



DHAKA TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 233

ASHWIN 1, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

RABIUL AWAL 22, 1447 HURI

16 PAGES PLUS LIFE STYLE : Tk 15.00



Vandalised police vehicles outside the Bhanga Police Station after protesters, who were opposing the new constituency delimitation, carried out an attack there yesterday.

PHOTO: SUZIT DAS

Chaos in Bhanga over EC's new boundary map

Upazila parishad complex, police station attacked; four people injured

STAR REPORT

Opposing the change in constituency demarcation, protesters went on a rampage at the Bhanga Upazila Parishad and Bhanga Police Station in Faridpur yesterday, vandalising at least five police vehicles, torching 11 motorcycles, injuring four people and causing extensive damage to properties.

The violence erupted around 12:45pm and continued for nearly an hour. During that time, the protesters damaged properties inside and outside the upazila complex and the adjoining Officers' Club. Before that, they had stormed the police station.

Bhanga upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Tansib Jubayer said four people, including two journalists, had sustained injuries during the attack on the upazila parishad complex. "They were treated at the upazila health complex."

Residents of Bhanga upazila have been demonstrating since September 5 against the transfer of Algi and Hamirdi unions from Faridpur-4 to Faridpur-2.

On September 4, the Election Commission issued a gazette notification redrawing boundaries of 46 constituencies across the country.

As per the EC's revised demarcation, Hamirdi and Algi now fall under Faridpur-2. Previously, the two unions were under Faridpur-4.

Protesting the decision, demonstrators enforced blockades for several days in Bhanga upazila, suspending train services and causing immense suffering to passengers.

Tensions escalated Saturday night following the arrest of Algi Union

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

We're ready to scale up US imports CA tells US official



UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said Bangladesh is prepared to scale up its imports from the United States and hoped this would pave the way for further tariff reductions, contributing to a more sustainable and mutually beneficial trade partnership.

He reaffirmed Bangladesh's strong

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Jamaat, other Islamist parties to take to streets 5-point demand includes polls under PR system

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Jamaat e-Islami and several other like-minded parties have decided to take to the streets to realise their five-point demand that includes holding the election on the basis of the July Charter and under the proportional representation system.

Jamaat, Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB) and Khelafat Majlis yesterday

separately announced the three-day programme starting from September 18, following Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis's announcement on Sunday.

The parties will hold separate rallies and processions in Dhaka on September 18, processions in all divisional cities on September 19 and processions in all districts and upazilas on September 26.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Star ROUNDTABLE ON LDC GRADUATION

Reform or brace for setbacks

Business leaders push for a deferral while the government insists on timely transition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Business leaders have continued to push the government to seek a deferral of Bangladesh's graduation to a developing nation by five to six years, warning that a premature transition would cripple industries, erode export competitiveness, and trigger massive job losses.

The government, however, stresses that while the timeline is largely out of Bangladesh's hands, the central task remains strengthening competitiveness and preparing for life after preferences.

"Whether graduation comes in 2026 or later, the task is the same: to shift from preference-driven growth to productivity-driven competitiveness," said Anisuzzaman Chowdhury, special assistant to the chief adviser.

Bangladesh must also ensure that policy continuity and institutional reforms become the hallmarks of the next phase of development, he added, emphasising deeper collaboration between the government and the private sector.

He was speaking at a roundtable on "Empowering the Private Sector to Face the Challenges of LDC Graduation", organised by The Daily Star at its Dhaka office. The discussion, the final of a series, brought together leaders of major chambers, trade bodies, exporters, economists, and bankers.

Chowdhury said his office has been holding consultations with entrepreneurs across sectors to identify challenges. He announced plans to hold two national dialogues on tax and credit policy, and on energy by December.

While acknowledging that some industries would be affected once benefits as a least developed country are withdrawn, he reminded that postponement of the graduation is not a decision Dhaka can make alone.

He also stressed that many preparations were already underway. These included reforms at the National Board of Revenue and Chattogram port, the launch of a national single window that issued over 500,000 trade licences in two months, and the roll-out of a one-stop service centre, he said.

Business leaders, however, warned that the country is simply not ready.

AK Azad, chairman and managing director of Ha-Meem Group, painted a bleak picture: eight to nine hours of power cuts daily in factories, no new gas connections for industries, and a distressed banking sector weighed down by bad loans -- about a third of all disbursed credit.

Add to that \$28 billion laundered abroad, rampant bribery in licence renewals, and chronic gas shortages, all of which are not in favour of graduation, he said.

Once Bangladesh graduates, its exports to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Explore FTAs with key markets to offset tariff shocks

Strengthen Ctg port, NBR efficiency to cut delays, costs

Fix gas, power crisis to ensure stable supply

Seek product-specific waivers, particularly in pharmaceuticals



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