



Idol artisans
struggle as
material costs
soar

P3



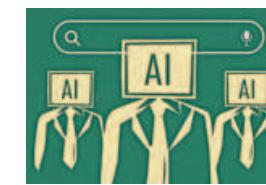
Just transition
is key to our
pledge to cut
emissions

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Why we
need a water
allocation plan

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How AI can
transform your
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'Nothing works without money'

Say 75% of 8,067 families
surveyed by PPRC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over one in every 12 households admitted to paying bribes or extortion money in the year between May 2024 and April 2025, according to a new survey.

The number dropped from 8.5 percent before August 2024 to 3.7 percent this April. However, the survey noted the practice remains widespread, with police, political leaders, and government offices being the main recipients.

At least 39 percent of respondents said they had to pay police officials, 33 percent paid political leaders or activists, and nearly half reported payments to government offices. Many said they paid to get faster service, avoid legal hassles, or simply because money was demanded.

The findings were presented at a webinar titled "Economic Dynamics and Mood at Household Level in Mid-2025" organised by Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC). They were based on responses from 33,207 members of 8,067 families.

Households reported a wide range of crises. Nearly 20 percent faced financial struggles, 7 percent were hit by natural disasters, and 2.3 percent reported problems with police or courts, PPRC Executive Chairman Hossain Zillur Rahman, also a former caretaker government adviser, said during the presentation.

Medical expenses were the most common financial burden, troubling two-thirds of the families. Loan repayments came next at 27 percent, followed by education

AT A GLANCE

- Over 1 in 12 households paid bribes or extortion money in past year
- 39% paid police; 33% paid political leaders or activists
- Financial crises, medical costs, and rising food prices top concerns

costs at 8 percent. Others mentioned migration costs, legal fees, charity, or bribes for jobs.

Both rural and urban households worried about high treatment costs and expensive medicine. More than half reported high health costs: rural respondents cited expensive treatment (52 percent) and medicine (50.9 percent), while urban respondents reported costly medicine (53.4 percent) and unnecessary tests (51.1 percent).

Legal troubles also weighed heavily, with over half of affected households saying they faced property conflicts and 47 percent caught up in harassment cases. Others reported arrests, detentions, or similar issues.

When asked about daily harassment in getting public services, people highlighted how little works without payment.

Nearly 75 percent said "nothing works without money", 36.4 percent pointed to complex or unnecessary rules, 22.3 percent cited unclear service paths, 21.8 percent delays in decisions, and 19.3 percent inattentive officials.

Across all income groups, rising commodity prices were the most pressing concern. Among the poorest 40 percent of households, 65.6 percent cited price hikes, 48.3 percent reported income drops, and 30 percent faced food insecurity.

For middle-income households, price hikes affected

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JULY UPRISING Hasina's voice matches 'shoot' order audio Forensic expert tells ICT-2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday heard an audio conversation, recorded during the July uprising, purportedly between deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and then Dhaka south city mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh.

In the conversation, Hasina is heard telling Taposh that she had given orders to use lethal weapons, deploy helicopters, and fire directly at protesters to suppress the movement.

Testifying in the Abu Sayed murder case, Inspector Rukunuzzaman, also a CID Digital Forensic Lab officer, told the tribunal that they ran forensic tests of the recording.

"In the test, the female voice matched former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and the male voice matched Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, then mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation," Rukunuzzaman said.

Hasina is not a suspect in the case.

Contacted in the evening, state-appointed defence lawyer Md Amir Hossain declined to comment on the recording.

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As cars splash through a waterlogged street, two students lift their feet onto the rickshaw seat to stay dry, while the puller drags it through knee-high water. Heavy rains left parts of the capital submerged, putting commuters in troubled waters. The photo was taken yesterday in the New Market area of the city.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Bangladesh Business Awards today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 23rd edition of the DHL The Daily Star Bangladesh Business Awards will be held today.

Global logistics service provider DHL and Bangladesh's most widely circulated English newspaper, The Daily Star, have been honouring the best of the business

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Notice

Today we have published a four-page special supplement on LDC graduation instead of our regular Star Business.

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Rucsu elections deferred to Oct 16 amid campus unrest

SHOHANUR RAHMAN RAFI and NUR AHSAN MRIDUL

Amid ongoing unrest at Rajshahi University, sparked by student protests and teacher strikes, the Rucsu and hall union elections were deferred once again yesterday.

The new date has been fixed for October 16, marking the third revision.

The announcement followed a nearly four-hour-long emergency meeting of the Rucsu Election Commission in the afternoon.

In a press release, the commission said the polls cannot be held in a "festive, participatory, and fair" manner under present circumstances.

With teachers, officers, and employees enforcing a complete shutdown, it said the manpower required to conduct the election could not be ensured.

The announcement has drawn mixed reactions from candidates, with Shibir-backed panel rejecting the deferral and Chhatra Dal and independents welcoming it, while left-leaning panels express concerns over repeated delays.

The elections, initially scheduled for September 15, were pushed back to September 28 and later advanced to September 25.

At a press conference, Shibir-backed panel leaders accused JCD, BNP, BNP-leaning teachers, and the Rucsu Election Commission of conspiring to defer the election.

They warned that if the October 16 date was pushed back again, responsibility would rest with those named.

Later, nearly a thousand Shibir activists from the Rucsu treasurer's office around 9:30pm and began parading around the campus.

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