leaf extract, and it has been reported to be a major contributor towards anti-thrombocytopenic properties. Carpaine also possesses antitumor activity and antihelminthic activity. Papaya leaves also contain chemical compounds, like pseudo-carpaine, which impart a bitter taste to the

leaves.

Use of papaya leaf extract to increase the platelet count in dengue-affected patients is a topic of debate. Whether the natural increase in the platelet count observed in dengue patients after the defervescence phase is being mistaken as the effect of papaya leaves has been addressed by several studies. The anecdotal evidence is supported by studies indicating a rapid increase in platelet count in a test group of dengue patients following administration of papaya leaf extract. Thrombocytopenic mice treated with papaya leaf extract showed increased levels of thrombopoietin, a chemical that enhances platelet production.

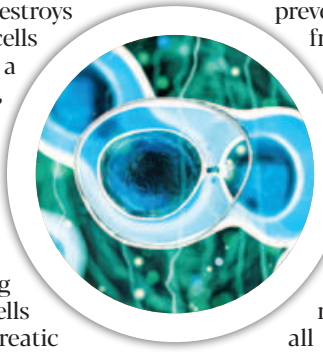
Papaya leaf extract has also been reported to exert significant inhibition of haemolysis along with red blood cell membrane stabilisation. Thus, the immunomodulatory effect of papaya leaf extract, particularly with regard to the platelet count enhancing effect, has been established.

In this context, papaya leaf juice seems to be a potential candidate against dengue viral infection.

The writers are the assistant professors of neonatology at the Institute of Child & Mother Health (ICMH), Matuail, Dhaka, and a public health specialist, respectively. Email: abdullahelamaan@gmail.com, khainoorzahan@gmail.com

## Stem cell-derived islet cells show promise for type 1 diabetes treatment

Researchers have made a significant advancement in the treatment of type 1 diabetes, a condition where the immune system destroys insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. In a recent clinical trial, scientists tested stem cell-derived islet cells (zimislecel) as a potential treatment for this disease. Zimislecel is created by turning embryonic stem cells into functional pancreatic islet cells, which are responsible for insulin production. The treatment involves a single infusion of these



cells into the bloodstream, delivered via the portal vein, alongside an immunosuppression protocol to prevent the immune system from attacking the new cells.

In a phase 1-2 trial, 22 patients with type 1 diabetes received zimislecel. After at least 12 months of follow-up, 14 patients were still being monitored. The results were promising: all patients had some level of insulin production, and many saw significant improvements in blood sugar control. In fact, 10

patients were able to stop taking insulin altogether.

However, the trial was not without risks. Two patients died during the study period—one at 20 months and another at 30 months—due to complications related to immunosuppression, which is used to prevent the rejection of the new cells.

While the treatment is still in its early stages, these results offer hope for a potential breakthrough in managing type 1 diabetes by restoring the body's ability to produce insulin. Further studies are needed to confirm these findings and ensure the long-term safety of this approach.

Source: The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)

## The art of boredom in healing your brain

TASHIRIF AREFIN

There is an Italian term, *il dolce far niente*, that calls for intentionally letting go—to prioritise simply being alongside doing. It gives the brain the pause it needs to recharge so that it can be more productive. Yet in today's hyperconnected world, this kind of purposeful idleness has become increasingly difficult to access.

Boredom might just be the rarest experience of our time. In an age where every empty second is instantly filled with a scroll, a swipe, or a screen, the simple act of doing nothing has become almost extinct. We carry endless entertainment everywhere. As a result, many people never access the brain's default mode—the space where thoughts about life's meaning and personal purposes arise—and this could have been fuelling today's mental health crisis.

Neuroscientist Alicia Wall, a researcher at Rensselaer Institute, says it is critical for brain health to let ourselves be bored from time to time as our brain shifts to default. Being bored, the researcher says, improves social connections. Boredom can also foster creative ideas, replenish our work mojo, and provide an incubation period



for embryonic work ideas to hatch. Our brain gets a much-needed rest when we are not working it out too hard. Interestingly, famous writers have said their most creative ideas came when they were moving furniture, or taking a shower. These eureka moments are called insights.

This idea aligns with what author Arthur Brooks told Sean Kelly in a podcast: if you were put into an fMRI machine and asked to 'think about nothing,' the parts of the brain that would light up are the same ones involved

in contemplating and exploring life's meaning. He added that the problem today is that most young people are not even looking for the meaning. And the reason they are not even looking is they are not in the parts of the brain where they need to be to look. As Brooks puts it, we are using our brains wrong.

So ditch that outdated adage, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop," and alongside your to-do list, create a to-be list: a time when you can be mindfully present. Set aside 10-20 minutes a day where you intentionally will not do anything productive. No phone. No music. Just sit or lie down in nature.

Let your thoughts drift without judgement. Also, next time you are in a waiting room or in a line, do not pull out your phone. Let yourself just exist in that moment. It might feel awkward at first. That is good. Alongside, what you can try is to just sit and stare. Watch the clouds, the ceiling fan, or just a tree. Do not try to think; just let your brain breathe.

Let your mind wander. And sometimes, do not be afraid to do nothing because that is exactly what your brain needs to begin.

Tashirif Arefin came up with this article out of boredom. Email: meghdoot.dmc@gmail.com

## Harnessing AI to enhance traditional medicine

On 11 July 2025, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) released a new report titled Mapping the Application of Artificial Intelligence in Traditional Medicine. The report, presented at the AI for Good Global Summit, highlights the transformative potential of AI in enhancing traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine (TCIM), used by billions globally.

The brief showcases AI's role in areas like personalised care, drug discovery, and biodiversity conservation. Examples include AI-powered diagnostics in Ayurgenomics, machine learning models identifying medicinal plants in Ghana and South Africa, and AI analysis of compounds for blood disorders in South Korea.

A key focus is the need for high-quality, inclusive data to reflect the diversity of traditional medicine, emphasising the importance of preserving Indigenous knowledge through initiatives like India's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library. The brief also stresses safeguarding data sovereignty, with a call for community-led data governance models to protect Indigenous Peoples' rights.

With the TCIM market expected to reach nearly \$600 billion by 2025, the report calls for action in several areas: developing legal frameworks for AI in traditional medicine, building digital literacy among practitioners, and establishing global standards for ethical AI use.

By combining AI with the wisdom of traditional medicine, a new, more inclusive era of healthcare could emerge—one that benefits all.

Source: World Health Organisation



## Mastering portion control for healthier eating habits

It sounds simple enough: just avoid overeating. But managing portion sizes is often more challenging than it seems. Many people unknowingly consume more than they intend to, which can lead to weight gain and other health issues. The key to success lies in understanding what a true serving size looks like—and often, it is smaller than we think.

A "serving size" is a standard measure of food that helps you gauge how much to eat. Instead of memorising complex measurements, it is easier to compare serving sizes to everyday objects. For instance:



- Vegetables or fruit: the size of your fist
- Pasta: about one scoop of ice cream
- Meat or fish: roughly the size of a deck of cards
- Chips: a cupped handful
- Apple: the size of a baseball
- Potato: like a computer mouse
- Cheese: the size of two dice or your thumb (from tip to base)

At home, portion control becomes easier with a few simple tricks. Use smaller plates and bowls to naturally limit the amount of food you serve. When preparing meals, serve yourself appropriate portions and avoid going back for seconds. It can be helpful to store any leftovers in pre-measured portions, and freezing excess food in individual servings ensures you do not overeat later.

Dining out also presents challenges, but they are manageable. You can ask for smaller portions or share dishes with a dining companion. If you have dessert, consider splitting it—most restaurant servings are much larger than needed.

At the supermarket, be mindful of bulk-sized snack packs, which often encourage mindless munching. Instead, choose single-serving packages to keep portion sizes in check.

By following these simple strategies, you can make it easier to stick to healthy portion sizes, helping you enjoy your meals without indulging. Managing portion control is not about restriction—it is about learning what a true serving looks like and making it work for you.



# Grass meets its gilded era

KHALID HOSSAIN

There was a time, not long ago, when men's tennis kept one foot in the future but the other firmly in the past. Change was always on the horizon; but, like a sun that never quite set, the old gods lingered.

For nearly two decades, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic redefined the sport. However, as Centre Court prepares to witness Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner face off in the Wimbledon final, there is no longer an iota of confusion that the new era is deep rooted.

The 2025 final at the All England Club is the verification: in Alcaraz and Sinner, tennis has found its new centre of gravity. Their names now orbit the Grand Slam calendar the way the terrific trio once did; and today's meeting will mark the seventh consecutive major claimed by the deadly duo.

Just five weeks ago in Paris, they produced one of the greatest matches in Grand Slam history. That French Open final was, in Alcaraz's own words, "the best match I have ever played so far", while Sinner said, "I don't know if it'll get better than Paris [2025], because I don't think it's possible."

A five-hour and 29-minute epic at the clay colosseum had everything: athleticism, emotion, nerves and resilience. Sinner had three match points; Alcaraz, however, as he so often does, found another level from the brink of despair.

But if Paris was where Sinner slipped, London might be where he lands. The Italian has parked the pain of that defeat

SINNER (WORLD NO. 1) VS ALCARAZ (2)

Head-to-head  
Alcaraz leads 8-4 (won last 5)

Grand Slam finals record  
Alcaraz 5-0, Sinner 3-1

Streaks  
Alcaraz 24-match winning streak; Sinner 4th straight Slam final



"Hopefully it's going to be a good match, like the last one."

Jannik Sinner



"I just hope not to be five-and-a-half hours on court again. If I have to, I will."

Carlos Alcaraz

and stormed into his first Wimbledon final by dismantling a hobbled Djokovic in straight sets. In doing so, he beat the man who had featured in six consecutive Wimbledon finals prior to this edition; symbolically closing the curtain on an era.

"It's just age... the wear and tear of the body," Djokovic admitted, as his wait for an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam continues.

Alcaraz, already a two-time defending champion at Wimbledon, will arrive on the back of a career-best 24-match winning streak. The 22-year-old Spaniard has never lost a Grand Slam final.

"The things we are doing right now are great for tennis," he said. Few would disagree.

Sinner, for his part, knows the odds: "He [Alcaraz] is the favourite. He's again in the final. It's very tough to beat him on grass. But I like these challenges," said the 23-year-old Italian.

If Sinner's icy baseline precision and recent hard-court dominance make him a methodical counterweight to Alcaraz's dynamism and willpower, their rivalry could mirror the balance once provided by the Big Three.

And therein lies the narrative: this is

not merely about two players, but more about the future finally standing strong on its own two feet. The era of Djokovic, Nadal and Federer thrived not just because of individual greatness, but for how they forced each other into greatness.

In Alcaraz and Sinner, tennis may have found its next great axis.

In this Wimbledon that began with speculation and sentiment about a fading champion, it now ends with clarity.

History suggests the grand finale on the hallowed lawns will be tight. Expect fire, finesse, and perhaps another five-set epic.

## Litton in focus as Tigers vie to level series

SPORTS REPORTER

As Bangladesh take on hosts Sri Lanka in the second T20I in Dambulla today in a bid to level the three-match series, all eyes will be on skipper Litton Das, who has so far failed to inspire an underperforming side since assuming captaincy full-time in May.

Since being named captain of the T20I side till the next year's ICC T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, Litton has led Bangladesh to back-to-back series defeats against the UAE (2-1) and Pakistan (3-0) and a defeat today would hand him a third straight series defeat as captain.

The visitors are trailing the series 1-0 after losing the series opener in Pallekele by seven wickets on Thursday, which was also their sixth straight defeat in the format.

The woeful defeats have been an outcome of the team's collective failure, and Litton's sporadic form has aggravated Bangladesh's problems.



The batter has made 147 runs in seven innings since gaining captaincy with a highest score of 48 off 30 against Pakistan, and has not scored a half-century in the format in his last 13 innings.

All seven of those matches were played in placid batting surfaces, and while fellow top-order batters Parvez Hossain Emon (216) and Tanzid Hasan Tamim (231) scored at a rapid rate of 175.60 and 159.31 respectively, Litton, with his strike rate of 124.58, squandered the early momentum.

In the first T20I against Sri Lanka, Emon and Tanzid once again gave Bangladesh a good start, making 46 runs in just five overs before Litton's 11-ball six to dampened their efforts.

Apart from Litton's own form, his captaincy has also been below par so far. In just seven matches as captain, he has tried out 20 different players in the playing XI, and from the looks of it, he and the team management have not been able to lock down their best XI yet.

In the series opener, Bangladesh opting for four genuine openers in the starting XI, omitting Jaker Ali and not picking pacer Mustafizur Rahman were decisions that raised many eyebrows.

Bangladesh are surrounded with similar selection issues ahead of the crucial game in Dambulla today, where they have never played a T20I and have only featured in five ODIs, having last played there in 2017.

For both Bangladesh and Litton, the challenge will be to address the issues swiftly, otherwise, they will sink deeper into the mire of their own making.

## BAN-PAK T20I SERIES

# Big relief for BCB as media rights sold

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) heaved a sigh of relief after managing to sell its worldwide media rights for the national team's upcoming three-match home T20I series against Pakistan.

Although the media rights were expected to be sold through an open bidding, scheduled for Thursday (July 10), the board had to sell it in a different way after companies who showed interest for the series did failed to meet the floor price.

It has been learnt that the board had offered a floor price of Tk 4cr for the media rights of the series but none of the interested companies offered even half of the figure.

"The offer prices were just nonsense. Then we talked to a few of the interested companies separately and eventually got an amount which almost fulfilled our target," a BCB director, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star.

The director, however, didn't disclose the name of the company or the amount the board received from the sale.

"We can't reveal the figure right now as the company which bought the media rights need to sell it to the broadcasters. But we will reveal it after the series," he added.

However, it has been learnt that T Sports, a local private television channel, will broadcast the series, scheduled between July 20 and 24.

Earlier in April, the BCB had failed to sell media rights for the two-Test home series against Zimbabwe as neither broadcasters nor marketing agencies showed any interest. The BCB had to telecast the series on state-owned BTV free of cost.

All three matches will be played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka.

Earlier, Bangladesh had toured Pakistan for a three-match T20I series in May-June, and lost the series 3-0.



KL Rahul etched his name in history with a gritty 100 on Day 3 of the third Test against England at Lord's -- his 10th Test ton and second of the series -- becoming only the second Indian after Dilip Vengsarkar to feature twice on the iconic Honours Board. He was dismissed the very next ball after reaching the milestone yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

➤ This will be the first major international final in men's football between clubs from England and France.

➤ The last time these two teams met was in the last 16 of the 2015-16 UEFA Champions League, which saw PSG advance 4-2 on aggregate.

➤ PSG have scored ten first-half goals in the competition, while Chelsea are yet to concede before the break in any match.



# PSG's relentless run faces Chelsea's fearless fight

AGENCIES

The stage is set for a blockbuster finale as PSG take on Chelsea in the final of the FIFA Club World Cup 2025 at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey on Sunday.

With global bragging rights and over \$100 million in prize money on the line, both clubs will aim to close out marathon campaigns with the ultimate reward.

PSG arrive as overwhelming favourites. Fresh off a stunning 5-0 Champions League final win over Inter Milan, Luis Enrique's men have steamrolled through the Club World Cup -- putting four past both Inter Miami and Atletico Madrid, before dispatching Bayern Munich and thrashing Real Madrid 4-0 in the semis.

"We have had this objective from the beginning," Enrique said. "It's very difficult to achieve these things -- very few teams can do what we are trying to do."

Chelsea's road to the final has been less flashy but equally resilient. Enzo Maresca's side saw off Benfica, Palmeiras, and Fluminense, building on a season that has already delivered a UEFA Conference League

title and a return to the Champions League.

Despite their underdog tag, the Blues are drawing confidence from the unpredictability of finals.

"They're probably the best team in the world right now," Maresca admitted. "But every game is different. We're here to do our best and try to win the final."

PSG's English conquests in 2024-25 -- Manchester City, Liverpool, Aston Villa, and Arsenal -- underline the magnitude of Chelsea's task. From a rousing comeback against City to a gritty shootout win at Anfield and a professional two-legged victory over Arsenal, PSG have shown resilience, depth, and clinical finishing.

But Chelsea captain Reece James remains undaunted: "Everyone has them down as strong favourites, but I've been in many finals where the favourites didn't win."

With Moises Caicedo likely to return from injury and Levi Colwill embracing the underdog role -- "We have nothing to lose" -- Chelsea are determined to end

PSG's incredible run.

As the curtain falls on FIFA's expanded Club World Cup, the final promises a fitting climax: the world's form team against a revitalised giant eager to shock the world -- all under the New York skyline.



The match, starting at 1:00am (Monday, Bangladesh time) will not be telecast, but live-streamed for free on DAZN.



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WHO sends  
Saima Wazed  
on leave  
Reports Health  
Policy Watch



STAR REPORT

Saima Wazed Putul, the World Health Organization's (WHO) regional director for the South East Asia Regional Office (SEARO), has been sent on indefinite leave from Friday, according to Health Policy Watch.

The action was taken four months after Bangladesh's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed two cases against Saima Wazed,

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A Palestinian woman pushes a man and a child in a wheelchair as people gather to collect bags of flour at a UN World Food Programme (WFP) warehouse on Al-Jalaa Street in Gaza City, in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: AFP

No party can  
buy the force of  
uprising: Nahid

STAR REPORT

National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener Nahid Islam yesterday accused a particular party of being solely focused on power and power sharing.

"We wanted reforms, justice, and a new constitution. But a party has stood against these popular demands. They want to preserve the old settlement. They want to preserve the old politics. They want to preserve extortion and terrorism.

"But we've said that even after the mass uprising and the sacrifice of so many lives, if they think of doing the old politics, it won't be easy. The force of the mass uprising is still on the ground."

Making an oblique reference to the BNP, Nahid made these remarks while addressing a rally in Satkhira yesterday.

"The party thought it could buy the force of the uprising with two or three seats in parliament and promises of power-sharing. But no political party in Bangladesh has the means to buy the force of the uprising."

The NCP leader further mentioned being told that the particular party was open for conversation.

"We, the leaders of the uprising, opened the door for you. On August 5, we said, let us go beyond all divisions

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AIR INDIA JET CRASH  
Fuel to engines cut  
off before crash  
Says preliminary probe report

AFP, New Delhi

Fuel control switches to the engines of an Air India flight that crashed shortly after takeoff, killing 260 people, were moved from the "run" to the "cutoff" position moments before impact, a preliminary investigation report said yesterday.

The report, issued by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), did not offer any conclusions or apportion blame for the June 12 disaster, but indicated that one pilot asked the other why he cut off fuel, and the second pilot responded that he had not.

The Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner was headed from Ahmedabad in western India to London when it crashed, killing all but one of the 242 people on board as well as 19 people on the ground.

In its 15-page report, the investigation bureau said that once the aircraft achieved its top recorded speed, "the Engine 1 and Engine 2 fuel cutoff switches transitioned from RUN to CUTOFF position one after another with a time gap of 01 sec".

"In the cockpit voice recording, one of the pilots is heard asking the other why he cut off. The other pilot responded that he

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US slaps 30% tariff  
on EU, Mexico

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump yesterday said major US trading partners Mexico and the European Union would face a 30 percent tariff starting next month, ramping up pressure for deals in his trade wars.

Both sets of duties would take effect August 1, Trump said in separate letters posted to his Truth Social platform, citing Mexico's role in illicit drugs flowing into the United States and a trade imbalance with the EU, respectively.

Since returning to the presidency in January, Trump has unleashed sweeping tariffs on allies and competitors alike, roiling financial markets and raising fears of a global economic downturn.

The fresh duties for Mexico announced by Trump would be higher than the 25 percent levy he imposed Mexican goods earlier this year, although products entering the United States under the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) are exempted.

Canada earlier received a similar letter setting out 35 percent tariffs on its goods. A US official earlier told AFP that the USMCA exemption was similarly expected to remain for Canada.

The EU tariff is also markedly steeper than the 20 percent levy Trump unveiled in April.

The EU, alongside dozens of other economies, had been set to see its US tariff level increase from a baseline of 10 percent on Wednesday, but Trump pushed back the deadline to August 1 just days before the elevated rates were due to take effect.



Since the start of the week, Trump has sent out letters to more than 20 countries with updated tariffs for each.

Brussels said Friday that it was ready to strike a deal with Washington to prevent the return of 20 percent levies, and the latest letter suggests talks will carry on. The EU has prepared retaliatory duties on US goods worth around 21 billion euros after Trump also slapped separate tariffs on steel and aluminium imports earlier this year, and they are suspended until July 14.



Swiatek crushes  
Anisimova in  
Wimbledon final

AGENCIES

Iga Swiatek thrashed American Amanda Anisimova 6-0 6-0 yesterday to become the first Polish player to win a Wimbledon singles title, ending a ludicrously lop-sided final in 57 minutes.

The 24-year-old eighth seed was merciless as she took brutal advantage of Grand Slam final debutant Anisimova's leg-sapping nerves in front of a stunned Centre Court.

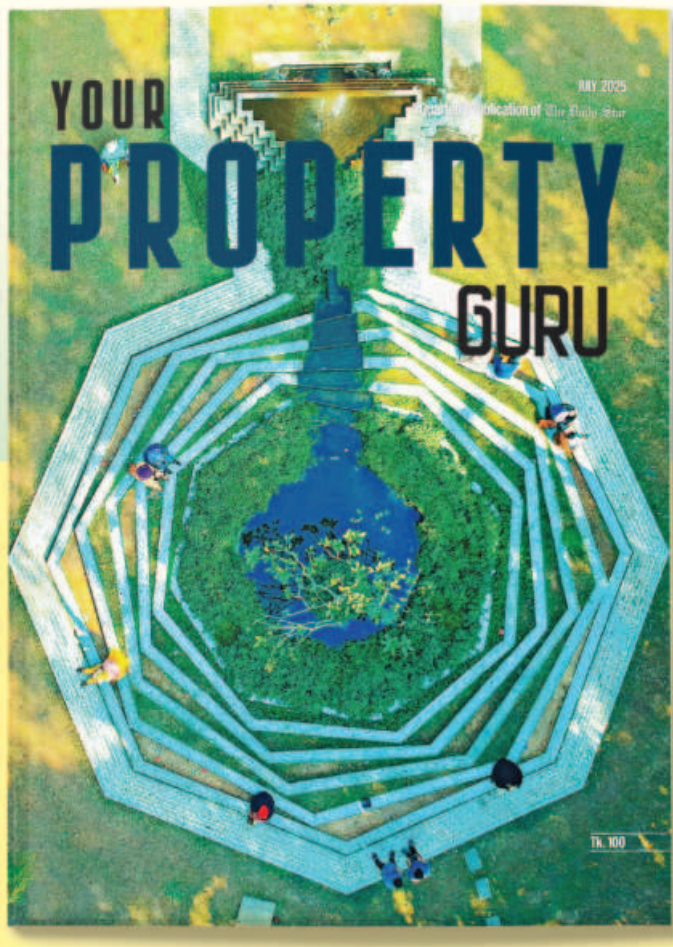
It turned into a nightmare afternoon for 13th seed Anisimova who became the first player to lose a Wimbledon final 6-0 6-0 since 1911 and the first to do so at any Grand Slam since Steffi Graf beat Natasha Zvereva at the 1988 French Open.

Swiatek, who had never gone beyond the Wimbledon quarter-finals before this year despite winning four French Open crowns, could never have imagined that claiming her sixth Grand Slam

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BSF shoots 2  
Bangladeshis  
dead

STAR REPORT

At least two Bangladeshis were shot dead allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) along the borders in Sunamganj and Thakurgaon early yesterday.

The victims are Shafiqul Islam, 45, of Bhangarpara area under Dowarabazar upazila of Sunamganj, and Md Rasel, 20, of Natun Bazar area of Thakurgaon's Haripur upazila.

Lt Col AKM Zakaria Kadir, commanding officer of BGB 28 Battalion in Sunamganj, and Abdullah Al Moin Hasan, commanding officer of BGB 42 Battalion in Dinajpur, confirmed the deaths.

Regarding the incident in Sunamganj, Lt Col Zakaria citing locals said, "A group of 10 to 12 Bangladeshis crossed 500 yards into Indian territory through the Bhangarpara border to bring cattle at night. On their way back, they

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