

NEWS

Winter chill

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Abdul Mannan, a local hawker in the Laldighir Par area, explained that they are selling adult wear for Tk 200 and children's items for Tk 100. "These are fixed prices; we don't appreciate bargaining here," he said firmly.

However, for some, bargaining remains a necessity. Khaleda Akter, who came to Laldighi with her son, was seen negotiating hard with a vendor. "We cannot afford the glitzy shopping malls, so I've come here to find something cheaper for my son."

The winter season means a major investment for these small scale traders. Kamal Uddin, a hawker at Laldighir Par, invested Tk 2 lakh this season. "I bought 20 bundles of warm clothes at Tk 10,000 each," he said. Each bundle typically contains around eight varieties of items, including woollen caps, scarves, gloves, and earmuffs.

"My daily sales hover between Tk 3,000 and Tk 4,000. Depending on the quality, I sell sweaters for anywhere between Tk 200 and Tk 500," he added.

Average

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7,800 in October 2025 was priced at approximately Tk 28,500 by December, this reporter found.

Rising prices have begun to alter consumer behaviour. Many buyers are now turning to the second-hand market, while others are exploring technical workarounds such as using laptop RAM in desktop systems with adapters.

Nasim Rahman Zeem, a computer science graduate, said the scale of recent price hikes was difficult to justify. "RAM prices are expected to rise," he said. "But global manufacturers have not yet fully shifted production. The sharp increase in Bangladesh over the past few months does not seem entirely justified."

Market analysts say the effects of the price hike will be felt most sharply in the smartphone sector, which is highly sensitive to global supply chain trends.

Counterpoint Research forecasts that average smartphone selling prices could rise by nearly 6.9% in 2026, as manufacturers either pass on higher component costs to consumers or scale back device specifications to protect margins. The firm also expects global smartphone shipments to fall by 2.1% that year, citing higher memory costs as a key factor.

Budget smartphones are likely to be hit hardest. These devices typically operate on thin profit margins and rely on lower-cost memory configurations, leaving manufacturers with limited room to absorb price increases.



A public transport worker clears tram tracks during snowfall in Vienna, Austria.

DHAKA SATURDAY JANUARY 10, 2026
POUSH 26, 1432 BS
The Daily Star 9

Cricketers rally

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Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB). We are stunned, shocked and outraged by it," the statement read.

"Such a remark by a board official about the most successful opener in Bangladesh's history, who represented the country for 16 years, is utterly condemnable. Not only because it concerns a player like Tamim, but because such comments about any cricketer are unacceptable and insulting to the entire cricketing community."

Sharing a clip of Tamim's comments on Facebook, Najmul wrote that the country had now "witnessed the emergence of another proven Indian agent".

The post sparked immediate backlash from within the cricketing community.

Several cricketers, including former Test captain Mominul Haque and current Test skipper

Najmul Hossain Shanto, expressed their displeasure on social media.

Left-arm spinner Tajul Islam said he was "shocked" by the choice of words used by the BCB director.

"When a responsible board director makes such remarks on a public platform, it raises serious questions about professionalism, ethics and the code of conduct of BCB officials," the statement added.

CWAB president Mohammad Mithun, along with several other cricketers, later addressed the issue at a press conference in Sylhet, where he strongly criticised the comments and stressed that Bangladesh should not miss out on participating in the World Cup.

"I want the Bangladesh team to play the World Cup. Why would players miss out on such a big event?" Mithun said.

"The responsibility lies with the cricket board to negotiate and make arrangements so the players can participate, while ensuring their safety and security."

Mithun further remarked that cricket was increasingly being dragged into politics, something he felt should not happen.

Meanwhile, the BCB is awaiting a response from the ICC to a letter sent on Thursday, in which the board outlined its security concerns over sending the team to India.

Shooters yet to be

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directly involved in the killing," he added.

Musabir, ex-general secretary of the Sweekhchasebak Dal's Dhaka north city unit, was accompanied by Abu Sufian Bepari Masud, general secretary of Tejgaon Van Workers' Union, who sustained bullet injuries in the attack. Masud was undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Meanwhile, protests demanding justice for Musabir continued. Several hundred people, including local BNP leaders, activists, and residents, yesterday staged a demonstration in the Karwan Bazar area, issuing a 24-hour ultimatum for the arrest of those involved in the killing.

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed visited Musabir's house and expressed condolences to the bereaved family.

Speaking to journalists, he said they demanded the home ministry take proper action following a thorough probe. He added that the investigation should determine whether any force opposed to democracy and elections was behind the killing.

Musabir's wife Suraiya Begum told this newspaper that her husband had often said he was making many enemies and could be killed at any time. "But he said it casually. That's why we failed to realise that something like this could happen."

She also demanded that her husband's killers be arrested quickly and brought to justice.

In another development, this correspondent saw army personnel patrolling the Karwan Bazar area last night.

Trump halts 2nd wave of attacks

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Thursday.

"It's all over now,"

Marquez said in a video

taken by a local journalist

of him and his wife,

accompanied by another

released opposition member

Biagio Pilieri.

The White House credited Trump with securing the prisoners' freedom.

"This is one example of how the president is using maximum leverage to do right by the American and Venezuelan people," Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly said in a statement to AFP.

Trump broadened his

threat to drug traffickers in a Fox News interview that aired Thursday night, saying he would target cartels in land strikes - the US military

has already destroyed at least 31 vessels in maritime attacks in the Eastern Pacific and the Caribbean, killing at least 107 people.

"We are going to start now hitting land with regard to the cartels. The cartels are running Mexico," Trump told broadcaster Sean Hannity.

Interim leader Rodriguez's brother, Parliament Speaker Jorge Rodriguez, said "a large number of Venezuelan and foreign nationals" were being immediately freed for the sake of "peaceful coexistence."

He did not say which prisoners would be released, nor how many or from where.

Is BNP failing to connect

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leaders campaign for Jamaat in the national election, it will have an impact," he said.

Despite the repeated losses, he said, the BNP leadership appears to be paying little attention to the warning signs.

"If BNP forms the government by winning the people's vote, it could still face challenges as it will not control these five universities," he said, noting that universities in Bangladesh can influence and even destabilise governments.

Analysts say, for the BNP, Chhatri Dal's failures have not only damaged its standing among students but also created broader political challenges.

"When elected Shibir

They added that the party's failure to mobilise its student wing after the mass uprising has left it struggling to maintain influence in campuses, leaving space for Shibir to expand its support base.

The defeats were also attributed to Chhatri Dal's prolonged absence from campuses, a widening age gap between leaders and students, and internal infighting.

Analysts warn that if the BNP fails to reassess the weaknesses exposed by the defeats and make strategic adjustments, it could face setbacks in the upcoming polls.

Prof Sabbir said issues such as extortion by party members and internal feuds

over business interests have already contributed to an image crisis for the BNP, which was reflected in the student elections.

Two members of BNP's Standing Committee acknowledged that the scale of the defeats was deeply disappointing.

"University elections have never had an impact on national elections, and I hope they will not have an impact this time either," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said, blaming the previous government for Chhatri Dal's organisational absence on campuses.

In light of rising trade, Khalilur urged Greer to ease business travel and sought DFC access, citing progress in labour reforms, said the press release.

"Even before the formal execution of the reciprocal trade

agreement, Bangladesh has made major strides in reducing the trade gap by substantially increasing imports from the US," it quoted Khalilur as saying.

The USTR ambassador agreed to positively consider Dhaka's proposals, the press release said.

Greer also agreed to give serious consideration to Khalilur's proposal to lower or eliminate US reciprocal tariff on apparel using US content, it added.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the US Tareq Md Ariful Islam accompanied Khalilur in the meeting.

Khalilur is scheduled to meet US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Allison Hooker and US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Paul Kapoor today.

Business leaders said the bond requirement would make necessary travel to the US difficult, potentially affecting trade ties.

Last year, Washington imposed a 20 percent reciprocal tariff on Bangladeshi goods and sought to narrow trade gaps. In 2024, the US imported \$8.37 billion worth of goods from Bangladesh, while exports to Bangladesh stood at \$2.21 billion.

Bangladesh has since increased imports of US products, including wheat, cotton and liquefied natural gas (LNG), and pledged to buy Boeing aircraft in the coming years.

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