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Ceasefire jolted by fresh attacks

Iran threatens to quit truce as Israel kills 254 in Lebanon in a day, ceasefire terms diverge; Hormuz stays 'blocked'

AGENCIES

Relief over a truce between the United States and Iran gave way yesterday to alarm as fighting continued across the region, with Israel launching its biggest attacks yet on Lebanon and Iran striking Gulf neighbours' oil facilities.

World financial markets rose after President Donald Trump announced the agreement late on Tuesday, two hours before a deadline he had set for Iran to open the blockaded Strait of Hormuz or face the destruction of its

Rivals say trust lacking, ready to fight if talks fail | **Trump says Lebanon excluded from truce** | **JD Vance to lead US team for talks in Pakistan** | **Israeli PM Netanyahu says truce 'not end of campaign'**

"whole civilisation".

Uncertainty over the truce also deepened amid conflicting accounts from both sides over what was agreed.

Iran and Pakistan both asserted that the ceasefire included Lebanon. Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, disagreed, and Israeli forces unleashed their heaviest attack of the war so far on more than 100 targets, killing at least 254 people.

Trump also said that the temporary ceasefire deal between Washington and Tehran does not cover the Israel-Hezbollah conflict.

Iran's Tasnim news agency cited an unnamed source warning that Iran will withdraw from the ceasefire if attacks on Lebanon continue.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu said that Israel remains prepared to confront Iran if necessary, despite the truce.

"Let me be clear: We still have objectives to complete, and we will achieve them -- either through agreement or through renewed fighting," Netanyahu said in a televised statement.

"We are prepared to return to combat at any moment required. Our finger remains on the trigger. This is not the end of the campaign, but a step along the way to achieving all our objectives."

Netanyahu also listed the war's achievements.

"We destroyed not only existing missiles, but also the factories that

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World breathes a sigh of relief

AGENCIES

A world weary of Donald Trump's apocalyptic rhetoric breathed a sigh of relief yesterday as the US and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire, raising cautious hopes of a path toward lasting peace.

The announcement fell in the middle of the night in Europe and the Middle East, and many US allies were slow to make public statements about it. But the dramatic pause sparked some governments to issue immediate public praise.

However, as time progressed, welcoming messages poured in from all around the world.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on all parties to abide by the terms of the ceasefire "in order to pave the way toward a lasting and comprehensive peace in the region", according to his spokesperson.

Guterres underscored "that an end to hostilities is urgently needed to protect civilian lives and alleviate human suffering", and thanked Pakistan and other nations involved in facilitating the truce.

Dhaka yesterday welcomed the ceasefire, terming it an encouraging development towards de-escalation in the region.

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Iranians hold portraits of the country's slain supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as they gather in Tehran's Revolution Square after the United States and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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War fallout to slow growth, deepen poverty: WB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The US-Israel war on Iran is casting a long shadow over Bangladesh's economy, threatening to slow growth, stoke inflation, deepen poverty, cut jobs, and raise debt burdens, according to the World Bank's latest Bangladesh Development Update.

"The Middle East conflict is likely to materially affect Bangladesh's economy, compounding existing vulnerabilities," the World Bank said in the report released yesterday at a press briefing in Dhaka.

Higher import costs, weaker exports, and falling remittances are expected to strain the current account balance, while rising energy prices and pressure on the exchange rate could intensify already elevated inflation.

Real GDP growth is now projected to fall to 3.9 percent in FY26, down from an earlier forecast of 4.6 percent, reflecting spillover effects from the war alongside pre-existing weaknesses in export growth and continued sluggish public and private investment.

The human cost, the report suggests, will be steep. Poverty has already risen for three consecutive years. Before the conflict, around 17 lakh people were expected to move out of poverty this year; that number is now projected to be just 5 lakh, meaning 12 lakh people could stay below the poverty line.

Around 6 lakh jobs are also expected to be lost.

Rising prices account for about 10 percent of the increase in poverty, widening

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IMPACT OF WAR ON BANGLADESH ECONOMY

- GDP growth may slow to 3.9% in FY26 from a projected 4.6%
- 12 lakh people to remain under poverty line
- About 6,00,000 jobs may be lost
- Inflation could rise by 0.5 percentage points
- Subsidies may increase to 2.8% of GDP from 2%
- Public debt could reach 45% of GDP by FY28 from 39.5% now

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday ratified 14 ordinances issued under the interim government, including one that enabled a ban on the activities of the Awami League and another that granted indemnity to participants in the 2024 July uprising.

By passing the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2026, the parliament gave a permanent statutory basis to the ban on the activities of the AL.

The interim government promulgated the ordinance on May 11, 2025, and imposed the ban the next day.

The ordinance made changes to a 2009 version of the law, empowering the government to pursue a total embargo on a group's existence by both banning it and its political activities.

After Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed placed the bill in parliament, opposition leader Shafiqur Rahman objected, saying, "We received a comparative sheet only three-four minutes ago. We could not read it fully. This law is certainly a sensitive one. We should be given more time to review it."

A comparative sheet outlines the differences between the existing law and the proposed amendments for MPs' review.

Shafiqur is also the chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, a party that was banned by the AL government under a previous version of this law on August 1, 2024 -- just days before the fall of the Hasina regime on August 5.

In response, Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad said, "There is a specific time for raising objections. If objections had been raised within that time, we could have considered them."

Salahuddin, in his response to Shafiqur, said, "This bill concerns the banning of a genocidal, terrorist organisation. It is an amendment to the previous Anti-Terrorism Act. The opposition leader will surely recall that they and the NCP [National Citizen Party] together launched a movement. That movement mobilised [public opinion] in Bangladesh. Based on that, their [AL's] activities were banned under the Anti-Terrorism Act."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Consumers weighed down by runaway LPG prices

Retailers blame higher costs; consumers cut back use



12-KG CYLINDER

RATE FOR	BERC RATE (TK)	SALE (TK)
Bottler	1,633	1,750-1,775
Dealer/Distributor	1,683	1,825-1,880
Retailer	1,728	2,000-2,200

ASIFUR RAHMAN and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

LPG users are not getting cylinders at the government-set rate anywhere in the capital despite a record 29 percent hike by the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) amid the US-Israel war on Iran.

A 12kg LPG cylinder, officially priced at Tk 1,728 last week, is now selling between Tk 2,000 and Tk 2,200 across Dhaka, widening the gap between regulated and market prices.

Even though the 12kg cylinder's regulated price was Tk 1,341 in March, consumers had to pay between Tk 1,600 and Tk 1,800 across the market for much of the month. Towards late March, the price started rising and even before the regulator's decision to hike the price, traders were reportedly selling cylinders at between Tk 1,900 and Tk 2,100.


Visits to Karwan Bazar, Banani, Mohakhali, Banasree, Kochukhet, Ibrahimpur, Shewrapara, Kazipara, Mohammadpur, Bhasantek, Mirpur and Pallabi found that the prices

vary by area and company, but remain consistently above the fixed rate.

"There is no supply shortage, but companies and dealers are quoting higher prices -- we have no option but to sell above the government rate," said Mohammad Munna, a vendor in Bhasantek's Dewampara area.

Disputes with customers have increased, particularly among low-income buyers who are aware of the price hike but not the pricing mechanism.

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ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন
নগর ভবন, ৫ ফিনিঞ্জ রোড, রমনা, ঢাকা।

নিয়মিত প্রতিদিন জমা পানি ফেলে দিন

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

সর্ব সাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের আওতাধীন/মালিকানাধীন বিভিন্ন শপিংমল, মার্কেট ও দোকানসমূহ সন্ধ্যা ৭:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত খোলা রাখার এবং সকল প্রকার বিলবোর্ড/এলইডি বোর্ড এর বাতি, চলমান/অনুষ্ঠিতব্য মেলা/বাণিজ্য মেলা ও সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান আবশ্যিকভাবে সন্ধ্যা ০৭:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে বন্ধ করার সরকারি নির্দেশনা রয়েছে। উল্লিখিত নির্দেশনা প্রতিপালন করার জন্য বিশেষ ভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলো।

কোন ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠান উক্ত নির্দেশনা অমান্য করলে বিদ্যমান আইন ও বিধি-বিধান অনুযায়ী যথাযথ প্রশাসনিক ও আইনগত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

নিজ আঙ্গিনা পরিষ্কার রাখি, সবাই মিলে সুস্থ থাকি

কর্তৃপক্ষ

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/২১২/২০২৫-২৬

GD-775

Teen accused of raping 10-yr-old

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrokona

A case was filed yesterday against a 17-year-old neighbour on allegations of raping a 10-year-old boy in Purbadhala upazila of Netrokona. The accused has been absconding since the incident.

Citing the case statement, Officer-in-Charge (OC) Md Didarul Alam of Purbadhala Police Station said the incident occurred on Tuesday afternoon.

The teenager allegedly lured the child into his house and raped him when no one else was present, the case statement said.

After the boy started screaming, the accused fled the scene. Family members later rescued the child, who fell ill following the incident and was admitted to the local health complex yesterday morning.

The boy's mother filed the case later in the day while her son was undergoing treatment. Family members said the child is in severe pain.

OC Didarul said that efforts were underway to arrest the fugitive accused.



A fireball rises from a building hit by an Israeli airstrike in the area of Abbasiyeh, on the outskirts of the southern Lebanese city of Tyre, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

China visit to sow 'seeds of peace'

Says Taiwan opposition leader

AFP, NANJING

Taiwan's opposition leader, a proponent of closer ties with Beijing, said yesterday she hoped to sow the "seeds of peace" during a rare visit to China.

Kuomintang (KMT) chairwoman Cheng Li-wun is the party's first leader to visit China in a decade but her trip – during which she hopes to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping – has sparked debate in Taiwan.

Critics, including those within her own party which traditionally supports relations with China, have accused her of being too pro-Beijing.

China claims self-ruled Taiwan is part of its territory and has threatened to use force to seize it.

"I hope that today we plant the seeds of peace not only for Chinese people on both sides of the Strait, but for all humankind," Cheng said yesterday, in comments broadcast by Taiwanese media.

She spoke during a symbolic visit to the eastern city of Nanjing, where she visited the mausoleum of revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen, one of the few Chinese historical figures revered in both Beijing and Taipei.

Beefed-up security at the mausoleum prevented foreigners from entering, AFP journalists saw.

China severed high-level contact with Taiwan in 2016 after Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party won the presidency and rejected Beijing's claims to the island.

Ceasefire jolted by fresh attacks War fallout to slow growth, deepen poverty: WB

FROM PAGE 1
produce them. Iran is now firing what remains in its stockpile, and that stockpile is steadily dwindling," he said.

"We have severely damaged Iran's nuclear programme, destroying critical infrastructure and centrifuge facilities," he said, adding that Israel would ensure that the enriched uranium is removed from Iran.

"We have crippled the financial and weapons production networks of the Revolutionary Guards," he said, adding that the campaign had also hit Iran's steel plants, petrochemical complexes and transport infrastructure.

Long after the ceasefire was meant to take effect, Kuwait, the UAE and Bahrain all reported fresh Iranian missile and drone strikes, several of which targeted vital oil, power and desalination infrastructure.

Iran also attacked Saudi Arabia's huge East-West Pipeline to the Red Sea just hours after the ceasefire was agreed, an industry source told Reuters. The pipeline is the main route by which some oil has been able to bypass the blockaded strait.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he had invited Iranian and US delegations to meet in Islamabad on Friday, and that Iran's president had confirmed Tehran would attend.

With several of Iran's veteran political leaders killed in the war, Iran's delegation is expected to be led by parliament speaker and former Revolutionary Guards Commander Mohammad Baqer Ghalibaf, with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Trump is dispatching his Iran negotiating team, led by Vice President JD Vance, to Pakistan for talks, the White House told reporters yesterday, adding that the first round of negotiations would take place on Saturday.

Though both the US and Iran declared victory, their core disputes remained unresolved.

Trump conveyed a different version of the agreement in early yesterday morning social media posts from the one he had suggested as he announced the ceasefire on Tuesday night.

In the first version, he referred to Iran's 10-point proposal as a "workable basis on which to negotiate", and focused on an agreement to reopen the strait.

The statement caused surprise in Washington as Iran's 10 points differ widely from US objectives and include a right to enrich uranium, the full lifting of sanctions, the payment of war reparations and a scheme giving Iran and Oman joint control of the Hormuz strait.

Later, Trump implied that the ceasefire was based on an entirely different 15-point proposal from the US, claiming many of the points had "already been agreed to".

He insisted there would be no enrichment of uranium and that the US and Iran would work together to unearth the Iranian stockpile of 440kg of highly enriched uranium (HEU), which Trump called "nuclear dust", enough fissile material for a dozen nuclear warheads.

Iran's also published two different versions of its interpretation of the agreement. The Farsi version included an acceptance of Iran's right to enrich uranium. The English version did not.

Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, confirmed Trump's claim that the Strait of Hormuz would be reopened during the two weeks of the ceasefire, but said shipping would have to apply for safe passage through coordination with Iran's armed forces.

Iran's military closed the strait, a freely navigable waterway before the war, in retaliation for the US-Israeli attack on Iran on 28 February, and is now charging tankers a \$2m-a-ship toll to pass through.

Tehran's apparent interpretation of the ceasefire is that it will allow all shipping to pass but keep the toll in place, eventually sharing the income with Oman as a co-custodian of the strait.

Tehran's other demands, including lifting economic sanctions, remain deeply at odds with the US.

Trump yesterday announced new tariffs of 50 percent on all goods from any country that supplies arms to Iran. He also insisted that Iran had undergone "regime change".

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Washington had won a decisive

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remittances – placing renewed pressure on foreign exchange reserves. Bangladesh remains heavily dependent on imported energy, sourcing 60–65 percent of its crude and 55–60 percent of its LNG from the Middle East. More than one-third of its gas demand is met through imported LNG, the World Bank said.

The report notes that the government has inherited an economy under significant strain.

Urging the government to press ahead with reforms, the World Bank warned, "With thin foreign exchange buffers, tight fiscal and monetary conditions, and a fragile banking sector, Bangladesh has limited capacity to absorb a prolonged shock and to mitigate its impact on its people, notably the most vulnerable."

Jean Pesme, World Bank division director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, said, "Resilience has underpinned Bangladesh's growth story. But without decisive structural reforms, especially in revenue mobilisation, the financial sector, and the business environment, this resilience cannot last."

"Bold and immediate reforms will be essential to returning to a more resilient and inclusive growth path and creating more and better paid jobs."

CURRENT ACCOUNT UNDER PRESSURE

The war is expected to weigh on all major components of the current account – imports, exports, and

percentage points to inflation in the coming months, the report said.

External pressures may also weaken the taka, raising the local currency cost of imports of food, fuel, fertiliser, and industrial inputs, and amplifying inflationary pressures.

FISCAL STRAIN, RISING DEBT

Higher global energy prices are also expected to intensify fiscal pressures through increased subsidy requirements in power, gas, and fertiliser sectors.

If domestic prices are not adjusted, subsidy outlays could rise by about 0.8 percentage points to 2.8 percent of GDP in FY26, with further increases likely without price adjustments. This could crowd out priority spending, undermine fiscal consolidation, and increase government borrowing needs amid tight financing conditions.

Public debt is projected to rise gradually, exceeding 45 percent of GDP by FY28, up from 39.5 percent at present.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The World Bank outlined four key short-term priorities to stabilise the economy and lay the foundation for structural reform.

Containing inflation will require a tight monetary stance and avoiding unsterilised liquidity support to banks, alongside supply-side measures such as reducing import duties on essential food items, strengthening market competition, ensuring timely agricultural inputs, and expanding

targeted food distribution.

Reducing government financing needs is critical to avoid crowding out private credit. This will require improved revenue mobilisation through tax policy and administration reforms, along with gradual rationalisation of energy and fertiliser subsidies.

Concessional external financing from development partners could help anchor policy and reduce reliance on domestic borrowing.

Restoring banking sector stability will demand swift action: completing asset quality reviews, enforcing time-bound restructuring based on viability and burden sharing, and strengthening governance and transparency.

Phasing out regulatory forbearance, improving non-performing loan resolution, clarifying deposit protection mechanisms, and introducing an emergency liquidity assistance framework are also essential.

The report concluded that easing regulatory and trade constraints is key to unlocking private investment and job creation.

Measures such as digitalising business licensing, simplifying SME inspections, improving transparency in incentives, strengthening competition policy, streamlining formalisation, and ensuring reliable power supply will be crucial to support sustained, job-rich growth.

IRAN'S 10-POINT PROPOSAL

- Fundamental commitment to non-aggression from the US
- Controlled passage through the Strait of Hormuz
- An acceptance of Iran's nuclear enrichment programme
- The lifting of all sanctions and resolutions against Iran
- End of all resolutions against Iran at IAEA
- End of all resolutions against Iran at UNSC
- The withdrawal of US combat forces from all bases in the region
- Full war compensation through collection of tolls at Hormuz
- Release of all Iranian assets and properties frozen abroad
- Ratification of all these matters in a binding UNSC resolution

military victory and that Iran's missile programme had been functionally destroyed.

Hegseth warned that "we stand ready in the background to ensure that Iran upholds" the terms.

"We know exactly what they have, and they know that, and they will either give it to us" or "we'll get it, we'll take it, we'll take it out," he said, raising the possibility of further US strikes.

General Dan Caine – the top US military officer, who spoke alongside Hegseth – also said the US military is prepared if the truce collapses.

Crowds took to the streets of Iran overnight to celebrate, waving Iranian flags and burning those of the United States and Israel. But there was also wariness that a deal would not hold.

"The enemy, in its unjust, illegal and criminal war against the Iranian nation, has suffered an undeniable, historic and crushing defeat," Iran's Supreme National Security Council said.

But the agreement is a blow for Netanyahu, the Israeli leader, who had repeatedly said he wanted Iran's rulers to fall.

Yair Golan, a former Israeli military deputy chief of staff, called the outcome a "complete failure that endangered Israel's security".

"The nuclear programme was not destroyed. The ballistic threat remains. The regime is still intact and is even emerging from this war stronger," he wrote on X.

JS seals ban on AL activities

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Meanwhile, the AL, whose activities have been banned since 2025, issued a press release saying, "The step taken targets not only a political party, but rather, it is a direct blow to the country's democratic practice, fair political system, and the fundamental rights of the people."

"The initiative to ban a political institution of the masses, which has been built through the path of history, tradition, and struggle, questions the very spirit of democracy and pushes the state toward a one-party or autocratic trend."

In parliament, the home minister and the opposition also sparred over the implementation of the ordinances related to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) when Salahuddin placed the July Mass Uprising (Protection and Liability Determination) Bill, 2026.

The bill, which was adopted as law yesterday, grants indemnity to participants in the July uprising.

It designates students and members of the general public who participated in the movement as "participants in the mass uprising" and states that all civil and criminal cases filed against them for incidents occurring during the uprising will be withdrawn, and no such cases may be filed in the future.

It also outlines procedures for disposing of pending cases. However, complaints regarding uprising-related killings will be investigated by the NHRC, which will distinguish between political resistance and criminal acts.

If the investigation finds that the alleged act was a criminal misuse of the chaotic situation, it will initiate legal proceedings.

Conversely, if the commission concludes that the act was part of political resistance, it may order the government to provide compensation to the victim's family, but no other legal recourse can be sought.

NHRC, underscoring the need for an effective human rights commission.

"If the commission now operates under the 2009 law, it will be a fully government-controlled body. This NHRC has been used to suppress opposition parties and opinions, to engage in victim-blaming, and to legitimise enforced disappearances and killings."

He argued that if the commission is placed under a ministry and given responsibility to investigate and review the activities of the July uprising, then such reviews will be questionable.

Salahuddin responded saying that their intentions are being misconstrued.

"We want to establish an independent NHRC, aligned with the law on enforced disappearances and the ICT Act. Enforced disappearances are now being tried by ICT under the amended law, with punishments including life imprisonment and the death penalty. They have investigating agencies and prosecution teams, so it's better if victims of enforced disappearance can directly file cases under the ICT Act."

He commented that the ordinance on NHRC issued by the interim government was "childish". "The powers given to the commission lacked stakeholder consultation. We must consult stakeholders."

The parliament yesterday also passed the Government Accounts Audit Bill, the Protection and Conservation of Fish (Amendment) Bill, the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Amendment) Bill, the Sheikh Hasina Rural Development Academy, Jamalpur (Amendment) Bill, the Security of Family Members of the Father of the Nation (Repeal) Bill, the Spatial Planning Bill, the Abandoned Houses (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Bill, the Special Security Force Amendment Bill, the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, the Bangladesh Private Export Processing Zone (Repeal) Bill, and the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill, ratifying the related ordinances unchanged.



CBC NEWS ONLINE

The Artemis II crew is packing up to prepare for landing after a successful loop around the moon.

The capsule is pointed back toward Earth, with a splashdown planned for tomorrow around 8:06 pm ET in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of San Diego, California, NASA officials say.

"All of the science equipment and cameras and tablets and reference material that got unstowed in support of the flyby, we have to put that all away," NASA flight director Rick Henfling said at a news conference Tuesday afternoon.

"We have to pack up our suitcases and get ready to come home."

The historic mission broke the distance record Monday as the farthest humans have flown from Earth, reaching 406,771 kilometres and beating the previous record of 400,171 kilometres set by Apollo 13

in 1970. The astronauts also got to name two lunar craters. They proposed Integrity, their capsule's name, and Carroll, in honour of Wiseman's late wife who died of cancer in 2020.

"There wasn't a dry eye in mission control" when the names were announced, Henfling said.

Crew members spent seven hours making observations during the lunar flyby and reported seeing details on the moon's surface as well as Mars, Venus and Saturn in the distance.

Nasa geologist Kelsey Young said Tuesday there were "audible screams of delight" in the science room when the astronauts mentioned seeing impact flashes, which are caused by "micro-meteorites" hitting the moon's surface.

"Listening to the level of scientific discourse that the crew was having yesterday was incredibly inspiring," she said.

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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পূবালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

DOCTORS-DU STUDENTS SCUFFLE Emergency care at DMCH remains halted for 5 hours



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital's (DMCH) emergency department remained suspended for around five hours yesterday after a scuffle between doctors and Dhaka University students at the department forced many critical patients to seek care elsewhere.

The incident occurred around 5:15pm, and emergency services were suspended from about 5:22pm. The services properly resumed around 10:15pm.

According to doctors at the emergency department, a DU student came for treatment earlier in the day and was given a prescription. As the medicines were not available at the hospital, he was asked to buy them from outside.

He later returned with fellow students and started misbehaving with the doctor on duty, claiming the medicines were not available outside either, the doctors said.

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People cautiously waded through dirty water that continues to overflow from a clogged manhole and puddles onto Elephant Road in Dhaka. This issue has persisted for nearly a month, increasing the likelihood of accidents and inconvenience to pedestrians' movements. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

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Bogura-6 by-polls, Sherpur-3 election today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission is set to hold by-election for Bogura-6 constituency and the rescheduled general election for Sherpur-3 today for the 13th National Parliament.

Voting will be taking place from 7:30am till 4:30pm.

The 13th National Parliamentary election, alongside a referendum, was held on February 12 across 299 constituencies. Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Tarique Rahman, who won in Dhaka-17 and Bogura-6, later vacated Bogura-6, prompting the EC to declare the seat vacant and announce a fresh schedule.

Meanwhile, the election in the Sherpur-3 constituency was cancelled eight days before the national election following the death of Jamaat-e-Islami's valid candidate in the constituency.

'BNP following AL's footsteps'

Alleges Asif Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party (NCP) spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyian yesterday alleged that the BNP is following a path similar to that once taken by the Awami League.

He warned that the ruling party would not be able to "do whatever it wants" after the July uprising.

He made the remarks at a roundtable titled "The Politics of Cancelling Ordinances and Denying Referendums: Bangladesh in the Era of Parliamentary Dictatorship", held at the Jatiya Press Club.

Asif said the country could have moved forward by implementing the July Charter and the referendum verdict but was instead heading in the opposite direction.

He also accused the BNP of taking a selective stance

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13TH PARLIAMENT

Family, not individual, core unit of development

Tarique tells JS, reiterates 4cr families to come under 'Family Card' scheme

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday told the parliament that the BNP government considers family, not the individual, as the fundamental unit of development.

He reiterated that four crore low-income and marginalised families across the country will be brought under the Family Card programme gradually.

The Leader of the House said this while replying to a question from Noakhali-1 MP AM Mahub Uddin Khokon, reports BSS.

Tarique, also ruling BNP chairman, said the current government has taken the Family Card programme based on the vision of ensuring social security for citizens through a family-centric development



approach.

In the initial phase, he said Family Cards were distributed to 37,814 families across 10 districts and three city corporations on March 10, 2026.

Meanwhile, the prime minister also announced a series of measures aimed at strengthening Bangladesh's education sector, reiterating the government's pledge to gradually raise education spending to 5 percent of GDP, as outlined in the election manifesto.

Responding to a question from BNP lawmaker Selim Reza during the question-and-answer session at the parliament, the premier said 43 priority areas in the education sector have been identified, with short, medium, and long-term plans underway.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

No primary schools in 2,839 villages

Education minister tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary and Mass Education Minister ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon yesterday told parliament that 2,839 villages across the country do not have any primary schools.

The minister presented the data responding to a question from BNP lawmaker Zainal Abidin.

According to the minister, the number of villages without primary schools stands at 717 in Dhaka Division, 818 in Chattogram Division, 355 in Rajshahi Division, 37 in Rangpur Division, 341 in Khulna Division, 45 in Barishal Division, 260 in Sylhet Division and 266 in Mymensingh Division.

Based on the data, a total of 2,76,516

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

Hybrid classes planned for Dhaka schools: Milon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Education Minister ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon yesterday said the government is planning to introduce hybrid classes, combining online and offline lessons, on a pilot basis at selected educational institutions in Dhaka.

He said the move was being considered in view of the global energy crisis, severe traffic congestion, and the growing need to adapt to a technology-based education system.

Milon made the remarks as chief guest at a seminar titled "Continuing education activities

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Australian parliamentary team due this week

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

An Australian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the House of Representatives Milton Dick will visit Bangladesh this week to strengthen parliamentary-to-parliamentary engagement between the two countries.

The visit is part of an international three-country tour to Malaysia, Bangladesh and Türkiye ahead of the 152nd Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Istanbul, Türkiye, on April 15-19.

The delegation includes Milton Dick MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives (Queensland); Sharon Claydon MP, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives (New South Wales); Basem Abdo MP (Victoria); Senator Deborah O'Neill (New South Wales); Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC (South Australia); and Senator Tammy Tyrrell (Tasmania).

"The visit reflects Australia's long-standing

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

PLAYING MARCH 7 SPEECH Emi denied bail for the third time

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday denied bail for the third time to Sheikh Tasnim Afroz Emi, former vice-president of Shamsunnahar Hall union at Dhaka University and a central vice-presidential candidate in the 2025 Ducsu election, in a case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act over playing Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's March 7 speech on a loudspeaker.

Judge Md Nurul Islam of the Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court-II in Dhaka passed the order after hearing her bail petition, defence lawyer Muha Noman Hossain told The Daily Star.

On March 8, police produced Emi along with Md Asif Ahmed Shoiqot, former employment affairs secretary of the banned Chhatra League's

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'See what they did to my husband...'

Wife shows photo of victim's mutilated body at Int'l Crimes Tribunal-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A chilling photograph of the mutilated body of a victim of enforced disappearance was produced before the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday, leaving the courtroom in silence.

The image showed the body of a man with limbs tied up, eyes blindfolded, and a woollen cap pulled over the head. The abdomen was cut open with entrails exposed, and the face disfigured beyond recognition.

Munni Akhter, wife of slain Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) member Md Nazrul Islam, recalled the brutal end of her husband while testifying as the third prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case against Maj Gen (relieved) Ziaul Ahsan, who stands accused of abducting and killing 104 people.

"See what they did to my husband... what state they left him in," Munni told the tribunal in a voice heavy with anguish, while struggling to hold back tears.

She described how the family had identified Nazrul from the same image

after police recovered his body from the Baleshwar River in 2010, following his abduction.

Munni said her husband, a medical assistant at the BDR Hospital in



Pilkhana, had witnessed killings during the 2009 BDR mutiny and fled the compound by scaling a wall to save his life.

Fearing for his safety, Nazrul went into hiding, moving to Keraniganj and later to Gopalganj, where he worked under a false identity, Nurul Amin Munshi, at a clinic in Kotalipara.

On March 15, 2010, he left for work but never returned.

The next day, Munni learned from

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Autorickshaw driver killed as bus hits him

STAR REPORT

A CNG-run autorickshaw driver was killed after a bus hit him in the capital's Farmgate area yesterday.

The victim, Mamun Foragi, 33, was critically injured in the crash around 12:30pm near the Tejturi Bazar footbridge, witnesses said.

Passersby rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead around 1:15pm, said Inspector Md Faruk, in charge of the hospital's police camp.

Kazi Faisal, a local, said a bus of Labbaik Paribahan struck the autorickshaw driver near the footbridge at Tejturi Bazar.

According to his driving licence, Mamun was the son of Sekandar Foragi from Charfesson upazila in Bhola and had been living in the Hirajhil area of Siddhirganj, Narayanganj.

Police said the body was kept at the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Tejgaon police are investigating the incident.

Appellate Division will decide fate of SC Secretariat: AG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus yesterday said the issue of establishing the Supreme Court Secretariat will ultimately be settled by the Appellate Division, as the government plans to appeal against the High Court verdict.

He noted that the High Court directive to establish the Secretariat will not take effect until the Appellate Division disposes of the appeal.

He made the remarks at a press briefing at his office on the Supreme Court premises yesterday afternoon.

Ruhul told reporters, "The issue of establishing a separate Supreme Court Secretariat is tied to the Supreme Court itself. We expect the apex court will hear and dispose of the appeal cautiously so that no question arises about its decision in the future."

Following a writ petition, the High Court bench of Justice Ahmed Sobel and Justice Debashish Roy Chowdhury delivered its verdict on September 2 last year, scrapping article 116 of the constitution, which had vested the powers of control and discipline of lower court judges in the president.

The bench directed the government to establish the Supreme Court Secretariat within three months and ruled that the Supreme Court, not the president, will have authority over the transfer, posting, and discipline of lower court judges.



Hybrid classes

FROM PAGE 3
and saving electricity amid the situation arising from the global energy crisis" at the International Mother Language Institute.

The minister said the initiative would not be introduced in all schools at once. Rather, it could be launched as a pilot project at institutions with the required capacity.

Milon said crises across history have often opened the door to new possibilities, and that the education system must move forward with new methods instead of being halted by the current situation.

In the same way, Bangladesh's education system would have to be

rethought in the context of the current energy crisis, traffic congestion, and global competition.

The minister said under the proposed model, some classes would be held online and some offline during the week.

He also said teachers' training and supervision would have to be increased to make online classes effective, and that students would need to remain focused during virtual classes.

Milon said the government had already taken various steps to save electricity, including fixing air conditioner temperatures and changing office hours, along with an emphasis on expanding the use of solar power and electric transport.

Chickenpox spreads rapidly in Rohingya camps

Over 8,700 infected in 3 months

MOKAMMEL SHUVO, Cox's Bazar

Chickenpox infections have surged in the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, with over 8,700 cases reported in the past three months, raising concern among health officials.

The spike highlights growing vulnerability in the densely populated camps, where overcrowding and limited hygiene facilities are accelerating transmission, particularly among children.

Dr Toha Bhuiyan, health coordinator of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission, said 8,769 people were infected with chickenpox in the past three months. In comparison, 1,355 cases were recorded in the last six months of last year.

Measles and rubella remain largely under control as a result of routine vaccination, he said, suggesting that greater awareness and preventive measures are needed to curb chickenpox.

"Regular immunisation for children in the camps is ongoing according to schedule," Dr Toha said, adding



that such diseases tend to rise during this season, though the risk of death remains low.

Officials said cramped living conditions, shared facilities and limited scope for isolation are contributing to the rapid spread.

"My son suddenly developed rashes, followed by fever. We are trying to keep him isolated, but it is very difficult as we all live in one room," said Nurjahan, a resident of Kutupalong camp.

Another parent, Mohammad Idris, said, "If one person gets infected, others quickly catch it. It is becoming very difficult to manage the children."

Australian parliamentary team

FROM PAGE 3

"The visit reflects Australia's long-standing partnership with Bangladesh and its support for inclusive, transparent, and resilient democratic institutions as a foundation for sustainable development and regional stability," said a statement of the Australian High Commission in Dhaka issued yesterday.

"It underscores Australia's commitment to supporting democratic governance, strong parliamentary institutions, and inclusive political participation," the statement also said.

Australia supported Bangladesh's 13th National Elections held in February this year through the UN

Development Program-led BALLOT Project.

During the visit, the Australian delegation will meet with National Parliament Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam, and other MPs.

The delegation is also expected to observe parliament proceedings, and will exchange views on shared priorities, including clean and green development, civics and democracy, youth engagement, gender equality, women's political participation and leadership, financial transparency and parliamentary oversight.

Earlier on Tuesday, High Commissioner to Bangladesh Susan Ryle briefed State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed on the visit.

She also discussed the possibility of LNG supply from Australia to Bangladesh to meet Bangladesh's energy demand, bilateral cooperation in agriculture and climate change, as well as enhancement of bilateral trade and investment.

Shama Obaed stressed cooperation in skills development of Bangladesh's labour forces and women empowerment, and expressed hope that the visit would enhance Bangladesh-Australia bilateral relations following the formation of the new government.

Emi denied bail for the third time

FROM PAGE 3

Shahidullah Hall unit of Dhaka University, and Abdullah Al Mamun, a leader of BCL's Shaheed Sergeant Zahurul Haq Hall unit, before the court and sought their confinement. The court subsequently sent the three to jail.

The following day, the trio sought bail in the case, but the court rejected their petitions.

On March 15, Emi was denied bail for the second time in the case.

According to the case statement, a group of activists from the Awami

League, Jubo League and Chhatra League gathered around 3:00pm on March 7 at Shahidullah Hall crossing and played the historic March 7 speech on a loudspeaker.

Police went to the spot after receiving information and detained Shoikot with the help of locals.

Later, around 9:20pm, Mamun and Emi, along with 10-15 unidentified individuals, gathered in front of Gate 1 of the National Museum in Shahbagh.

At the time, the accused chanted slogans using loudspeakers and attempted

to resume the activities of the banned student organisation, according to the case.

They also obstructed police from performing their duties and tried to snatch Shoikot from police custody, it said.

At that point, a group of students led by Ducsu representatives AB Zubair and Musaddiq Ali Ibne Mohammad held Mamun and Emi and handed them over to the police.

Following the incident, police filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station under the Anti Terrorism Act on March 8.

Bogura-6 by-polls

FROM PAGE 3

In Bogura-6 by-poll, three candidates are contesting

— Bogura district BNP president and Bogura municipality former mayor Rezaul Karim Badsha, Jamaat-e-Islami ameer of Bogura town Abidur Rahman (Sohel), and

Bangladesh Development Party's candidate Md Amin.

In Sherpur-3, the contesting candidates are — BNP's Md Mahmudul Haque Rubel, Jamaat-e-Islami's Md Masudur Rahman, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist)

candidate Md Mizanur Rahman, and independent aspirant Md Aminul Islam.

EC's Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed yesterday said preparations for Bogura-6 by-polls and Sherpur-3 rescheduled election are so far satisfactory.

জনতা ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
এ্যাকাউন্টস ডিপার্টমেন্ট
জনতা ভবন, প্রধান কার্যালয়
১১০, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা-১০০০

জনতা ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এর ২০২৬ সালের জন্য বহিঃনিরীক্ষক (External Auditor) নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে Expression of Interest (EOI) আহ্বান

জনতা ব্যাংক পিএলসি, এর ২০২৬ সালের জন্য বহিঃনিরীক্ষক নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে নিম্ন বর্ণিত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন নিরীক্ষা ফার্মের নিকট হতে Expression of Interest (EOI) আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

ক) অডিট ফার্মকে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের সর্বশেষ তালিকাভুক্ত ফার্মের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হতে হবে।
খ) অডিট ফার্মের অংশীদারগণের জনতা ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র নিকট কোনরূপ দায়-দেনা অথবা ঋণ নেই।
গ) অডিট ফার্মের অংশীদার জনতা ব্যাংকের পরিচালক কিংবা জনতা ব্যাংকের ঋণগ্রহীতা প্রতিষ্ঠানের পরিচালক হিসাবে নিয়োজিত নহে।
ঘ) জনতা ব্যাংকের পরিচালনা পর্ষদের সদস্য অথবা উর্ধ্বতন নির্বাহী কিংবা তাদের পোষাদের সাথে অডিট ফার্মের কোন সর্জনস্বত্ত্ব নেই।
ঙ) অন্য কোন রাষ্ট্র মালিকানাধীন ব্যাংকে নিরীক্ষক হিসাবে নিয়োগ প্রাপ্ত হলে সর্জনস্বত্ত্ব ফার্মের নিয়োগ বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
চ) যে সকল অডিট ফার্ম আইসিএবি/বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক/অন্য কোন নিয়ন্ত্রক সংস্থা কর্তৃক তালিকাভুক্ত (Black listed) নহে।
ছ) ব্যাংকের প্রধান কার্যালয়সহ ৬০(ষাট)টি বৃহৎ শাখা নিরীক্ষা করতে হবে।
জ) অগ্রাহ্যপত্র প্রস্তাবিত নিরীক্ষা ফি'র বিম্যটি উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
ঝ) বহিঃনিরীক্ষার আওতা ও দায়িত্বযোগ্য প্রতিবেদনসমূহ, নিরীক্ষা ফি ইত্যাদি বিআরপিডি সার্কেলার লেটার নং- ৩১/২০২৪ তারিখ- ০৯ জুলাই ২০২৪ অনুযায়ী পরিপালিত হবে।

আগ্রহী ফার্মসমূহকে প্রতিক্রিয়া বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে ২৮ দিনের মধ্যে নিম্নে উল্লিখিত ঠিকানায় Expression of Interest (EOI) (Audit Methodology এবং Firm Profile সহ) পঠানোর আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।
Audit Methodology, Firm Profile এর নমুনা এবং বিআরপিডি সার্কেলার লেটার নং- ৩১/২০২৪ https://www.jb.com.bd/>Files অথবা https://jb.com.bd/about_us/download পাওয়া যাবে।

উপ-মহাব্যবস্থাপক
এ্যাকাউন্টস ডিপার্টমেন্ট (লিফট-১৬)
জনতা ব্যাংক পিএলসি, প্রধান কার্যালয়
১১০, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা

GD-776

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ ইউনেস্কো জাতীয় কমিশন
শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

'International Fund for Cultural Diversity-IFCD' এর অধীনে প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব আহ্বান

International Fund for Cultural Diversity-IFCD হতে সহায়তা প্রাপ্তির লক্ষ্যে ইউনেস্কো কর্তৃক প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব আহ্বান করা হয়েছে। সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠান ও এনজিওসমূহ এ প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব দাখিল করতে পারবে।

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সাবতীনা মনীর চিঠি
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বাংলাদেশ ইউনেস্কো জাতীয় কমিশন

GD-761

See what they did

FROM PAGE 3

a colleague of her husband that five to six plainclothes men had forcibly picked up Nazrul from Kotlipara's Bamtar Mor and taken him away in a microbus.

Two days later, she filed an abduction case with Kotlipara Police Station.

One day, the family was informed that a body believed to be Nazrul's had been recovered from the Baleshwar River in Bagerhat Shoronkhola.

A photograph published in a newspaper led to his identification by one of

Nazrul's brothers.

When Munni reached the police station, she identified her husband's clothing, but by then, the body had already been buried as an unclaimed corpse through Anjuman Mufulul Islam.

Following a DNA test arranged with the district administration's help, the body was exhumed and reburied in the family graveyard.

Prosecutor Mizanul Islam asked Munni who she believed was responsible for her husband's killing. The witness replied, "Later, I came to know that the accused former Rab intelligence chief Ziaul Ahsan had forcibly abducted and killed my husband."

"I want justice," she added.

The defence objected, arguing that the prosecution had asked a leading question. The tribunal, however, recorded the statement with objection.

UNITED FINANCE

Career Opportunity

United Finance PLC, one of the leading Non-Banking Financial Institutions in the country established in 1989, is a Public Limited Company listed with Dhaka Stock Exchange.

United Finance PLC serves the financial needs of a diverse client base of both companies and individuals. The company operates in all 64 districts of Bangladesh through 25 offices. For details please visit www.ufplc.com

To lead the company's Islamic Finance wing, United Finance PLC is presently looking for a competent **Head of Islamic Finance** according to the following details:

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- Foster a culture of excellence and continuous improvement across the Islamic Financing Division.
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- Minimum 15 years of experience in a Bank or NBFIs.
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- Competitive remuneration and benefits will be offered to the deserving candidate

How to Apply

As a gender-equal opportunity employer, United Finance PLC encourages interested candidates to apply with a CV and NID on or before **16 April 2026** by emailing directly to the Chief Human Resources Officer at CHRO@ufplc.com

Eastern Bank PLC.

HEAD OFFICE, 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, DHAKA-1212

Tender Notice

Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL) invites sealed bids from eligible, experienced, and competent bidders for the following services/items:

Lot 1: Network Switch | Lot 2: Licenses for Virtualization & Operating System (2nd call) | Lot 3: Treasury Management System (2nd call) | Lot 4: Load Balancer (LB) (2nd call) | Lot 5: Network Access Control (NAC) (2nd call) | Lot 6: Sandboxing Solution (2nd call) | Lot 7: Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) (2nd call) | Lot 8: Data Loss Prevention (DLP) (2nd call) | Lot 9: SOC Solution (3rd call)

Interested bidders are requested to collect the RFP document electronically by sending an email from their official email address to bidit@ebi-bd.com mentioning the name of the company and the authorized contact person, mailing address, telephone & mobile phone numbers on or before **Monday, 20 April 2026**.

Queries are to be mailed by **Monday, 27 April 2026**.

Bids should be prepared in accordance with the instructions contained in the RFP document and submitted as per the process described in the RFP document bearing official authorized person's seal & signature in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marking 'Technical Offer' (hardcopy and softcopy both) and 'Financial Offer' (hardcopy only) on the envelopes.

Bids should be dropped in the Tender Box, addressing to The Office of the President, Purchase Committee, Head Office, Eastern Bank PLC., 100 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212 (Basement-1, Tender Box) on or before **Thursday, 7 May 2026**.

Tenderers are allowed to bid for all lots or any lot separately. However, common documents need not to be submitted for multiple lots, submission with one lot is enough.

Trump had no good option Iran expert says about two-week ceasefire

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump has agreed to suspend his planned bombing of Iran for two weeks, following his threat that "a whole civilization will die tonight" if Tehran did not comply with his demands.

On Tuesday evening, within hours of the planned attack, Trump took to his platform Truth Social to announce he had reversed course.

Shortly after Trump's message, Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araghchi confirmed that a tentative agreement had been reached.

Experts say the two-week postponement raises critical questions, including whether Israel would abide by the ceasefire Trump has agreed to. There are also lingering concerns about whether Israel would end its strikes against Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as Iran's other regional allies, despite breaking similar agreements in the past.



Rescuers work at the site of an Israeli strike in Beirut yesterday. Israel carried out its heaviest strikes on Lebanon since the conflict with Hezbollah began last month, killing dozens and wounding hundreds, according to Lebanon's health ministry. PHOTO: REUTERS

TRUMP'S IRAN CEASEFIRE US political leaders react with caution, relief

AGENCIES

Politicians in the United States have largely welcomed the truce with Iran, with some of President Donald Trump's Republican allies voicing scepticism about a possible deal, as Democrats renewed calls for accountability over an "illegal war".

"I'm glad Trump backed off and is desperately searching for any sort of exit ramp from his ridiculous bluster," Chuck Schumer, the Senate Democratic leader, said on Tuesday night.

Earlier, Schumer called Trump an "extremely sick person" who was waging a "wanton war of choice".

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a progressive Congresswoman from New York, said the two-week agreement "changes nothing". "The President has threatened a genocide against the Iranian people, and is continuing to leverage that threat,"

she said on social media, calling again for his removal from office.

Hakeem Jeffries, the House minority leader, called Trump's behavior "unhinged, unprincipled and unconscionable" in a Tuesday evening interview on CNN.

"The American people strongly oppose this reckless war of choice," he said. "He's plunged America into this war without any plan, any objective and any exit strategy."

Democrats will demand that Speaker Mike Johnson immediately reconvene the House to move a war powers resolution to bring a permanent end to this conflict, Jeffries said.

While Congressional Republicans had been publicly muted in response to Trump's earlier threats, many cheered the president's acceptance a short-term ceasefire, casting the move as shrewd and tactical, reports The

Guardian online.

"Excellent news," Senator Rick Scott of Florida said. Senator Lindsey Graham, one of the chamber's loudest and most aggressive Iran hawks, said on Tuesday evening he shared the hope that "we can end the reign of terror of the Iranian regime through diplomacy".

But he added: "We must remember that the strait of Hormuz was attacked by Iran after the start of the war, destroying freedom of navigation. Going forward, it is imperative Iran is not rewarded for this hostile act against the world."

Analysts suggest that while the ceasefire may temporarily ease tensions, the shadow of Trump's threats — including his warnings about the potential obliteration of a civilisation — could have long-lasting diplomatic repercussions.

WEST BENGAL SIR

Mamata's TMC to move court again to resist voter deletions

THE HINDU ONLINE

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday hit out at the BJP and the Election Commission over voter deletions during the SIR exercise and said her party will move a court again to resist the removal of electors from the rolls.

Her comments came after nearly 91 lakh voters' names were deleted from the electoral rolls following the completion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in the state.

"You will not be able to defeat the TMC by deleting names. We will move a court again to resist the exclusion of names," Banerjee said while attacking her principal challenger BJP over the roll revision exercise.

Banerjee had in February argued in the Supreme Court as she sought an intervention in the SIR process. Yesterday, she filed her nomination from her native Assembly constituency of Bhabanipur in South Kolkata. The EC figures, which pushed the total deletion to over 90.83 lakh names from the original voter base of 7.66 crore in October 2025, showed that the proportion of removal of electors now remains at over 11.85 percent.

Four killed as violence flares in India's Manipur Internet partially shutdown

AGENCIES

At least four people were killed, two of them by police fire, in India's northeastern state of Manipur on Tuesday, officials said, after months of relative calm.



Two children from the mostly Hindu Meitei community were killed after a bomb exploded in a house in the Meitei-dominated Bishnupur district, the officials and the chief minister's office said.

Later on Tuesday, police opened fire to control a crowd that had stormed a camp belonging to security forces, killing two people, the state's interior minister, Govindas Konthoujam said.

A partial internet shutdown was in place. The children killed in the latest unrest belonged to the Meitei community, whose members alleged the attack was carried out by Kuki militants. Kuki groups denied the accusations.

THE SECURITY PRINTING CORPORATION (BANGLADESH) LTD. (SPCBL)
GAZIPUR-1703.

International e-Tender.

International e-Tender is invited in 'The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd. (SPCBL)'s e-Tender site <https://spcbltender.bb.org.bd> for procurement of the following item for SPCBL as per e-Tender schedule. Necessary information is given below:

e-Tender No.	Nature of e-Tender	Name of Item	Date of Publish	Last Date & time for submission of e-Tender	Date & time for Opening of e-tender
33/2025-2026	International	Supply of 45,000 Reams Non-Judicial Stamp (NJS) Paper.	09/04/2026	07/05/2026 11:00 A.M	07/05/2026 11:15 A.M
34/2025-2026	International	Supply of 8,085 Reams Security Paper for Printing Academic Transcript & Certificates.	09/04/2026	14/05/2026 11:00 A.M	14/05/2026 11:15 A.M

For more details, please visit/contact the followings:
Website : www.spcbl.portal.gov.bd
Cell No : +8801701006808
Telephone : +88-02-223375560-67 Ex: 177.
E-Mail : info@spcbl.org.bd
E-tender site : <https://spcbltender.bb.org.bd>

sd/-
(Rafeza Akter Kanta)
General Manager (Foreign Purchase)
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Telephone: +88-02-223375589

GD-773

Gazipur Development Authority
Ministry of Housing and Public Works
Gazipur, Bangladesh

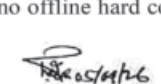
Reference No:- gda-dev-2025-2026-3-3 Date: 05-04-2026

e-Tender Notice

e-tender is invited by National e-GP system portal (www.egp.gov.bd) for the procurement of

Tender Id	Name of Work	Last selling Date and Time	Opening Date and Time
1253428	Supply of vehicles under project titled Survey, Random Selection, and Feasibility Study on Low-income Housing.	19-04-2026	19-04-2026

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline hard copies will be accepted.


Md. Mumtazur Rahman
Member (Administration and Finance)
Gazipur Development Authority
&
Project Director

GD-770

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়
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তারিখ: ২৫ ফেব্রু ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ
০৮ এপ্রিল ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

ই-টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিষয়: দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি সংবাদপত্রে প্রকাশ।

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরে দারুণিক কাজে ব্যবহারের নিমিত্ত কম্পিউটার, প্রিন্টার ও স্ক্যানার ক্রয়ের জন্য ন্যাশনাল ই-জিপি পোর্টালে (www.eprocure.gov.bd) নিম্নোক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা হয়েছে।

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১। ইহা একটি অনলাইন টেন্ডার, কোন হার্ডকপি গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
২। প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্য ও বিজ্ঞপ্তির জানার জন্য খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট-এ (www.mofood.gov.bd) দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (ফোন-০১৯১৩-৪৬২৩৮৭) এবং ই-জিপি সিস্টেম পোর্টালে (www.eprocure.gov.bd) এবং e-Gp help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) ফোন নং-১৬৫৭৫ এ যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।


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ইমেইল : dsservice@mofood.gov.bd

GD-766

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Planning
Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division
Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

No- 21.00.0000.000.005.30.0329.25-353 Date: 08/04/2026

Invitation for e-Tender (Goods)

e-Tender is inviting in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Purchase of Goods. Details are given below:

Package No	Description	Tender ID No	Closing Date & Time
GR-13/2025-26/IMED	Supply of Furniture	1254525	20-Apr-2026 Time-12:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) system. (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)


08/04/2026
(Ripan Chakma)
Joint Secretary

GD-764

Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail-1902
Phone: 01763417338

Higher Education Acceleration and Transformation (HEAT) Project Bangladesh
University Grants Commission
Web: <https://heat.ugc.gov.bd/>
Window 1 (Pandemic Readiness Related Research and Development)
PIN: 11026


Ref: HEAT-11026-MBSTU-Tender Notice-1 Date: 09/04/2026

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal System and no offline hard copied will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). e-Tenders are invited in e-GP portal system by the office of the sub project manager (BMB-11026), Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail for the procurement of following items:

SL No.	APPID, Tender ID, Package No.	Package Name	Type of Tender	Online Tender Notice Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Closing/Opening Date & Time
1	221342, 1253367, MBSTU/11026/G-1	Supply and Installation of Laboratory (Molecular Biology) Machineries and Equipments	NTC, OTM	Date: 09/04/2026 Time: 10:00 am	Date: 26/04/2026 Time: 12:00 pm
2	221342, 1254902, MBSTU/11026/G-6	Laptop and Desktop, Printer, High performing computer for NGS analysis	NTC, OTM	Date: 09/04/2026 Time: 10:00 am	Date: 26/04/2026 Time: 01:00 pm

e-Tender details can be downloaded from as stated above on e-GP system for purpose. The fees for the e-Tender documents from the e-GP system must be deposited online through any registered bank. e-Tenders will be accepted within the date and time stated and accepted tenders will be opened online immediately. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP portal system and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


(Professor Dr. Mohammad Johirul Islam)
SPM, HEAT Project (PIN: 11026),
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University,
Tangail-1902, Bangladesh.

GD-760

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Ceasefire brings a much-needed relief

US, Israel should consider Iran war's global impact, agree on upholding peace

We welcome the two-week pause in the war between Iran and the US, which came at the 11th hour. The ceasefire indeed brings a great sense of relief not just for the people of Iran, who have been enduring persistent bombing for over a month, but also for the people of Bangladesh and the world at large. As part of the ceasefire deal, Iran has agreed to the safe transit of ships through the Strait of Hormuz. The reaction to this development is evident in international oil prices, which dropped below \$100 per barrel for the first time in weeks.

For most of us, this war, imposed on Iran by the US and Israel, has been incomprehensible. It has broken all international rules and norms and lacks a clear purpose, further dramatised by US President Donald Trump's social media rhetoric. In his latest post, Trump even threatened to destroy the entire Iranian civilisation, only 12 hours before the deadline he had set for the opening of the Strait of Hormuz. How could a head of state express the intent to destroy a civilisation! This is unheard of and unacceptable, and must be condemned worldwide.

The ceasefire has created a window to resolve the crisis through discussion. In this regard, we would like to compliment Pakistan for being able to convince the US president and the Iranian leadership, as both sides reposed their confidence in Pakistan as a mediator. However, the issue of what started the war in the first place, and Israel's role in it, must be raised. Based on facts, we know that Israel's intention from the very beginning has been to drag the US into the war by pushing the narrative that the assassination of Iran's supreme leader would collapse the country's theocratic regime. Israel went about implementing that illegal act of killing another country's leader, with President Trump believing the Israeli narrative, while the world watched in silence. Despite all this, Iran proved its resilience despite relentless bombing by the US and Israel, with the latter continuing its assassination of the Iranian leadership.

With time, Israel's greater goal of expanding its territory at the cost of its neighbours will become clear. Even as the world welcomes this ceasefire, Israel has launched new strikes on Lebanon, claiming the truce does not include Lebanon. It remains to be seen how Israel will react if peace is brokered between the US and Iran. While we await a positive outcome, the world and, more importantly, the American people should wake up to Israel's intention of derailing the negotiation. They must decide whether Israel's intention would ultimately lead to a peaceful world or a conflict-ridden one. Finally, we wish the negotiation hosted by Pakistan, set to take place on Friday, is pursued with in-depth understanding of how this war has caused instability and chaos around the world.

Keep BCB away from political influence

Appointments should prioritise expertise, not partisan stance

In the latest episode of a management shake-up, the National Sports Council (NSC) dissolved the board of directors of the country's cricket regulator on Tuesday. The decision follows a probe report that found the board's October 2025 election to be marred by irregularities. The NSC has put an 11-member ad hoc committee, headed by former men's national team captain Tamim Iqbal, in charge of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), a move rejected by the now-former board president, another national cricket veteran, Aminul Islam Bulbul, who has categorically denied the allegations levelled against his team. This dramatic changeover has naturally raised eyebrows.

The probe report, we are told, found several instances of irregularities during the election, such as government interference, including by the then sports adviser, disputes over councillorships, loopholes in BCB constitution, and undue influence wielded by the then president and other board members. In fact, these controversies surrounded the election from the beginning, with the current ad hoc president—who was also in the running in the polls—withdrawing from the contest, alleging “political interference and conspiracies.” We cannot help but wonder: why did the NSC not investigate these allegations at the time?

Interestingly, the ad hoc committee has failed to escape the political influence that its predecessor was accused of. The new management includes several members who are direct relatives of sitting ministers and have no connection with professional cricket. How are they expected to serve the interests of the sport without relevant expertise? For a government that aims to remove political influence from sports—as the state minister for youth and sports has recently reiterated—this move is indeed baffling.

This whole state of affairs has set a poor precedent, and regardless of who comes out on top, cricket will be the ultimate victim. If the government is committed to the growth of sports, it must break the cycle of partisan interference and ensure that all sports administrations are beyond reproach. The immediate priority should be to ensure that the ad hoc committee adheres to its mandate of holding the BCB election within three months. Beyond that, it must ensure that only those with expertise in professional cricket get a seat at the table. And to keep the election free from controversy, members of the ad hoc committee should not be allowed to take part in it. If they wish to contest, they must first step down from their administrative roles.

We also urge the NSC to ensure that future BCB boards are formed in line with the standards set by the International Cricket Council. To this end, it must examine the alleged constitutional loopholes and amend the BCB constitution as necessary.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Baghdad falls to US

On this day in 2003, Baghdad fell to US-led forces, several weeks after the start of the Iraq War. US President George W Bush argued the conflict was necessary so as to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, due to his regime's supposed possession of weapons of mass destruction and support of terrorist groups.

The HC has spoken: Repeal can't undo judicial autonomy



Khan Khalid Adnan
is advocate of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh,
fellow at the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, and
head of the chamber at Khan Saifur Rahman and
Associates in Dhaka.

KHAN KHALID ADNAN

With regard to the preservation of our judicial autonomy, the real question was never whether Bangladesh would aspire to achieve it, but whether the state was prepared to surrender the administrative levers through which the courts are quietly managed. The recent release of the full judgment in Writ Petition No. 10356 of 2024 makes that question impossible to evade (although the judgment was pronounced in September 2025, the full 185-page text was published on April 7, 2026). This landmark judgment was delivered by Justice Ahmed Sohel and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury. The High Court, on pages 157 and 158 of the full text, says that the consultative formula under the amended Article 116 of the constitution had become “illusory and meaningless”; on page 167, that a separate secretariat is a constitutional imperative; on page 182, that true judicial independence requires dismantling the “dual governance system”; and on page 184, it directs the government (that is, the law ministry) and other relevant respondents to establish an independent separate secretariat within three months.

The publication of the full judgment—with its rebuke, observations, and instructions—comes at an awkward moment for the government and the parliament. As we know, a parliamentary special committee has recently recommended repeal of the Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance, 2025, and the law minister has already tabled a repeal bill. But the secretariat is no longer a theoretical future institution. Under the then Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed, a secretary was assigned, a post-creation committee was formed, the institution was formally inaugurated, and hundreds of posts were approved. In other words, the state's current attempt means repealing not just the ordinance but also a structure it had already begun to operationalise, and it would create a vacuum if it goes ahead with it. That is why the practical question surrounding the ordinance is so serious.

In spirit, the ordinance followed the HC judgment far more closely than its critics want to admit. Its preamble was built around Articles 22, 109, and 116 of the constitution, and around the unfinished constitutional project

of separating the judiciary from the executive, with explicit reference to the *Masdar Hossain case* (Civil Appeal No. 79 of 1999). Section 4 of the ordinance placed the overall control of the secretariat with the chief justice. Sections 11 and 12 gave the secretariat separate budgetary space and freed expenditure from prior executive approval. These were not cosmetic provisions. They reflected the same institutional insight that now runs through the judgment: judicial independence is meaningless if the court does not control the



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

administrative machinery through which independence is lived. That is precisely why the HC insisted, on page 167, that a separate secretariat is not a matter of executive discretion, but a constitutional necessity.

In content, too, the ordinance anticipated much of what the judgment demands. The secretariat was empowered to deal with staffing, organisational structure, budget management, research, training, post creation and, in design, even the posting, promotion, transfer, discipline, and leave of members of the judicial service. The ordinance, therefore, recognised something Bangladesh's political class has long preferred to deny: courts are not controlled only by spectacular constitutional amendments or headline-grabbing appointments; they are controlled through payroll, posts, promotions, files, leave, buildings, training, and the daily circulation of administrative power.

On that basic institutional diagnosis, the ordinance and the judgment were travelling in the same direction.

It should be acknowledged, however, that the ordinance did not fully reach the constitutional position that today's judgment has restored. It was drafted under the old, compromised Article 116. So while it moved boldly towards autonomy, it still carried traces of the very executive architecture the High Court has now condemned. The most obvious example is section 7, which envisaged the secretariat performing service administration for judicial officers “on behalf of the President.” Section 16 also left a disciplinary role with the Law and Justice Division in certain cases. Sections 8, 10, and 17 embedded executive secretaries, and even the law minister or adviser, inside key planning, commission, and post-creation structures. While the judgment recognises that some dealings between the judiciary and the

defects, has already done much of that institutional groundwork. The parliament should, therefore, stop pretending that the choice is between a tainted ordinance and some pristine future law. The real choice is between preserving a partially built architecture and returning judicial administration to the old maze of ministry control. If repeal proceeds

Courts are not controlled only by spectacular constitutional amendments or headline-grabbing appointments; they are controlled through payroll, posts, promotions, files, leave, buildings, training, and the daily circulation of administrative power.

without a simultaneous replacement and savings framework, its most likely outcome will not be reform but rather administrative confusion followed by executive recapture.

The constitutionally responsible path here is straightforward: withdraw the repeal bill or convert it immediately into an amendment bill. Keep the secretariat alive. Validate all acts already done under the ordinance. Allow the existing secretariat to continue under the new legal framework. Remove every reference that makes the secretariat act for the president under Article 116. Remove the law ministry's residual disciplinary grip over judicial service matters. Recast executive participation in committees as coordination, not control. Preserve what the ordinance got right—namely, chief justice-led control, direct institutional communication, staffing authority, and budgetary autonomy. Do not destroy the machine merely because its wiring needs to be corrected in light of a judgment that finally restored the original constitutional current.

Let us be honest: a parliament that responds to a judgment demanding an independent secretariat by abolishing the only functioning legal framework that has begun to build one would not be defending constitutionalism. It would be mocking it. Bangladesh does not need a judiciary that is independent in rhetoric but subordinate in administration. The High Court has now said exactly that, in substance and in unmistakable terms. The only serious question left is whether the political class is prepared to accept a judiciary it cannot quietly manage.

Hasty diagnosis is derailing autism care



Dr Imdadul Haque Talukdar,
is a public mental health specialist and adjunct
assistant professor of psychology in the Department
of History and Philosophy at North South University.

IMDADUL HAQUE TALUKDAR

Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is not a disease, but a complex neuro-developmental condition. Over the last decade, social awareness regarding autism has grown significantly in Bangladesh. However, as a mental public health specialist, I find the systemic weaknesses in the identification and service delivery processes at the grassroots level deeply concerning. Specifically, the hurried and unscientific manner in which disability allowances are determined at the upazila and district levels poses a major threat to both the rights of affected children and the state's future planning.

At the primary level, the responsibility for identifying disabilities rests with medical officers at upazila health complexes. Most of these officers lack specialised clinical training in ASD or neurodevelopmental disorders. The MBBS curriculum covers this subject only briefly, making it nearly impossible for a general practitioner to accurately diagnose a child by

analysing complex behavioural traits. During the selection process for disability allowances, when hundreds of applicants gather, decisions are often made within minutes based on superficial physical examinations or anecdotal evidence from parents or guardians. This culture of haste is a red flag for public health. Autism is not something that can be detected with a stethoscope or based on a blood test; it requires prolonged observation and a rigorous evaluation of the child's social and communication skills. In the absence of specialised training, these rushed decisions frequently lead to misdiagnosis.

Every scientific determination requires a gold standard or an objective tool. While the developed world utilises internationally recognised scientific protocols to identify autism, Bangladesh has yet to mandate a simplified, scientific national standard diagnostic tool that a general physician at the grassroots level can use easily. Due to the lack of a uniform guideline, different doctors

apply different criteria. Consequently, children with hearing impairments or intellectual disabilities are sometimes mistakenly issued autism cards, while those truly on the spectrum are excluded due to inadequate assessment. This not only results in inaccurate national statistics but also deprives those in genuine need of appropriate therapy and support.

While the developed world utilises internationally recognised scientific protocols to identify autism, Bangladesh has yet to mandate a simplified, scientific national standard diagnostic tool that a general physician at the grassroots level can use easily. Due to the lack of a uniform guideline, different doctors apply

Furthermore, the repercussions of misdiagnosis extend far beyond the individual, impacting state-level policymaking. When inaccurate data enters our Disability Information System (DIS), it inevitably compromises government planning and budget allocations. If public

health policies are built on flawed data, the core issues remain unaddressed, leading to a waste of state resources and the marginalisation of rightful beneficiaries.

There needs to be radical reform in the autism diagnosis process. Every medical officer at the upazila level must undergo intensive, short-term training to help them recognise the clinical symptoms of autism accurately. Furthermore, a validated screening tool, translated into Bangla, must be made mandatory. We also need to move away from relying on a single physician and instead form multi-disciplinary teams comprising social service officers, physiotherapists, and psychologists. Dedicated time and spaces must be allocated for these assessments to ensure every child receives the attention they require. Finally, a digital monitoring system should be established to allow experts at the district or divisional levels to randomly verify the data sent from the upazilas.

Sympathy for individuals with autism is not enough; ensuring their civic rights is a moral obligation for the state and for all of us. With the existing perfunctory assessments, we are not just creating flawed statistics but also jeopardising the future of thousands of children. Let us look beyond the formalities and commit to fixing structural flaws. An accurate diagnosis is, after all, the first and most vital step towards effective care.

Iran war and the long shadow of oil colonialism



LETTERS FROM THE UK

Dr Geof Wood,
a development anthropologist, is emeritus professor of international development at the University of Bath in the UK. He has authored several books and numerous journal articles.

GEOF WOOD

We are separated, the UK and Bangladesh, by a war zone. It is affecting us both, especially through a rise in energy costs, though not with equal effects across the different classes and groups that make up our respective societies. These costs are a sharp reminder of global interconnectedness, with new elements emerging daily. There are clear differences of opinion and judgement about the ongoing war within the UK: the populist right buying into Trump and Israel's agenda; the centre very cautious, seeking legality and adopting only a defensive stance; the left and Greens, along with peace groups and the Muslim diaspora, implacably opposed.

Much is intermingled in terms of history, responsibility, and present alignments. What is the longer view? Are we now looking at the denouement of a particular, extended "colonial" era arising from World War I, which entailed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and a Gulf region reset by rich, western industrialising societies intent upon capturing access to oil and establishing ownership through its exploitation once above ground (through refining and transportation)?

Obviously, a major part of the post-World War I settlement in the region was the formation of Israel. Britain held this West Asian space towards the end of that war and, in the 1917 Balfour Declaration, acceded to the Zionist quest for a homeland for displaced Jews "alongside" Palestinian pastoralists. This position was later ratified during the British Mandate for Palestine under the League of Nations. Over the last century, "alongside" has morphed into "at the expense of" Palestinians, predictably generating resistance to ongoing Israeli expansionism in the region and the resulting sequence of atrocities. Everyone in these territories is now at risk, with ultra-Christian Zionists in the US stoking a genocidal agenda.

More widely in the Gulf region, the last century has entailed a political resettlement beginning with the formation of new client

nations, comprising tribal and clan identities reorganised into monarchy and subjugation. These emergent "royal and oil" states were serviced by oil companies and educated immigrants from neighbouring urban cities, with residual desert pastoralism persisting in the hinterland of high-rise urbanism and refineries. Except for desert shepherds, all have been living off quasi-monopoly "rents" (the OPEC cartel) from globally desired fossil fuels, directly or indirectly, through royalties, profits, salaries, and construction contracts.

This oil colonialism was supported by transforming the pastoral and caravan traditions of Islam into this newly settled era over the last 110 years—a modern syncretism combining Western extractive technologies with conservative Islam: an international cultural alliance largely for the purpose of sharing the rents from oil exploitation. Thus did Christian colonialism intersect with Islamic dependency. The history of empire across Asia, whether under the Ottomans, Mughals, or the British, acknowledged the principle and convenient necessity of indirect rule, or suzerainty, leaving local institutions to manage the day-to-day conditions of colonial extraction and allocation of rents, enough to the domestic population to maintain its loyalty. This "colonial" settlement included Persia, especially exaggerated during the artifice of the short Pahlavi dynasty, which came to a sticky end in February 1979.

The outcomes of this "colonial" era have not been great for the ordinary people of the region. Palestinians suffer through displacement and marginalisation from their own space, as exemplified by the 1948 Nakba to Gaza and persistent Israeli encroachment into the West Bank. Note that Israeli Zionists have room for manoeuvre in this zero-sum expansionism: Israel does not import oil from within the region. Thus, ordinary Israelis are experiencing acute insecurity, with only a semblance of democracy now being tested by their elite's ultra-nationalistic ideology.

And outcomes for ordinary people

elsewhere in the region have not been favourable, either. Tiny elites have historically been assigned control over allocating rents across their subjugated populations, without democracy or freedoms of any kind. A significant proportion of these populations are immigrants, without even the rights of indigenes, liable to imprisonment or deportation at any hint of voice, especially women. These are authoritarian regimes

neighbouring hostile non-Shia Islamic sects. Women suffered, freedoms were curtailed, and obedience became a condition of personal security and safety. This Iranian version of anti-colonial sentiment has, alas, turned in on itself and become barely distinguishable from its neighbours. Its brief glimpse of post-colonial freedoms was crushed. Again, oil rents (via Kharg Island) are allocated by an unaccountable elite (Islamic Revolutionary

likely rooted in Western concern that Iran's post-Pahlavi assertion of autonomy has a demonstration effect in the region. This comes at a time when capitalist interest groups are fighting a rearguard action globally to protect their fossil fuel monopolies and associated rents from the reordering implications of renewables.

In this fight, the principals in the West and their elite regional agents share short-term common interests in defending existing business models, especially as the energy demands of the AI revolution are so high. Such AI development must not be impaired by the prospect of oil-rich countries like Iran escaping dependency and thus gaining the ability to influence global prices of increasingly scarce hydrocarbons. We saw this briefly in the 1973 "oil crisis." Perhaps this is why China and Russia seem content to stand back, monitor events, and extract advantages. Any demonstration effect of Iran's independence—despite its high internal cost to freedoms—would not ultimately serve China and Russia's interests either, at least until renewables and nuclear energy can replace oil and gas.

So, that brings us to Trump and his desire to continue the hydrocarbon business model. Like in Russia, US oligarchs also benefit from the present rise in oil prices at the expense of their own populations. The risks of transitioning to renewables are too great for Trump's brand of elite domination, his political agenda reliant on oil billionaires and his own business model dependent on ever-increasing debt to sustain his otherwise fragile property positions. He needs the banks, and they need oil. But Trump also needs a populist base to maintain his ability to orchestrate this rent-seeking behaviour, ensuring that he becomes too big to fail for the banks. It is a high-wire act. "They [the banks] are in blood, stepped in so far, that to retreat were as difficult as going o'er"—to quote *Macbeth*.

Maintaining that populist base requires Trump to imitate or mirror the behaviour of autocrats in the Gulf and elsewhere, except that, for now, he still has to operate within the remnants of democracy until he can dismantle them entirely. Will the 2026 midterms be cancelled? Signs of such an agenda are visible in present-day US politics, aided by entrenched capitalist interests and fragmented cultural factions of regressive Christianity, who see their paternalistic authority threatened by wokeism and female emancipation—much like in the Gulf region.



A view of a residential building damaged by a strike, amid the US-Israeli conflict with Iran, in Tehran, Iran, March 23, 2026.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

hosting the neo-colonial military bases of Western allies to ensure the flow of oil at cartel prices (rents).

Persia, now Iran, might have escaped this Arab scenario in the February 1979 uprising against repression. This uprising can be seen as an outcome of rapid urbanisation from desert conditions during the Shah's nearly three-decade oil bonanza, courtesy of US- and UK-backed oil companies. Such rapid urbanisation releases a new urban "cheek-by-jowl" experience of relative deprivation—a lesson for all societies presently undergoing rapid transformation from desert or agrarian pasts. But the February 1979 uprising was quickly overtaken by a new, theocratic nationalism, requiring "othering" and enemies to cohere and subjugate the domestic population: Western "satans" and

Guard Corps, etc.), now boxed into a corner of self-preservation—directly and via regional proxies—at the expense of its people.

These ultimately fragile political settlements in the region are now under threat from the local divisions engineered by historical colonial forces. Some might be tempted to represent such divisions as sectarian splits within Muslims. Local wars have indeed been fought in these terms over the last three decades. But rather, it is the steady Iranian extraction since 1979 from its "colonial" dependency (with, of course, the dangers of entering other dependencies such as Russia) that has starkly revealed the choice elsewhere in the Gulf between autonomy and ongoing dependent existence—a division, or, dare one say, a "gulf"—easily represented externally by sectarian differences, but more

A strategic roadmap for Dhaka's solid waste management



Dr Nawshad Ahmed,
a retired UN official, is an economist and urban planner.

NAWSHAD AHMED

Dhaka is the second-most populous city in the world and is projected to be the world's most populous city by 2050, according to a 2025 report published by the United Nations on world urbanisation prospects. The rising population, coupled with unplanned urbanisation, makes Dhaka a challenging ground when it comes to solid waste management, which is one of the top environmental problems in the city and a major public health issue.

There are four city corporations in urban Dhaka—Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) covering some 197.18 square kilometres, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) covering around 109.24 square kilometres, Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) covering some 329.53 square kilometres, and Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) covering an area of 72.43 square kilometres. The city corporations serve a total area of approximately 708.38 square kilometres, and the total population living in this area

is estimated to be around 13.94 million, as per the 2022 population census. This translates to a population density of 19,680 persons per square kilometre, which is the most densely populated part of the country, explaining why the four city corporations are struggling to manage the rapidly increasing volumes of solid waste.

The four city corporations in Dhaka generate about 11,500 tonnes of solid waste daily—6,500 tonnes from DNCC and DSCC, 4,000 tonnes from GCC, and 1,000 tonnes from NCC. The average per capita waste generation stands at 0.65 kg per day. Approximately 75 percent of the waste is organic with high moisture content, and 70-80 percent is collected daily.

The four city corporations have the herculean task of collecting, transporting, and making sure the solid waste is disposed of in a hygienic manner. However, this task is often obstructed due to the lack of proper infrastructure facilities and an acute shortage

of skilled manpower. During a string of visits to all four city corporations between September and November 2025, I have found that in DNCC and DSCC, the community-based organisations collect waste via rickshaw vans, transfer it to about 114 secondary transfer stations, from where about 400 trucks transport it to the final destination—the two landfill sites in Aminbazar of DNCC and Matuail of DSCC—each site covering about 100 acres of land. Gazipur and Narayanganj cities also collect a part of the solid waste through community-based organisations by door-to-door collection service and collect the rest of the waste by the municipal staff from the households, business establishments, institutions and industries, and keep them in dustbins from where about 300 municipal trucks transport them to respective landfill sites.

That being said, a huge amount of solid waste, about 20 percent, remains uncollected. The uncollected plastic bottles and polyethylene bags pollute the soil, water, and air and impact the local environment. The plastic waste often ends up in the drainage system, blocking and causing water stagnation and flooding. In addition, a huge amount of waste goes into the water bodies, causing pollution. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11—sustainable cities and communities—sets a target to "reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special

attention to air quality, municipal, and other waste management by 2030". Safe waste disposal is thus one of the major areas requiring significant improvements in order to achieve this SDG goal.

The city corporations, therefore, need to design proper waste collection and disposal methods and invest adequately in the next five years to achieve the 2030 agenda. They should also take it seriously to strengthen operational procedures, adopt innovative technologies, and involve local communities, NGOs, and the private sector in proper solid waste management. Furthermore, the corporations must also ensure safe disposal of waste to minimise pollution in surface and ground water, soil, and air through recycling, reuse, and incineration methods.

A very small amount of waste is segregated in Dhaka city, as domestic source segregation has not been introduced yet. An ideal and globally applied waste management approach is the 3R (reduce, reuse, and recycle) strategy. This approach helps to separate and reuse a large amount of recyclable waste, such as glasses and plastic bottles, paper, and hardboards, which can be marketed for profit. The organic items, which constitute about 70 percent of solid waste in Dhaka, can be transformed into composting fertilisers. Technology exists today for this transformation to produce organic fertilisers, which can drastically lower the volume of solid waste, improve food security and reduce the

use of chemical fertilisers. Although all four city corporations are thinking of introducing this transformational technology, none have put it on the ground yet. Consequently, waste recycling is still undertaken informally by scavengers belonging to underprivileged communities, who often risk their health while the formal sector neglects the opportunity for waste recycling in a land-scarce and densely populated urban environment.

Donor-funded solid waste management projects in Dhaka, implemented by the DNCC and DSCC, with support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the World Bank, have succeeded in somewhat improving the situation in recent years. These initiatives focused on upgrading from open dumping to sanitary landfills, promoting 3R (reduce, reuse, recycle) policies, and proposing waste-to-energy solutions. Despite these projects, limited collection, inadequate transportation, and unscientific disposal of a significant amount of daily waste in the capital city of the country cause an adverse impact on the environment, spreading diseases and badly affecting the health of the inhabitants. So it is essential for a city like Dhaka, which is the second largest in the world, to put a stronger effort at the highest political level and arrange the financial and technical support needed to transform Dhaka into an environmentally healthy city by 2030.

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

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WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR
OPINION PIECES TO
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'Rakkhosh' releases in Rome, expands international run

Eid-ul-Fitr release *Rakkhosh* has expanded its reach internationally, premiering in Rome, Italy, on April 6. The film received a positive response from audiences on its opening day, according to the production house.

Director Mehedi Hassan Hridoy said the film has already performed well in both multiplexes and single screen theatres across Bangladesh, paving the way for its global rollout. Following its Italy release, the team remains optimistic about its international reception.

The film is now set to release in the United States on April 17, with distribution handled by Galaxy Media. Screenings will take place across multiple cities, with plans also underway for a Canadian release.

Produced by Real Energy Production, the film stars Siam Ahmed and Susmita Chatterjee.



In honour of Nazrul, inspired from Tagore CHHAYANAUT HOSTS 'BOSHONTO'

NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

In the Bangla cultural calendar, spring often arrives not only in colour, but in melody. This season, that arrival takes shape in *Boshonto*, a lyrical play dedicated to poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, while drawing from the timeless world of Rabindranath Tagore.

Organised by the Dhaka metropolitan branch of Jatiya Rabindra Sangeet Sammilan Parishad, the production was staged on April 7 at 6:30 pm at Chhayanaut Sanskriti-Bhaban in Dhanmondi.

At its heart, *Boshonto* appears to be more than a seasonal musical. It is built on an evocative dramatic premise: in a kingdom burdened by emptiness and anxiety, the poet becomes the one who restores feeling, colour and liveliness. Spring is not treated merely as a backdrop, but as a living force — embodied through poetry, music, dance and a cast of floral characters who together transform the stage into a garden.

The production tributes Tagore's dedication of the play to Nazrul during the latter's imprisonment, creating a bridge between two towering poetic spirits of Bengal. In that sense, *Boshonto* becomes both



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

homage and celebration — one poet remembered through the artistic universe of another.

The production brings together a wide range of characters drawn from nature: Bonobhumi, Amrakunjo, Korobi, Bokul, Dipshikha, Madhabi, Malati, Shalbithika, Nodi, Dokhin Hawa, Rituraj, Jhumkolota, Akash, Dhutura, and others. Rather than appearing as fixed dramatic roles, they seem to function as seasonal presences — each helping shape the emotional texture of the play.

The song selection reflected the

mood of renewal and blossoming, with familiar Rabindra Sangeet pieces on spring, longing, beauty and movement woven into the production alongside ensemble dance performances. Students and teachers performed together, with participants including Lily Islam, Suma Ray, Sharmin Sathi Islam, Sharmila Bandyopadhyay, Tania Mannan and others.

Boshonto is a play that takes audiences back to their roots. In a land of six seasons, spring is often seen as their king — a time when branches are colourful in new leaves and nature begins to dress with renewed life. As the season prepares to welcome Pohela Boishakh, *Boshonto* evokes a sense of rebirth and hope. This is not the story of a single protagonist, but an ensemble offering in which flowers, wind, sky, river and human emotion share the same stage. The production ultimately imagines spring as a state of awakening.

For audiences who return to Tagore every spring, *Boshonto* will likely offer something familiar and warm. And for those drawn to productions that mix literature, music and dance, it may be one of those evenings where the spirit of the season feels most alive under stage lights.

Actors Equity Bangladesh holds memorial for Shams Suman

Actors Equity Bangladesh has announced a memorial event to honour National Film Award-winning actor Shams Suman, whose death last month left a deep impact on the country's cultural community.

The programme, titled *Shams Suman... Smritite Amlan*, is scheduled to take place today (April 9) at 6 pm at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka.

In a statement, the organisation said the event honours Suman, a vice-president of its executive committee and a respected colleague. Actors, admirers, and well-wishers are invited to attend.

Suman passed away on March 17 after a long career in theatre, television, and film.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Khona'

BotTala's *Khona*, a seminal exploration of gender, class, and rural wisdom, reaches its 100th performance at the Central Shaheed Minar. Through song, ritual, and evocative storytelling, the production fuses history with contemporary relevance, inviting audiences into a rich, immersive reflection on Bangladesh's social and cultural heritage.

DATE: FRIDAY-SATURDAY | APRIL 10-11, 2026
TIME: 7 PM ONWARDS
VENUE: CENTRAL SHAHEED MINAR



NEWS

Consumers weighed down by runaway LPG prices

FROM PAGE 1

"Customers know prices have gone up by Tk 300, but they don't understand why — it's creating tension."

Sales have dropped as many are switching to electric or wood-fired stoves, he said.

Operating under official pricing has become nearly impossible, said a trader in Kochukhet, who bought cylinders from dealers at around Tk 1,850.

"In this area, many customers are from law enforcement or administration, so charging higher prices is difficult. Honestly, I feel like shutting down for a few days just to avoid the constant pressure," he said.

Retailers in Mirpur's Kafurl area echoed similar concerns.

The official rate does not reflect actual costs, said Nurun Nabi, manager of a dealership.

"On paper, we are supposed to sell at Tk 1,633 or Tk 1,728 depending on the batch. But in reality, we procure at around Tk 1,775. With transport costs of about Tk 30 per cylinder and operational expenses, selling at the fixed rate is not viable."

He insisted there is no shortage in supply.

"Gas is available in abundance. Any quantity can be supplied. The issue is pricing, not availability," he added.

Across outlets, prices differed by brand: Jamuna cylinders were selling at around Tk 1,900; Fresh, Omera and Bashundhara at Tk 2,000; and Beximco as high as Tk 2,100.

The private operators have imported about 1.86 lakh tonnes of LPG to supply in April while the monthly demand is around 1.5 lakh tonnes, according to data from the National Board of Revenue.

For low-income families, the price surge is forcing a shift back to traditional fuels.

Aklima Begum, a resident of the Korail slum in Banani, said her five-member family now relies more on wood-fired cooking.

"We use LPG only when we need to cook quickly in the morning. The rest of the time, we use a clay stove," she said.

A cylinder lasts the household about two months, while wood costs about Tk 800 per month.

"Earlier, we bought a cylinder for Tk 1,680. If it goes to Tk 2,000, we

simply cannot afford regular use. We are already struggling to manage expenses with a monthly income of Tk 18,000 to Tk 20,000."

Increased reliance on firewood has its own costs: it takes more time, produces smoke and causes eye irritation.

"But what choice do we have?" she said.

Firewood is currently selling at around Tk 20-25 per kg in local markets.

The impact is also severe on small businesses dependent on LPG.

Fuel costs are eating into already thin margins, said Dulal Hossain, who runs a tea stall in Mirpur-13.

He sells tea for Tk 5 to Tk 8. If gas prices go up, he has to raise prices to Tk 10 to Tk 12.

"Customers won't accept it," he said.

A cylinder lasts him less than a week despite operating 12 hours a day.

"With Tk 300 extra per cylinder, it's becoming difficult to survive," he added.

At a roadside eatery in Bhasantek, the owner said monthly fuel costs have surged beyond staff wages.

The eatery's monthly losses due to higher fuel costs exceed Tk 20,000. Daily fuel expenses are around Tk 3,000, which is more than the staff salaries.

But raising food prices is not an option.

"If we increase prices, customers leave. But without increasing, we incur losses," he said.

The latest price hike by BERC raised the cost of a 12kg cylinder by Tk 387 to Tk 1,728, one of the steepest increases since the regulator began monthly adjustments in April 2021.

The hike followed a nearly 45 percent surge in global LPG benchmark prices, along with higher freight and shipment costs linked to disruptions amid the ongoing US-Israel war on Iran.

However, industry players argue that the regulator's pricing does not reflect actual import costs.

Import premiums, estimated by BERC at \$120 per tonne, have surged to between \$300 and \$350, according to operators.

Before the prices were set last

week, some operators placed a note of dissent saying that the prices do not reflect the actual cost of import.

Following it, the BERC held another meeting with the operators.

BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed yesterday told The Daily Star that the regulator does not consider forward-looking freight costs while setting LPG prices, citing a lack of verifiable data from traders.

"We do not fix prices based on projected freight costs. Traders claim they are unable to book new cargo due to higher freight charges, but without concrete documents, we cannot take a forward-looking approach."

He also questioned the credibility of the cost data submitted by operators with the note of dissent.

"They claimed freight costs of around \$350, but the documents showed about \$150, which was later manually altered. Without clear and reliable information, it is very difficult to make decisions."

The regulator is open to revisiting prices more frequently if justified by evidence.

"We have told traders that prices can be reviewed every 10 days if needed. If actual cargo arrives and verified freight costs — say \$150 — are established, adjustments can be made within five days."

No final decision has been taken yet, he said, adding that the issue will be discussed again early next week.

If the war situation eases, freight costs may also decline.

Adherence to the BERC's fixed price is mandatory, and the regulator will seek stronger monitoring through district administrations, Ahmed added.

In a statement yesterday, LPG Operators' Association of Bangladesh acknowledged reports that LPG is being sold at prices above the government-fixed rates in various parts of the country.

It said bottling companies are supplying cylinders at regulated rates and urged distributors and retailers to comply.

The Department of National Consumer Rights Protection and deputy commissioners have already been instructed to take action against irregularities, according to the statement.

World breathes a sigh of relief

FROM PAGE 1

"Bangladesh hopes that all parties involved will respect the ceasefire and utilise this opportunity constructively to work towards a durable and sustainable resolution and restore lasting peace and stability across the region," said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement yesterday.

"Bangladesh reiterates that all disputes can and should be resolved peacefully through dialogue and diplomacy."

Former chief adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus also hailed the truce, urging world leaders to take "firm and effective measures to uphold international law".

"This is not merely a regional crisis; it is a moral challenge for all humankind... Now, more than ever, the world must come together... This is not merely about geopolitics or power; it is about the future of human civilisation. We must choose peace over war, dialogue over attacks, and unity over division," he said in a statement.

China welcomed the ceasefire, underlining its role in encouraging a deal between the US and Iran to pause hostilities.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news conference that Foreign Minister Wang Yi had held 26 calls with counterparts from warring countries while Beijing's Middle East envoy had "shuttled across" the war-torn region.

Beijing would "continue to make efforts to ease the situation and achieve a complete end to the war".

US President Donald Trump, who announced the truce, said he believed China helped push Iran into negotiating the ceasefire.

Russia said the approach of a "one-track, aggressive, unprovoked attack" against Iran suffered a "crushing defeat".

Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and the deputy chair of Russia's Security Council said the ceasefire showed that common sense has prevailed, but that "there'll be no cheap oil" going forward.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on X that he supports Trump's decision to suspend strikes on Iran, and the "US effort to ensure that Iran no longer poses a nuclear, missile and terror threat to America, Israel, Iran's Arab neighbours and the world".

Netanyahu said, however, that the ceasefire does "not include Lebanon", where Israeli forces have launched a ground invasion and are fighting with the Iran-aligned Hezbollah.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun welcomed the truce, adding that Beirut "continued efforts to ensure that the regional peace includes Lebanon in a stable and lasting manner."

Pakistan, which led efforts to reach the ceasefire, was optimistic that this was the turning point needed in the war.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed the "much-needed de-escalation."

Urging parties to uphold truce terms to "achieve sustainable peace in the region", EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas called the deal "a step back from the brink after weeks of escalation".

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said, "The Spanish government will not applaud those who set the world on fire just because they turn up with a bucket."

Sanchez said ceasefires were always welcome news, but added that "momentary relief must not make us forget the chaos, the destruction and the lives lost" while calling for "diplomacy, international law and PEACE" to prevail.

India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that it welcomed the ceasefire and expected that unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the truce "will bring a moment of relief to the region and the world" as he headed to the region.

French President Emmanuel Macron called the ceasefire "a very good thing" and that Paris hoped it "will be fully respected throughout the region" and that it "fully includes Lebanon."

Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz urged a "durable end to the war in the next days," adding "this can only be achieved by diplomacy."

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told reporters that Tokyo sees the development as a "positive move" and it awaits a "final agreement".

Meanwhile, the Saudi foreign ministry said it hoped the truce "will represent an opportunity to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable de-escalation" and enhance the security of the region.

Qatar's foreign ministry said the truce was "an initial step toward de-escalation" and urged Iran "to immediately cease all hostile acts and practices that undermine regional stability."

United Arab Emirates presidential adviser Anwar Gargash said in a post on X that "The UAE emerged victorious from a war we sincerely sought to avoid."

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong issued a joint statement welcoming the news and expressing their hopes that the deal will lead to a long-lasting resolution.

Ukraine welcomed the ceasefire, with Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha calling for similar "decisiveness" by Washington in stopping Russia's war on his country.

BSF shoots Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladeshi crossed the zero-line late at night and entered about 500 yards inside Indian territory. They were attempting to cut the barbed wire fence. At that time, members of the Satgram camp of India's 156 BSF Battalion, who were on patrol, fired one round into the air to disperse the trespassers.

As they did not retreat, BSF members opened fire on them. A man was shot and fell to the ground, while the others fled, he said.

Later, BSF members rescued the injured Bangladeshi and took him to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead, Lt Col Fazle Munim added.

The commanding officer said, "We have spoken with the BSF. It has been confirmed that one Bangladeshi was killed in the firing. The body is currently at a hospital in India."

A flag meeting between BGB and BSF officials was underway when the report was filed at 7:00pm yesterday regarding the return of Ali Hossain's body.

Earlier on Monday, a Bangladeshi man was injured by rubber bullets fired by the BSF after he "mistakenly" entered into Indian territory while cutting grass for cattle along with the Rahmatpur Gatiar Vita area under Patgram upazila.

Following that incident, locals became agitated and detained an Indian citizen along with his cattle, bringing them into Bangladesh.

Hours later, the Indian citizen and his cattle were handed back to the BSF through a flag meeting, where BGB lodged a strong protest over the shooting.

Tamim's first move: Cricketers get pay boost

STAR SPORTS DESK

The 11-member ad hoc committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), led by Tamim Iqbal, yesterday announced a significant increase in women cricketers' domestic match fees, among several key decisions taken at its first official meeting – held a day after assuming charge following the dissolution of the Aminul Islam Bulbul-led board.

Women cricketers will now receive Tk 10,000 for T20s, Tk 15,000 for one-dayers, and Tk 20,000 for longer formats.

Salaries for 30-35 contracted women cricketers have been raised from Tk 30,000 to Tk 40,000 per month.

For men's cricketers, Category A salaries have been increased to Tk 65,000 (from Tk 35,000), Category B to Tk 50,000 (from Tk 30,000), and Category C to Tk 40,000 (from Tk 25,000) per month.

Match fees for four-day games in the National Cricket League (NCL) and Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) have been raised from Tk 70,000 to Tk 100,000.

The committee will immediately meet Dhaka Premier League teams to find a quick solution to start the competition.

In line with government austerity measures amid the recent resource crisis, match timings for Bangladesh's upcoming white-ball series against New Zealand will be adjusted.

No shortcuts to leadership

EKUSH TAPADER

The latest developments surrounding Bangladesh cricket and the newly formed ad hoc committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) raise a familiar, uncomfortable question: will the dream of a politics-free sports arena ever move beyond being a hollow slogan?

The fall of the Awami League government on August 5, 2024, was hoped to be a turning point for the country's cricket, but now it appears to be yet another chapter in a long history of power struggles, political interference and administrative failures.

The dissolution of the Aminul Islam Bulbul-led board on Tuesday by the National Sports Council (NSC), following an inquiry on allegations of electoral irregularities in last year's BCB polls, was executed with remarkable speed.

While efficiency in governance is often welcome, such swiftness in a system otherwise plagued by delays naturally invites skepticism over whether this is a genuine attempt at reform, or simply another reshuffling of power.

Ironically, the very cricketers once celebrated as national heroes have become central figures in cricket's administrative decline. The transition from on-field excellence to off-field leadership has proven far more challenging than anticipated.

Names like Bulbul, Akram Khan, Khaled Mahmud Sujon, Faruque Ahmed, Naimur Rahman Durjoy once inspired millions with their performances. Yet, in administrative roles they have largely failed to deliver meaningful change, often becoming entangled in controversy and power politics.



PHOTO: AI GENERATED

The idea that former cricketers would naturally uplift the system was always somewhat romantic.

In 2013, under BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon, increasing the quota for cricketer-category councillors was seen as a progressive step. However, more representation did not translate into better governance. Instead, it exposed a harsh truth: sporting brilliance does not automatically equate to administrative competence.

Perhaps more concerning is how many of these former players have willingly – or reluctantly – become part of undemocratic practices.

Faruque, once admired for his principled stance as a chief selector,

eventually succumbed to the same pressures he once resisted.

His tenure as BCB president saw increasing alignment with political directives during the time of the interim government. What began as a promise of integrity ended in compromise and eventual removal.

The story repeated itself with Bulbul. Entering with a promise of a short, election-focused tenure, he instead became embroiled in one of the most controversial elections in BCB history.

His sudden exit, followed by the equally abrupt appointment of Tamim, underscores a troubling pattern of leadership changes driven not by transparent processes, but by shifting

political winds.

Tamim's appointment, accompanied by a committee with clear political affiliations, further weakens the argument that sports administration is moving toward independence.

The presence of politically connected individuals, combined with scenes of slogan-chanting crowds at the BCB premises during Tamim's first press conference after assuming the role, doesn't paint a pretty picture.

At the heart of this crisis lies the fundamental issue of legitimacy. Individuals assuming power not through robust democratic processes, but through endorsements, alignments, and, at times, outright intervention by powerful actors undermines institutional credibility and erodes public trust.

Former cricketers, in particular, need to be wary of their role in this cycle as their legacy as players is at risk of being overshadowed by their failures as administrators and their participation in questionable practices damages the very sport they once elevated.

If there is any lesson to be drawn from this ongoing saga, it is clear: true reform cannot come from recycled power structures or politically influenced appointments. It must emerge from transparent, democratic processes where accountability is paramount.

Tamim now stands at a critical juncture. Unlike his predecessors, he still has the opportunity to break the cycle. But doing so will demand a genuine commitment to democracy, independence and integrity.

Otherwise, the question will persist, louder than ever: is a politics-free sports arena in Bangladesh nothing more than an illusion?



Neuer, Raya steal the spotlight

AGENCIES

On a night when Europe held its breath, two goalkeepers stood tall between dreams and despair. In the roaring stage of the Champions League quarterfinals, it wasn't just goals that told the story – it was the saves, the defining moments, and the voices that followed.

In Madrid, under the blazing lights of the Santiago Bernabeu, Manuel Neuer delivered a performance that felt timeless. Guarding Bayern Munich's net, he faced relentless pressure from Real Madrid.

Early on, Vinicius Junior broke through, but Neuer rushed out to block bravely. Then came Kylian Mbappe – again and again – each attempt denied. A low drive was pushed away, while a curling effort was tipped wide, drawing gasps from the crowd.

Even Neuer acknowledged the danger: "You know how dangerous Real Madrid are... they had plenty of chances and could've scored more." Still, he stood firm.

Goals from Luis Diaz and Harry Kane put Bayern ahead, but it was Neuer's heroics that preserved the lead.

On the sidelines, Vincent Kompany praised the veteran: "At this level, you need special performances... and today we had that." He also highlighted Neuer's longevity, noting that few goalkeepers can maintain such standards for so long.

The display has reignited talk of a possible national team return ahead of the World Cup in June. The 40-year-old, who retired from international football in 2024, has been back in discussions among German fans.

However, Neuer dismissed the speculation. "We're not talking about the national team now," he said. "I've said my piece – my focus is on Bayern."

While Neuer dominated in Madrid, another hero emerged in Lisbon.

At the Estadio Jose Alvalade, David Raya produced a match-defining performance for Arsenal against Sporting. The standout moment came when Maxi Araujo unleashed a powerful strike, only for Raya to fly across goal and tip it onto the crossbar.

"I think that's a turning point," Raya said. "It's one of those moments that can change games."

He followed it up with more crucial interventions – smothering a low effort from Geny Catamo and later reacting sharply to push away a dangerous header.

His teammates were full of praise. Kai Havertz called him "unbelievable... the best keeper in the world," while Mikel Arteta described him as "phenomenal and extraordinary."

When Havertz scored the late winner, it felt like a fitting reward for Raya's brilliance.

All about KANE

When it mattered most, the expected difference-makers delivered. Harry Kane lit up the Santiago Bernabeu with the goal of the night – a precise, right-footed curler from outside the box that nestled into the bottom-left corner beyond Andriy Lunin – to seal Bayern Munich's 2-1 win over Real Madrid in the Champions League quarterfinal first leg yesterday. Michael Olise set up Kane for Bayern's second after Luis Diaz had given the visitors the lead, while Kylian Mbappe pulled one back in the second half for the home side. Kane's strike was his 49th in just 41 matches across all competitions this season, keeping him well ahead in the European Golden Shoe race, with Mbappe on his trail with 39 in 37. It was also Kane's 11th Champions League goal this term, second only to Mbappe's 14.

Bayern's victory was their first over Real since April 2012, ending a nine-game winless run against the record 15-time UCL champions in the competition (D2 L7).

This was only the sixth time Real have lost the home first leg of a European Cup/Champions League knockout tie, and the first since their 2-1 loss to Manchester City in the 2019-20 round of 16. They failed to progress in each of the previous five such ties.



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

All or nothing for Bangladesh against Hong Kong

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national hockey team, who finished among the top two in the last three Asian Games qualifiers, now find themselves on the brink of elimination – or qualification – for the 2026 Asian Games, depending on the outcome of today's crucial clash against Hong Kong in Thailand.

The 2014 champions, who finished runners-up to Oman in 2018 and 2022, failed to reach the semifinals this time after being held to a 1-1 draw by Uzbekistan in their third and final pool match.

With the top six teams from the nine-team qualifiers securing berths for September's Asian Games in Japan, Bangladesh have been pushed into the fifth-to-eighth place classification matches. Victory over Hong Kong is now their only route to qualification – a stage Bangladesh have never previously failed to reach.

Putting aside their recent struggles, Bangladesh are focused on delivering in

this must-win encounter. Historically, they have enjoyed a strong record against Hong Kong, remaining unbeaten in their last five meetings since 2012, including identical 5-1 wins in the 2014 and 2018 Asian Games qualifiers.

"Our backs are now against the wall, and there is no alternative but to win against Hong Kong," said forward Rakibul Hasan Rocky, adding that failure to qualify would be a major setback for Bangladesh hockey.

"However, we are ready to give our maximum because we are determined to win at any cost," he said. "We may have beaten Hong Kong in the past, but there are no small teams now as all sides have improved. Still, we want to keep our unbeaten run intact, even though Hong Kong have also performed well in this tournament."

Hong Kong have shown resilience in the ongoing qualifiers, pushing stronger sides like Oman in a narrow 2-1 defeat and putting up competitive performances against Indonesia, Kazakhstan and Thailand.



63 DAYS TO GO



Four names, 13 World Cups

Across 13 FIFA World Cup appearances, Serbia have amassed 63 points from 49 matches (18 wins and nine draws). Remarkably, they have competed under four different names: as Yugoslavia (eight times), FR Yugoslavia (1998), Serbia and Montenegro (2006), and Serbia in the three most recent editions (2010, 2018, and 2022).

** Visit The Daily Star's website to also read: From leather to chip: The historical evolution of the World Cup ball.



Struggling for form, Bangladesh captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz appears to be trying something different during the Tigers' practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Miraz, who has failed to cross the fifty-run mark in his last six ODI innings, will be hoping to turn his fortunes around when he leads Bangladesh in a three-match ODI series at home against New Zealand, starting on April 17.

PHOTO: BCB

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Ratify key human rights ordinances

13 global orgs urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirteen international human rights organisations have urged the government to urgently pass the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Ordinance and the Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress Ordinance in parliament to prevent them from expiring.

In a joint statement issued last night, the organisations, including ARTICLE 19, Human Rights Watch, and CIVICUS, expressed deep concern over a reported government move to let the ordinances lapse and introduce fresh bills in parliament at a later stage.

"Such action would effectively eliminate the revitalised NHRC, with five newly appointed commissioners, which now has strengthened authority and independence to investigate abuses and guard against impunity.

"Rather than allowing the ordinances to lapse, any amendments by the government should be made to

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Preparations for the Pahela Baishakh procession are in full swing at Dhaka University's Faculty of Fine Arts. Alongside students, actress Bipasha Hayat joined in painting and decoration activities yesterday.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Audit uncovers embezzlement of Tk 3,088 crore

Links ex-chairman HBM Iqbal, sons

MD MEHEDI HASAN

An audit has found that Tk 3,088 crore was misappropriated from Premier Bank between 2018 and September 2025 through inflated office rent, misuse of CSR allocations, manipulation of general ledger entries, abuse of procurement processes, and false renovation claims.

The findings emerged from an investigation into alleged fund embezzlement involving the bank's Head Office General Services Division, Financial Administration Division, and Banani branch.

The audit identified former chairman HBM Iqbal; his sons Moin Iqbal and Imran Iqbal, both former directors; several other former directors; and a number of former top officials, including managing directors, as directly or indirectly involved.

Conducted by MABS & J Partners, Chartered Accountants, the forensic audit was commissioned by an investigation committee approved by the current board following a Bangladesh Bank directive in August 2025.

The committee submitted its report in January 2026. Based on the findings, Premier Bank has recently filed multiple lawsuits seeking recovery of the allegedly

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CEASEFIRE IN MIDDLE EAST Fuel supply relief likely weeks away

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

The two-week ceasefire in the US-Israel war on Iran may not have an immediate impact on Bangladesh's fuel supply situation.

Any noticeable improvement in supply could take several weeks, according to officials of the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation and the energy ministry.



Although the ceasefire may improve supply conditions slightly, the market will not return to normal in the short term, said M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser at the Consumers Association of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is exposed to several risks, including the likelihood of having to purchase fuel at higher prices, he said. Contracts were in place in March to import a total of 440,000 tonnes of diesel, 200,000 tonnes of crude oil, 47,000 tonnes of jet fuel and 25,000 tonnes of furnace oil across 17 parcels, shows BPC data.

Of these, 10 parcels were delivered, bringing in 253,000

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ABU SAYED KILLING Tribunal to deliver verdict today



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 is set to deliver its verdict today in the crimes against humanity case over the killing of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) student Abu Sayed during the July 2024 uprising.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Md Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, fixed the date on March 5 after the prosecution and the defence concluded their arguments in the case on January 28.

Thirty people, including former BRUR vice chancellor Hasibur Rashid and former Rangpur Metropolitan Police (RMP) commissioner Md Moniruzzaman, stand accused in the case. They

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NOMINATIONS FOR WOMEN'S JS SEATS BNP still sorting, Jamaat all set

SAJJAD HOSSAIN and MAMUNUR RASHID

BNP is still struggling to finalise its nominees for the Jatiya Sangsad seats reserved for women, as a large number of leaders are seeking nominations, whereas Jamaat-e-Islami has completed its preparations and is ready to name its candidates for the 13th parliament.

The Election Commission yesterday announced the election schedule for the 50 seats, with voting slated for May 12.

Several thousand applicants from BNP have submitted their documents, describing their roles in past movements, loyalty to the party, and organisational work, and the party is verifying the papers.

To pick the nominees, the party is considering two methods, reviewing nomination forms and conducting interviews before the high command finalises the names and selecting candidates from the list directly.

Jamaat's women central committee, meanwhile, has finalised its list prioritising those who can play an effective role in parliament and meet public

expectations.

Jamaat is giving preference to nominees from areas where the party lost so that those places can have representation in parliament. It will not nominate family members of its lawmakers.

Several BNP leaders suggested that the nominees might include a mix of senior and young leaders, but leaning mostly towards the young.



The EC said BNP and its alliance will have 36 seats, Jamaat and its partners 13, and six independent candidates, who forged an alliance, will get one seat.

Stating that those who made sacrifices on the streets will get priority, Jatiya Sangsad Chief Whip Nurul Islam Moni said, "The constitution allows the prime minister to select any woman as a member of parliament.

"The leader of the House

will surely make decisions by considering those who have experience in politics and who can play a role in parliament," the BNP lawmaker told The Daily Star.

Contacted, Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, Jamaat's assistant secretary general, said, "We have already finalised the candidates. We will also accommodate qualified candidates from key regions like Chattogram, Khulna, Barishal, and Sylhet."

Talking to reporters, seven BNP aspirants said they have been in regular contact with senior party leaders over the last two months, highlighting their roles during the anti-government movement and ability to contribute in the House.

Many of the leaders are also hopeful that the party will evaluate their contributions fairly and consider their experience, loyalty, and grassroots work while deciding the nominations.

Speaking to this newspaper, BNP Assistant Secretary Nilufar Chowdhury Moni said, "I tried to

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BSF shoots Bangladeshi man dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A Bangladeshi man was shot dead, allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF), along the Dhabolguri border in Patgram upazila of Lalmonirhat early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Ali Hossain, 41, from Dhabolguri Purbo Paniartari village in Patgram upazila. His body is currently at a hospital in India.

The incident took place near sub-pillar no. 5 of main border pillar no. 874 at Dhabolguri border, about 500 yards inside the Indian territory, around 3:00am.

BGB 61 Teesta Battalion Commanding Officer Lt Col Syed Fazle Munim confirmed the aforementioned details.

Quoting phone conversations with the BSF, the BGB official said that seven to eight

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MEASLES VACCINATION Govt fast-tracks nationwide drive

Move comes as cases surge across the country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has advanced the launch of a special measles and rubella vaccination drive to April 20 from May 3 as measles cases continue to surge.

Health Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Hossain announced the decision in parliament yesterday.

Earlier, on April 5, while inaugurating the emergency measles and rubella vaccination drive for 30 highly affected upazilas, he said the special campaign in four city corporations would begin on April 12, followed by a nationwide campaign from May 3.

The special drive in four city corporations – Dhaka North, Dhaka South, Mymensingh, and Barishal – will begin as announced earlier, Shahriar Sajjad, deputy director of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation, said.

He said a meeting with the health minister and top officials yesterday morning considered all aspects, particularly the sharp rise in measles cases, and decided to bring forward the nationwide campaign to April 20.

Sajjad added that, according to earlier estimates, 1.99 crore children aged six months to under five years were supposed to be covered by the nationwide drive.

"However, as the emergency drive in 30 upazilas has already begun, and the drives in the four city corporations are set to begin on April 12, the children covered under those drives will be deducted from the nationwide campaign."

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Ten-month-old Jafrin (in the foreground) was admitted to a hospital in Ramganj, Noakhali, on March 26 with a cold and fever. As her condition worsened, she was referred to Dhaka. After failing to find a bed at Dhaka Shishu Hospital and Dhaka Medical College Hospital, she was finally admitted to the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Mohakhali on April 2. Doctors there confirmed she had measles. Yesterday, her twin brother, Jarif (in the background), was also diagnosed with the disease.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Police recover bodies of 13 slaughtered horses

One rescued alive; probe underway

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Police recovered the bodies of 13 slaughtered horses and rescued one alive from an abandoned house in Anarpura village of Munshiganj's Gazaria upazila yesterday.

According to police, locals had been noticing suspicious movement near the house, located close to Anarpura bus station, for around six months.

Villager Tofazzal Miaji said, "A group of us went to the house this morning [yesterday] to see what was going on... Sensing our presence, those who were inside the house fled, leaving the horses' bodies behind. We then informed the police."

Police rushed to the spot and recovered the 13 bodies and rescued one horse alive. "We believe it [the living horse] was also kept

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