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16 PAGES PLUS CAMPUS: Tk 15.00



Rancon Auto, Mitsubishi to make cars locally

B1



No headway in Sagar-Runi murder probe

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Nepal home minister quits after weeks in office

P5



'Beauty' of pitch puzzle awaits series decider

P11

Hormuz crisis further deepens

Iran seizes two ships for maritime violations after Trump extends ceasefire; US blockade to continue

Trump says talks could be held in next three days

Oil price jumps to \$101 a barrel

Iran parades ballistic missiles in Tehran

Iran president blames US for talks impasse

AGENCIES

Uncertainty over the Strait of Hormuz deepened yesterday after Iran's Revolutionary Guards seized two container ships trying to cross, hours after US President Donald Trump unilaterally extended a ceasefire to allow more time for talks.

Trump said on social media late on Tuesday that the US had agreed to a request by Pakistani mediators "to hold our attack on the Country of Iran until such time as their leaders and representatives can come up with a unified proposal ... and discussions are concluded, one way or the other."

A source briefed on the matter yesterday confirmed that Trump had not set a timeline for the extension of the ceasefire.

Despite the extension, Trump has maintained a US Navy blockade of Iran's trade by sea. Iran considers the blockade an act of war and has said that as long as it continues, it will not lift its closure of the strait, which has caused a global energy crisis.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



A factory is being built on farmland in Debitala of Khulna's Botiaghata upazila, raising concerns among locals and farmers about its impact on arable land. Locals fear the loss of farmland will threaten the livelihoods of those dependent on agriculture. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

'We are open to opposition input on fuel situation'

PM tells JS; Shafiqur proposes 'common committee'

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday told parliament that the government will consider the opposition's proposal regarding the fuel situation and, if it contains realistic measures, will certainly act on them.

Opposition leader Shafiqur Rahman earlier proposed forming a "common committee" comprising government and opposition members to address the current situation.

Also speaking in yesterday's parliamentary sitting, the Jamaat-e-Islami chief said they were ready to sit with an open heart, present their proposals to the government, but it is the government's responsibility to implement them.

The opposition also alleged that while the nation is struggling over fuel shortages, the government continues to deny the crisis with misleading claims.

The comments came during a discussion on the fuel crisis, as the opposition leader raised the issue as an urgent public matter.

The fuel crunch became an issue after the onset of the US-Israel war on Iran.

Leader of the House Tarique said, "I want to inform parliament that we will indeed invite the opposition. We will sit, we will discuss, we will examine their proposals. If there is anything realistic and implementable, we will certainly carry it out. Why wouldn't we? Because whichever side of the floor we sit on, the people of Bangladesh have sent us here to serve their interests."

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Govt sticks to old Boro price despite high production cost

SUKANTA HALDER

The government has kept Boro paddy procurement price unchanged this season, even though farmers say their cultivation costs have risen.

The food ministry will buy 5 lakh tonnes of paddy at Tk 36 per kg during the current Boro harvest season, the largest rice crop in Bangladesh. Last year's procurement target was

crop, particularly in the northeastern Haor region, where costs have climbed following a hike in diesel price.

In its latest Foreign Agricultural Service report, the US Department of Agriculture said farmers in the northern part of the country reported that labour wages were particularly high this year, especially during the peak period of rice transplantation.

Agriculture ministry estimates put the



"Even a small increase of two to three taka per kilogram could have helped farmers recover rising costs."

JAHANGIR ALAM KHAN, agricultural economist

3.5 lakh tonnes.

It will also buy 12.5 lakh tonnes of parboiled rice at Tk 49 per kg.

The nationwide procurement drive for paddy, rice, and wheat will run from May 3 to August 31, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed announced after a meeting of the Food Planning and Monitoring Committee (FPMC) at the Secretariat.

The announcement comes as farmers begin harvesting the highly irrigation-dependent

production cost of Boro at Tk 32.97 per kg this season, up marginally from Tk 32.96 last year. Farmers, however, say the figure does not reflect reality.

"I am worried about how I will cover the losses I will incur this year," said Mohammad Saidur Islam, a farmer from Azmiriganj in Habiganj, who cultivated Boro on 15 acres of land.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Soybean oil imports plunge

Importers blame unadjusted prices; minister says situation stable



SUKANTA HALDER and REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Soybean oil imports fell sharply during January-April this year compared to the same period last year, according to commerce ministry data.

Importers said they scaled back shipments because domestic prices have not been adjusted in line with international market rates. They added that continuing to sell at a loss is unsustainable, despite repeated appeals to both the current and immediate past interim governments for a price hike.

The government is trying to keep prices under control and claims that the import situation is still stable and there is no need for interference now.

According to commerce ministry documents, palm oil imports remained almost unchanged from 4.59 lakh tonnes between January 1 and April 15 last year to 4.57 lakh tonnes in the same period this year.

Soybean oil imports, however, registered a steep fall from 4.48 lakh tonnes to 2.61 lakh tonnes in this period.

Bangladesh's annual demand for edible oil stands at 24 lakh tonnes, around 90 percent of which is met through

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



TONU MURDER First arrest made 10yrs after killing

Ex-army man on 3-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Ex-army man Hafizur Rahman, a suspect in the Tonu murder case, was produced before a Cumilla court yesterday.

He is the first to be arrested after Sohagi Jahan Tonu was murdered 10 years ago.

The court placed Hafizur on a three-day remand.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Mominul Haque issued the order in the afternoon at Cumilla Sadar Cognisance Court-1 after the Police Bureau

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Farmers harvest Boro paddy on the dried-up Shib river in Tanore upazila of Rajshahi. Wearing traditional hats, they toil under the scorching summer sun, anxious about possible losses from hailstorms and not getting a fair price for their produce. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

'Gupto' graffiti spreads in univs

JCD activist, Jamaat adherent identified in photos of Tuesday's clash in Ctg

STAR REPORT

Leaders and activists of Chhatra Dal at several universities, including Dhaka University, yesterday painted graffiti on their campus to protest alleged attacks on their fellows by Islami Chhatra Shibir men at Government City College, Chattogram, on Tuesday.

Other institutions include Chittagong University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, and Jagannath University.

The clash between the two groups broke out in Chattogram after Chhatra Dal activists reportedly erased the word "student" from a graffiti and replaced it with the word "gupto" (covert).

The clash that ensued between Chhatra Dal and Chhatra Shibir left several injured.

JCD activists at DU said they went for graffiti as a form of protest against the Chattogram City College incident.

Mallik Wasi Tami, office secretary of JCD's DU unit, said the initiative was not organised by central JCD and that it was a spontaneous act of activists across several institutions.

Nasir Uddin Shawon, senior joint secretary of the DU

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



A graffiti at DU.

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Two special assistants to PM appointed



Ziauddin Saimum
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed two special assistants to the prime minister, assigning them portfolios in health and environment, according to separate gazette notifications issued by the public administration ministry yesterday.

Ziauddin Hyder has been appointed special assistant to the prime minister on health with the status of a state minister, while Saimum Parvez has been appointed special assistant on environment, forest and climate change with the status of a secretary.

A notification signed by Cabinet Secretary Nasimul SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



People stuck in traffic under scorching heat on a narrow street in Segunbagicha in Dhaka yesterday. Bikers occupy one lane while queuing for a nearby petrol pump, and roadwork by Dhaka South City Corporation has excavated another, leaving little space for commuters.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

AL-picked fertiliser dealers to be replaced

Tarique tells JS, reaffirms to repatriate laundered funds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday said all fertiliser dealers appointed during the Awami League-era will be dismissed and replaced with new ones.

He made the announcement during an unscheduled discussion in the parliament.

Earlier, Chief Whip Nurul Islam told the House that fertiliser dealers appointed under the "fascist government" were attempting to create an artificial crisis.

Urging immediate action, the chief whip called for cancellation of such dealerships and appointment of new ones so that farmers can access fertiliser at fair prices.

In reply, the prime minister, also the Leader of the House, said, "If there is consensus across the House, the government will soon take steps in this regard."

The PM also outlined a series of "time-befitting" plans undertaken by his government to develop the country's agriculture sector in the face of mounting challenges stemming from climate change, population growth, reduction of land, and technological limitations.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Govt mulls free schooling for children up to 13

Says Bobby Hajjaj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to make education free and compulsory for children aged between four and 13, as well as extend primary education up to Grade 8 in phases, State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajjaj said yesterday.

He made the remarks at a pre-budget consultation on education titled "Education Budget: Trends and Lessons", organised by Campaign for Popular Education (Campe) at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

"Children aged 4-5 years will be considered pre-primary, 6-10 for primary, and 10-13 years would take it up to Grade 8. We want to make it compulsory," Hajjaj said.

The state minister said the government was moving towards professional skill-based education so that students are better prepared for work and future livelihoods.

He also said development of a new SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



SUPER SPECIALISED HOSPITAL Long-delayed BMU facility to be fully functional soon

Says VC, blames recruitment complications for delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Super Specialised Hospital at Bangladesh Medical University (BMU), which has remained underutilised for around four years, will be made fully functional within six months, newly appointed Vice Chancellor Prof FM Siddiqui said yesterday.

Prof Saifullah Munshi, director of the 750-bed facility built at a cost of Tk 1,868 crore, said the hospital could not be fully operational due to a lack of manpower. Recruitment delays have been the main obstacle, he added.

The hospital, established with a loan from South Korea, was inaugurated in September 2022. However, no dedicated workforce has

been appointed so far, and only limited services are being provided using BMU's existing staff and budget.

The facility aims to offer world-class healthcare and reduce the need for Bangladeshis to seek



treatment abroad. It includes five specialised centres: Cardio and Cerebrovascular, Hepatobiliary and Liver Transplant, Mother and Child Healthcare, Kidney Disease and Urology, and Accident

and Emergency.

The recruitment process during the Awami League tenure was halted over allegations of corruption. An attempt was made to recruit manpower during the interim government, but it failed.

Prof Siddiqui, who took charge on April 5, said making the super specialised hospital fully functional is one of his top priorities.

Around Tk 2,000 crore has been spent to build the hospital, but it could not be made fully functional due to complexities over recruitments, said the BMU VC.

"Changes will come within three to six months, and the hospital will become dynamic within this time," he said while SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Dhaka district gets its first female DC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Farida Khanom, a deputy secretary at the Ministry of Home Affairs, has been appointed deputy commissioner (DC) of Dhaka, becoming the first woman to hold the post.

The Ministry of Public Administration issued a notification yesterday through its Field Administration-2 branch confirming the appointment.

Farida is currently serving in the Public Security Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

She will replace incumbent Dhaka DC Rezaul Karim. As of filing SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER CASE No headway in probe even 1.5yrs since HC directive

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Even after around one and half years since a High Court directive, the taskforce formed by the government has yet to come up with any breakthrough in its investigation into the killings of journalist couple Sagar Sarwar and Meherun Runi.

Meanwhile, the High Court is scheduled to hold a hearing and pass an order today on a government's petition involving the investigation into the murders.

"There is no significant progress [of the investigation]. That's all I can say," Md Mustafa Kamal, additional inspector general of police and chief of the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI), who is leading the taskforce, told this correspondent recently.

Asked whether more time would be sought from the HC to complete the investigation, Kamal said, "I can't say that right now. It can only be said after discussions with the government."

He, however, said the taskforce is scheduled to submit a progress report on the investigation to the HC through the Attorney General's Office during today's hearing.

Earlier, the Detective Branch of Police and SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



No consensus yet on revised transport fare

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite several rounds of discussions, the government and transport owners have yet to reach consensus over revising bus fares following the recent fuel price hike.

While government officials say they are trying to keep fares tolerable for passengers, transport owners have pushed for an increase of 28 paisa per kilometre, citing rising operational costs.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Shaikh Rabiul Alam yesterday said no decision has been made yet.

"A final decision will be taken after tomorrow's [Thursday's] meeting with all stakeholders," he said.

A ministry official, speaking anonymously, said the delay stems from the government's intention to keep transport fares unchanged.

Transport owners, however, urged a quick fare adjustment, saying that rising diesel prices, a stronger US dollar, and higher costs for parts and maintenance have pushed up operating expenses.

Saiful Alam, secretary of the Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association, said, "The recent fuel price hike has significantly increased our SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



Farmers queue with containers and tractors at a filling station in the Medical Intersection area of Rajshahi's Mohanganj yesterday as they continue to struggle for fuel amid a nationwide crisis triggered by the Middle East conflict.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Biman eyes fleet expansion to 47 aircraft by 2034-35

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines is eyeing a significant fleet expansion, aiming to increase its total number of aircraft to 47 by the 2034-35 fiscal year, with a focus on potential Boeing acquisitions.

The roadmap for this expansion was discussed in detail during a meeting held at the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism yesterday.

The discussion reviewed the integration of Boeing aircraft into the current fleet, as well as initiatives previously undertaken by the former government regarding aircraft procurement.

Biman currently operates a fleet of 19 aircraft, including 14 from Boeing. Under the new plan, the carrier will buy eight Boeing 787-10 Dreamliners, two Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners and four Boeing 737-8 MAX aircraft.

During negotiations over the 37 percent reciprocal tariff imposed by the US last year, the Ministry of Commerce had mentioned plans to order 25 Boeing aircraft.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

UPAZILA LEVEL
Ten Ansar
members at
each health
complex soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will soon deploy 10 Ansar members to each upazila health complex to ensure safety and security, said Health Minister Sardar Md Sakawat Husain yesterday.

He was talking to reporters after attending a programme at Bangladesh Medical University.

The minister said the Ansar members would be deployed within the next few days, in line with a decision taken at a meeting with the prime minister.

The move comes

days after doctors, at a conference of upazila health and family planning officers on April 18, in presence of the PM, raised security concerns.

The health ministry has written to the finance ministry seeking approval to appoint 4,950 Ansar members for deployment at 495 health complexes.

According to the letter,

it would cost around Tk 150 crore annually to hire the Ansar personnel.

**PRAYER
TIMING**
APRIL 23

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:25	12:45	4:45	6:27	8:00
JAMAAT 5:00	1:15	5:00	6:31	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

‘My income stops,
but expenses don’t’

Patuakhali fishers seek cash support from
government amid 58-day ban on fishing

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

The familiar roar of fishing trawlers has fallen silent along Patuakhali's coast as a 58-day government ban on fishing in the Bay of Bengal takes effect – an essential step for conserving marine resources, but one that is simultaneously straining the livelihoods of fishing communities and intensifying their financial hardship.

At the Mahipur-Alipur fisheries hubs and Kuakata beach channel, rows of idle trawlers now line the shore. Fishermen, instead of heading to sea, pass time mending nets or repairing boats, tasks that bring no income.

The restriction, aimed at ensuring the safe breeding of hilsa and other marine species, came into force on April 14 and will remain in effect until June 11.

For many, the timing has compounded hardship, coming just as fishers were beginning to recover from a prolonged fuel crisis.

“I have been fishing since childhood. I don't know any other work. Income has stopped, but expenses haven't,” said Rafique Majhi, 52, the sole earner of a six-member family.

Struggling to meet daily needs and his children's education costs, Rafique has taken loans of nearly Tk 2 lakh from local lenders, while continuing to repay NGO instalments. “Government support should come at the very beginning of the ban. Without suspending loan repayments, it will be difficult

for us to survive,” he added.

Faruk Majhi, 40, said assistance in the form of rice is inadequate. “We are supposed to receive 80kg of rice, but in reality, we get less. And rice alone is not enough, there are costs for oil, lentils, and medicine,” he said, suggesting at least Tk 5,000 in cash support is

fish landing centre.

Fish trader Abdul Jalil Gharami noted that traders, who often provide advance payments to fishermen, are under pressure as well. “We were already struggling with the fuel crisis. Now the ban has added to our difficulties,” he said.



Trawlers remain anchored in Mohipur-Alipur fish landing station area in Patuakhali.

PHOTO: STAR

needed.

“Debts are rising and fish stocks are declining. I am thinking of leaving this profession and learning to drive a rickshaw,” Faruk added.

The impact extends beyond fishermen. Workers at landing centres and traders who depend on the sector are also struggling. “We are forced to rely on borrowing to run our households,” said Kabir Hossain, an employee at Mahipur

According to the District Fisheries Office, 63,155 registered fishermen in Patuakhali are affected, with 53,750 covered under the Vulnerable Group Feeding programme. Each is set to receive 77kg of rice in phases during the ban.

District Fisheries Officer Bijon Kumar Nandi said a proposal has been sent to the higher authorities to provide fishers with cash assistance alongside rice.

Gunmen
open fire on
river police
in Kushtia,
six injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Pabna

Six people, including five members of River Police, were injured when gunmen opened fire on a patrol team during a raid on the Padma in Kushtia early Wednesday, police said.

Pabna Superintendent of Police Md Anwar Zahid said a team from Lakshmikunda River Police Camp in Ishwardi, led by Inspector Shafikul Islam, was conducting routine patrol in the Haripur area.

“As the team reached Haripur point, a group of criminals suddenly opened fire,” the SP said, adding that five officers and the boatman were injured.

The injured were identified as Inspector Shafikul Islam and police personnel Inamul Haque, Shahinur Haque, Nazmul Hasan and Manik Miah.

Shahinur Haque, who suffered a critical gunshot injury to his eye, was taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

The SP said Pabna, Kushtia and the River Police personnel will conduct drives to arrest those responsible.

PILOT PROJECT
Govt to give
free jute bags,
uniforms to
primary students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will distribute bags made of jute and uniforms to primary school students in every upazila across the country.

The decision came at a meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, at the Secretariat yesterday, said Atiqur Rahman Ruman, the PM's additional press secretary.

Ruman said representatives from three ministries – primary and mass education, textiles and jute, and local government – attended the meeting.

It was decided that students of two primary schools in each upazila will receive bags made of jute under a pilot programme.

He said the initiative has been taken to protect the jute industry and reduce environmental pollution.

After the meeting, Prime Minister's Office Spokesperson Mahdi Amin told journalists that the programme will begin in July in two schools in each upazila, with local administration selecting the institutions for the pilot phase.

He said one lakh students will receive the bags and uniforms free of cost in the first month.

The programme will be expanded gradually to include all primary schools.

He said the initiative follows the prime minister's directive to promote “Made in Bangladesh” products and aims to reduce inequality among students.

LGRD State Minister Mir Shahe Alam said the programme will be implemented jointly by the three ministries.

State Minister for Textiles and Jute Shariful Alam said the government aims to revive the jute industry and curb plastic pollution by promoting eco-friendly products among students.

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ADDENDUM NOTICE

Ref: 28/2026 Dated: 23/04/2026

Amendment of Local Tender no. 28/2026 for Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning (SITC) of HVAC System for Extended Bank Note Printing Hall at SPCBL, Gazipur

This is for information to all concerned that the above-mentioned tender, originally published on 02/04/2026, has been amended with the approval of the competent authority following the Pre-Tender Meeting held on 16/04/2026.

The amendments include changes in the following sections of the Tender Document:

1 Civil Works (Foundation/Plinth) of Chiller	2 Page No. 31, ITT Sub-Clause 14.1 (b)	3 BoQ Item No. 3, Page No. 98
4 BoQ Item No. 4, Page No. 99	5 BoQ Item No. 2, Page No. 97	6 BoQ Items No. 4, Page Nos. 98-102
7 BoQ Items No. 10.1 to 10.9, Page No. 113	8 Page No. 36, ITT Sub-Clauses 42.3, 42.4 & 48.1	

The detailed Addendum Notice may be viewed/downloaded from the following link: <https://spcbl.org.bd/pages/tenders>

All other terms and conditions of the Tender Document shall remain unchanged.

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FOR DETAILS

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Biman eyes fleet

FROM PAGE 3

The move primarily aimed at reducing Bangladesh's trade deficit with the US and to seek relief from the tariff burden.

Through negotiations, the tariff rate was reduced to 20 percent, effective August 1, 2025. Subsequently, the interim government signed a “trade agreement” with the US on February 9, 2026, which lowered the tariff further to 19 percent.

Earlier, during the interim government's tenure, Biman said it will buy 14 aircraft from Boeing. The first Boeing aircraft is scheduled for delivery in November 2031, while the rest are expected to arrive by October 2035, said Biman sources.

Regarding the purchase of Boeing aircraft, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Afroza Khanam said the formulation of a comprehensive action plan was needed based on route-specific revenue analysis before adding any aircraft.

She also said timely and realistic steps could turn Biman a more profitable

and passenger-friendly institution.

State Minister for Aviation and Tourism M Rashiduzzaman Millat said the activities to expedite Boeing aircraft acquisition process must be kept ongoing.

He stressed for timeliness of the supply chain and called for coordinated efforts among all concerned.

In the meeting, Biman presented its plan to operate flights on Yangon, Male and New York routes by 2026, Kunming and Bahrain route by 2028 and Sydney, Uhan, Jakarta and Seoul route by 2029.

The meeting also provided directives for necessary preparations to resume Biman's Dhaka-Narita flight operations, which remained suspended since July 1, 2025 due to “Haj flights, aircraft shortages, and business realities”, according to Biman.

জমি বিক্রয়

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Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Mymensingh.
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Memo No: 46.02.6100.000.07.002.25-1682

e-Tender Notice: 54/2025-2026

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of

No.	Package No & Scheme Name	Tender ID	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing/Opening Date & Time	Tendering Method
1	2	3	4	5	6
01	MRIDP/ISR/RD-08 Improvement of Charpabail Somaj Kollan More-Pailura GPS via Freedom Fioghter Liakatã??s House Road by BC from Ch.600-2065m under Ishwargonj Upazila District Mymensingh. [Road ID-361315140]	1256349	Date:- 10-May-2026 Time: 12:00	Date:- 10-May-2026 Time: 14:00	OTM
02	MRIDP/HAL/RD-46 Improvement of Shakuai Charpara Madrasa-Fonia Fery Ghat Road by BC from Ch.00-2500m under Haluaghat Upazila District Mymensingh. [Road ID-361244147]	1256348	Date:- 10-May-2026 Time: 12:00	Date:- 10-May-2026 Time: 14:00	OTM
03	MRIDP/HAL/RD-48 Improvement of Joinati Mohila Bazar-Shaknight River Par Road by BC from Ch.00-2000m under Haluaghat Upazila District Mymensingh.[Road ID-361244169]	1256347	Date:- 10-May-2026 Time: 12:00	Date:- 10-May-2026 Time: 14:00	OTM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The e-Tender Security must be submitted before last Date & Time from the National e-GP System portal and have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches respectively. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocurement.gov.bd)also from E-mail: xen.mymensingh@lged.gov.bd or Cell to 02-996664365. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders/Proposals / Pre-Qualifications / EOIs

Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

(Salman Rahman Rasel)
Executive Engineer
Phone: 02-996664365
xen.mymensingh@lged.gov.bd

GD-895

EU unblocks \$106b loan for Ukraine after Hungary row

AFP, Brussels

The EU yesterday gave the green light to block a 90-billion-euro (\$106 billion) loan for Kyiv, after the deadlock was broken in a months-long row between Ukraine and Hungary over a damaged pipeline.

Diplomats said the definitive sign-off should come by today as Budapest waits for Russian oil to arrive through the Druzhba pipeline after Kyiv said operations had restarted.

The bitter feud over the pipeline pitted Hungary's nationalist premier Viktor Orban against Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, stalling the vitally needed funds for Kyiv.

Resolving the standoff will allow Brussels to start paying out the loan in the coming months that Ukraine requires to plug its budget four years into Moscow's invasion.

Kremlin-friendly Orban – who suffered a crushing election defeat this month – had vowed that he would not budge until Ukraine repaired the pipeline.

Attacks in Lebanon strain ceasefire on eve of talks

Hezbollah and Israel accuse each other of ceasefire violations

REUTERS, Beirut/Jerusalem

An Israeli strike killed two people in southern Lebanon yesterday, Lebanon's state news agency reported, and Hezbollah said it launched an attack drone at Israeli forces in the south, further straining a ceasefire between the Iran-backed group and Israel.

On the eve of talks in Washington between Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors, Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said Beirut would seek an extension of the 10-day, US-mediated ceasefire, which is set to expire on Sunday.

Hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel reignited on March 2, when the Lebanese group opened fire in support of Iran.

The US-brokered ceasefire in Lebanon emerged separately from Washington's efforts to resolve its conflict with Tehran, though Iran had called for Lebanon to be included in any broader truce. The United States has denied any link between the tracks.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said the Israeli strike hit a car in al-Tiri, a village in south Lebanon, killing two people inside. The Israeli military didn't immediately respond to a request



for comment.

Hezbollah said it attacked an Israeli artillery position in southern Lebanon with a drone, in response to what it said was an Israeli violation of the ceasefire. The Israeli military said it had intercepted "a hostile aircraft" launched by Hezbollah towards Israeli soldiers in south Lebanon.

More than 2,400 people have been killed in Lebanon since Israel launched an offensive in response to Hezbollah's March 2 attack, according to Lebanese authorities. Israel has seized a belt of territory

at the border where its troops remain, saying it aims to create a buffer zone to shield northern Israel from attacks by Hezbollah, which fired hundreds of rockets at Israel during the conflict.

Israeli attacks on Lebanon also damaged or destroyed more than 62,000 housing units in the country, a government estimate found yesterday.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is set to attend today's meeting. Israel will be represented by its ambassador to Washington, Yechiel Leiter.

MANDELSON ROW UK PM says he won't resign

AFP, London

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer yesterday insisted he would not resign, claiming allegations of misleading MPs over his appointment of a party loyalist as UK envoy to Washington had been "put to bed".

Starmer's remarks in parliament came as the beleaguered premier faced fresh calls to step down over his admitted error of judgement in appointing veteran former politician Peter Mandelson to the coveted post.

The premier spoke to lawmakers a day after the foreign ministry's most senior official, Olly Robbins, gave evidence to a parliamentary committee, having been fired by Starmer over the affair last week.

Starmer has accused Robbins of failing to tell him about problems that emerged during Mandelson's security clearance.

Starmer told MPs that Robbins clearly answered "no" when asked if he had shared the recommendation "with me, number 10 or any other ministers".

"That puts to bed all the allegations levelled at me ... in relation to dishonesty," he said.

The exact nature of the risks raised by vetting officials has not been made public. Robbins has said that they did not relate to Mandelson's relationship with late US sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Nepal home boss quits after weeks in office

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's home minister stepped down yesterday over growing criticism of his finances, the second member of the cabinet to leave the new government just weeks after it was formed.

Sudan Gurung, a key figure in the Gen-Z protests in September that toppled Nepal's previous government, said he was leaving his post to ensure a "fair investigation".

"For me, morality is greater than a position, and there is no greater power than public trust... Public life should be clean, leadership should be accountable," said 38-year-old Gurung, who took office on March 27.

Gurung is the second minister to leave the new government after the labour minister Deepak Kumar Sah was dismissed over allegations of committing misconduct by getting his wife appointed to a health insurance board.

Dipa Dahal, press advisor to Prime Minister Balendra Shah, confirmed Gurung's resignation had been received.

Gurung participated in the deadly protests that began as a demonstration against a brief social media ban, but were fed by wider grievances over corruption and a poor economy.

At least 76 people were killed and more than 2,500 wounded during the two days of violence in September.

In January, Gurung joined the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) and won a seat in parliament after the party swept to a landslide victory in the March elections.

Gurung made headlines a day after taking his oath of office for arresting former prime minister KP Sharma Oli and ex-home minister Ramesh Lekhak for their alleged involvement in the deadly crackdown on protesters in September.

But soon he himself was beset by allegations over his financial investments and assets, as well as links with a businessman being investigated for money laundering.

Last week, Shah and his cabinet disclosed their assets to the public, in line with local laws requiring lawmakers to declare their financial status.

Soon after the disclosure, local media reported that Gurung had not revealed some of his financial investments.



We are open to opposition input

FROM PAGE 1

He said the current parliament was earned through the blood of many martyrs and reflects the hopes and aspirations of the people of Bangladesh for a brighter future.

"The issue we discussed today is undoubtedly an important one ... It's not only crucial for Bangladesh; considering global politics and realities, it is an issue of great importance for all of the world."

He, however, did not mention the word "crisis" in his speech.

At the start of the discussion, Shafiqur in his notice said it was unfortunate that while the nation is suffering from fuel shortages, government representatives continue to deny the crisis and issue misleading claims.

He noted that people across the country are unable to get fuel despite waiting in lines for hours on end at the filling stations, creating a multifaceted crisis in public life.

Taking the floor later, the opposition leader said, "If the ruling party feels it

is necessary, we can form a common committee to fully address this issue and find a comprehensive solution. We have some proposals, which we will hand over to you, since execution will be through the government.

State Minister for Energy Aninda Islam Amit said the government has been acting responsibly to tackle the current fuel situation triggered by turmoil in the Middle East.

He noted that reserves are secured until May and

despite mounting pressure.

"We had to make this adjustment based on practical realities," Aninda said, adding that long lines of bikers and cars at pumps do not reflect the actual state of fuel supply.

Opposition MP Masud Parves, from Jamaat-e-Islami, said farmers had to travel 15-20 kilometers for irrigation but received only two-three liters of fuel.

"Alongside the fuel price hike, LPG [Liquefied petroleum gas] prices have also been raised, and it is not available at the government-fixed rate," he said, adding that business leaders are saying that fuel shortage has already transferred many work orders from Bangladesh to neighbouring countries.

Another opposition MP from the Jamaat-led alliance, National Citizen Party's Atiqur Rahman Mujahid blamed the government's domestic and international management failure for the current fuel situation. He said a lack of accurate information has provoked

public uncertainty.

He added that forming a national crisis committee with members from both treasury and opposition benches would be a solution.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed rejected claims of a "fuel crisis". "Have any mills or factories shut down? Are schools and colleges closed? Cultivation is continuing as normal – then where is the crisis?"

Energy Minister Iqbal Hassan Mahmood said the government has increased the supply to the pumps since the war on Iran began. He added that some queues at petrol stations are being crowded by individuals with dishonest intentions, preventing genuine consumers from getting fuel.

He questioned whether everyone in line genuinely needed fuel, or if some riders were simply trying to resell it for profit.

"The so-called crisis being talked about does not exist; we are supplying as much fuel as required."

“

Have any mills or factories shut down? Are schools and colleges closed? Cultivation is continuing as normal – then where is the crisis?

Salahuddin Ahmed
Home Minister

"We can only cooperate by offering advice ... The government may adopt what it finds useful and discard what it considers irrelevant – there is no problem with that. We want to sit with an open heart."

Shafiqur added, "But we do hope that our sincere submissions will not be rejected unnecessarily – for the sake of the country and the nation."

efforts are underway to extend them through July.

After the war broke out, fuel prices rose by 38 percent in Pakistan, 40 percent in Sri Lanka, and 50 percent in the United States. Meanwhile, India restructured its tariff system. In contrast, Bangladesh increased prices by only 10-17 percent. Considering the farmers, the government initially avoided price adjustments

Nato 'will always defend' Turkey

Says alliance chief amid tensions in the Middle East

AFP, Ankara

Nato chief Mark Rutte yesterday said the alliance would do "what's necessary to defend" its members including Turkey after intercepting four missiles fired from Iran and heading into Turkish airspace over the past weeks.

A member of the US-led defence alliance, Turkey, which borders Iran, has been largely spared the sort of retaliation from Tehran suffered by countries in the Middle East before the ceasefire.

Nato forces had shot down ballistic missiles fired from Iran for four times, prompting the alliance to deploy a new Patriot missile battery at Incirlik air base in southern Turkey.

"Iran is spreading terror and chaos, and you feel this prominently here in Turkey," Rutte told journalists on a visit to Turkey's largest defence electronics company Aselsan.

"In recent weeks, Nato has successfully intercepted ballistic missiles heading to Turkey from Iran on four separate occasions," he said.

"Nato is prepared for such threats and will always do what is necessary to defend Turkey and all others. And we cannot do it alone," he added.

Rutte's visit comes ahead of a July summit by Nato leaders to be held in Ankara.

Praising the progress made by Turkey in the defence field, Rutte said: "We can learn a lot from what Turkey is doing here".

"This is needed because we live in a more dangerous world... and that means we need strong defences to protect our security".

Rutte said: "Turkey has gone through a defence industrial revolution. I could really say it's a revolution in recent years".

The Nato chief is due to meet with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has urged the US and Israel as well as Iran to stop fighting that has roiled the global economy.

(সংশোধিত বিজ্ঞপ্তি)

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়

সেবা শাখা

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তারিখ: ৮ বৈশাখ ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দ
২১ এপ্রিল ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

বিষয়: দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি সংবাদপত্রে প্রকাশ।

ই-টেন্ডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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1258835	10.00am	04.00pm	02.00pm	
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Md. Abul Hossain Miah
Assistant Engineer
Zila Parishad, Munshiganj

GD-892

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তারিখঃ ০৮ বৈশাখ ১৪৩৩
২১ এপ্রিল ২০২৬

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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সুপারসচিব (প্রশাসন)

ও

সভাপতি

বিভাগীয় নির্বাচন কমিটি

মন্ত্রিপরিষদ বিভাগ

GD-885

Why must MPs get offices in upazila parishads?

It may further erode the power of local administration

It is rare to see members of parliament (MPs) of the ruling party and the opposition be so united in their agreement on anything. The announcement by the state minister for Local Government that MPs would get their own rooms at upazila parishads has been unanimously welcomed. But granting such a facility would revert to the old practice of MPs exercising undue influence over upazila parishad affairs, which are meant to be handled by local administrators.

An MP from NCP (National Citizen Party) had raised the demand on March 31 for allocating sitting spaces for MPs within their constituencies; it was agreed upon in less than a month by the government. When it comes to facilities granted to MPs, there is little disagreement in the parliament.

We, however, would like to know why MPs need separate rooms in the upazila parishad buildings in the first place. An MP's main role is to deliberate on and pass legislation in the parliament. They are not required to go to the upazila and have an office to meet members of the public. Curiously, as there is no provision in existing regulations for allocating rooms in the name of individual MPs, these rooms have been labelled "Inspection Rooms". We can only imagine the huge cost to the government exchequer, not to mention taxpayers' money, to build such rooms for each MP. What happens when a constituency has more than one upazila parishad—will there be a designated room for the MP in each? According to the law, MPs get a monthly allowance for maintaining an office in each of their constituencies, which negates the need for a separate office in the upazila parishad premises. Furthermore, having such an office will conspicuously diminish the local government's authority.

We remember only too well how MPs of the previous elected government interfered with upazila parishad administrators' work, hogging the district development funds for projects that would make them popular. Instead of being the advisers to district bodies as they are supposed to be, MPs have in the past undermined the authority of the local administrators and hampered the normal functioning of these local government bodies. We do not want to see the same syndrome repeat itself in a post-uprising Bangladesh that demands real change in political culture. Empowering local government is crucial for rural development and decentralisation of power. The local government reform commission also recommended de-linking MPs from local government administration, allowing the upazila parishads to function independently.

While we appreciate that Prime Minister and Leader of the House Tarique Rahman also issued directives stating that MPs shall not take any additional privileges beyond public expectations and that no member should take a duty-free vehicle, the order concerning dedicated rooms for MPs in upazila parishads seems to contradict the spirit of good governance. Thus, we urge that lawmakers and the government revisit this decision.

A puzzling policy turnaround

Lifting of e-cigarette ban will weaken tobacco control

We are puzzled by the BNP government's decision to reverse the ban on e-cigarettes and similar products. While many lauded the parliament's approval of the Smoking and Tobacco Products Usage (Control) (Amendment) Ordinance earlier this month, a report in this daily points out how a crucial section imposing a ban on e-cigarettes was dropped before the bill's passage. This particular section included an expansive definition of e-cigarettes and outlined an airtight ban on the production, import, export, storage, advertisement, promotion, endorsement, marketing, distribution, purchase, sale, and transport of various forms of e-cigarettes and their components. Additionally, when amending the Land Use Control and Agricultural Land Protection Ordinance ahead of approval, the ban on the cultivation of tobacco on triple-crop land was also lifted.

It must be noted that passing the tobacco ordinance without the provision banning e-cigarettes contradicts BNP's own health services commitments to curbing tobacco consumption in its election manifesto, which is very disappointing. It is equally disturbing to see the responses of Ziauddin Hyder, an adviser to BNP Chairperson Tarique Rahman, when asked to comment on the reversal by this daily. His argument that the ban has been lifted so that research can be conducted on electronic tobacco products seems disingenuous. His assertion that there are too many regulations on tobacco cultivation already, and that there is no need for more, totally misses the point.

As anti-tobacco groups have pointed out, electronic tobacco products such as vapes are not only detrimental to public health, but they also act as a gateway for young people to develop nicotine addiction. Undoubtedly, the dropping of the aforementioned section would further weaken Bangladesh's already weak tobacco control framework and may even encourage more of these products to flood the market.

While vapes are banned in as many as 41 countries around the world, including neighbouring India, and with the UK this week imposing a ban on tobacco use for anyone born after 2008, how can Bangladesh let slip the chance to tighten its tobacco control mechanisms? Can we afford such laxness in a country where more than 1.3 lakh people reportedly die each year from tobacco use? The evasive responses of government representatives when questioned about such backtracking are also least reassuring. This is reminiscent of the way previous political administrations brushed aside questions surrounding their policies.

Whether the decision to lift the ban on e-cigarettes is the result of backdoor influence or not, it is crucial that the government reverses it. Vaping is neither recreational nor harmless. In fact, it may even be more harmful in some ways than tobacco smoking. There is still time for the government to act in the public's best interest by reinstating the dropped provision on the tobacco products usage and control law. We urge that it does so soon.

Rethinking canal dredging to improve flood management



Dr Md. Abdullah Al Baky, a GIS and remote sensing professional with expertise in fluvial geomorphology, is director of Geospatial Intellect in Melbourne, Australia. He can be reached at abdullah@geospatialintellect.com.au.

MD. ABDULLAH AL BAKY

As another monsoon season approaches, the government's current canal dredging programme can be a core option for flood preparedness. The aim of the programme is clear: restore drainage, reduce waterlogging, and allow floodwaters to recede faster. But the real question is deeper: can canal dredging alone shield Bangladesh from increasingly intense monsoon floods like the 2024 flood? Or does it need to evolve into a broader, nature-based flood mitigation strategy, as seen in countries like Australia?

Although Bangladesh is a deltaic country, over time, both natural (e.g., sedimentation) and artificial (e.g., illegal encroachment) factors have disrupted the country's natural hydrological system. The current canal dredging programme may smooth out this hydrological system. Fundamentally, the programme aligns closely with what global literature describes as nature-based solutions (NbS)—approaches that “use natural systems...to reduce flood impacts while delivering broader environmental benefits.” However, there are also negative outcomes, such as accelerated downstream flows, destabilised canal banks, and channel instability, arising from excessive canal deepening.

If asked about the success of the canal excavation programme, the answer depends on whether it is treated as isolated dredging or as part of a larger ecosystem-based flood management strategy. The immediate waterlogging problem can be resolved with an isolated strategy, but it does little to address broader flood risks. In ecosystem-based flood management (i.e., NbS), long-term resilience is ensured by reconnecting canals to floodplains, wetlands, and vegetation, thereby allowing the adjacent floodplain to absorb water, reduce peak flows, and regulate naturally. Canal restoration must therefore evolve beyond engineering fixes into a holistic, ecosystem-based flood management approach.

Recent flooding in Australia has accelerated the shift away from reliance on engineered infrastructure alone, driving a transformation towards NbS

to manage flood risk. Traditionally, flood management relied on levees, dams, and channel modifications. However, these approaches often accelerated water flow, transferring risk downstream rather than reducing it. NbS, on the other hand, seek to retain water within the landscape by absorbing it, slowing its flow, and spreading it out. In Australia, this approach centres on restoring wetlands, reconnecting rivers with their floodplains, and reinforcing



Overflowing river water washed away part of a coastal dyke in Khulna during the devastating flood of August 2024.

FILE PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

upstream vegetation to reduce runoff. Upper-valley dense vegetation plays a critical role by storing water and weakening its energy, whereas wetlands act as natural reservoirs, absorbing excess rainfall and reducing flood peaks.

Modern flood management is increasingly grounded in the understanding that ecosystems can regulate water more effectively than strict infrastructure. Scientific studies confirm that instead of rapidly draining water away, wetlands absorb and slowly release runoff, attenuating peak flows and easing downstream flood impacts.

of Bangladesh's most flood-prone and hydrologically complex systems. Scientific evidence indicates that this basin is susceptible to severe flooding, bank failures, and large-scale agricultural losses from extreme events. Apart from this basin, the devastation that the other basins can cause is evident from the 2024 floods that affected the eastern basins, including that of Gomati and Selonia, Muhuri, Feni rivers. According to the World Bank, over 12 lakh households were isolated, while total losses reached \$1.67 billion, heavily impacting infrastructure and livelihoods. These incidents make

Ecocide is hard to litigate, but we must still demand accountability



Barrister Noshin Nawal is a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at nawalnoshin@gmail.com.

NOSHIN NAWAL

We like our crimes tidy. A victim, a perpetrator, a sequence of events that can be narrated without requiring a climate scientist, three expert witnesses, and a decade of satellite data. It helps with closure. It helps with headlines. It reassures us that the world, however chaotic, is at least legally coherent. Ecocide has a rather inconvenient habit of refusing to behave like a proper crime. In Dhaka, for instance, the evidence is everywhere and nowhere at once. The air is unbreathable, the rivers look like they have given up on their original purpose, and yet life proceeds with impressive discipline. Offices open, traffic builds, weddings happen. There is something almost admirable about a city that can function at full capacity while slowly poisoning itself. If this is not harm, it becomes difficult to define what is.

We do not call ecocide a crime, of course. That would require the unpleasant business of accountability. Instead, we call it development, urbanisation, or, when we are feeling particularly philosophical, inevitability. These are comforting words. They suggest that what is happening is both necessary and beyond control. Yet, there is a word for it. International lawyers have spent decades trying to

formalise it. They call it ecocide, the widespread and long-term destruction of the environment caused by human activity. The ambition is to recognise it as a crime under the Rome Statute, placing it alongside genocide and war crimes. In other words, to admit that environmental destruction is not an unfortunate side effect of progress, but something for which someone should be held responsible. If that sounds excessive, it is only because we have normalised the alternative.

The difficulty is not in seeing ecocide. It is in proving it. In Ukraine, environmental destruction during the ongoing conflict has been described as ecocide, yet prosecutors have struggled to convert visible damage into viable legal cases. Out of hundreds of incidents, only a small number have progressed to a stage where they can be meaningfully pursued in court. The problem is not a lack of evidence in the ordinary sense. It is an excess of complexity. Environmental harm does not arrive neatly packaged. It unfolds over time, across borders, and through chains of causation that are anything but linear. Harm is cumulative, responsibility is diffuse, and causation is buried under decades of decisions politely described as necessary trade-offs. By the time the damage is visible,

it is already global.

Consider climate change. No single factory causes a flood in Bangladesh. No single policy decision raises sea levels. And yet, collectively, the damage is undeniable. Homes disappear, farmland becomes saline, and entire communities are displaced with quiet regularity. The harm is real. The perpetrator is less easy to isolate. Then there is the question of thresholds. What counts as “severe”? How widespread is “widespread”? How long is “long-term”? These are precisely the kind of ambiguities that determine whether a case survives or collapses. Add to this the requirement to prove knowledge or intent and the problem becomes even more complicated. Environmental destruction is rarely framed as destruction. It is framed as growth, infrastructure, and necessity. The same decision that pollutes a river is also the one that creates jobs. The same project that displaces a community is also the one that boosts GDP.

Proving that someone intended environmental harm, rather than economic progress, is not just difficult. It is politically inconvenient. Even where intent can be inferred, science introduces another layer of discomfort. Environmental harm relies on modelling, projections, and probabilities. Courts, understandably, prefer certainty. Science offers likelihoods. Somewhere between the two, accountability begins to blur. And then there is power. Recognising ecocide as an international crime would not simply target isolated actors. It would involve systems. Corporations, governments, and economic models that rely, to varying degrees, on

the necessity of aligning the canal restoration initiative with NbS crucial.

A critical question, therefore, arises: how can the government align the current canal excavation work with NbS? While deepening seems like the primary focus of this initiative, it should be achieved through variable channel design with pools and shallow sections, resulting in reduced flow velocity and enhanced habitat as was done in the Mary River Catchment Rehabilitation Project in Australia. Equally, maintaining the canals' natural bends rather than straightening them should be the key to managing the in-channel flow regime, as suggested by the National guidance of Australian Stream Rehabilitation Practice. Beyond excavation, reconnecting canals to the adjacent floodplain, palaeochannels, cutoffs, and wetlands is a vital option for spreading excess water, storing it, and reducing downstream runoff. Additional measures, including restoring riparian vegetation, adopting bioengineering for bank protection, and enhancing upstream infiltration, can further strengthen alignment with NbS principles.

Relying solely on structural flood protection solutions may fail during extreme events. Our past experiences say so. During the 1988 flood, the Chandpur Irrigation project embankment failed, and the Meghna River shifted by about 550 m, causing catastrophic flooding. Emphasising NbS does not mean replacing engineering infrastructure. Rather, it means a complementary approach as seen in the Victorian Murray Floodplain Restoration Project in Australia. For managing floods in Bangladesh, levees, embankments, and polders will continue to play a critical role. To enhance their effectiveness, incorporating NbS can open a new window of opportunity. So far, the hybrid approach integrating engineered systems with NbS is the most resilient and successful in flood management strategies.

Therefore, it is time to rethink Bangladesh's canal excavation strategy. Given that Bangladesh's landscape is different from Australia's, the programme can be adjusted in line with Australia's examples and guidelines. Unless canal excavation integrates NbS and moves beyond conventional dredging, achieving effective, sustainable flood management remains unlikely. The principal theme should be working not against water, but rather giving it space, reducing velocity, and applying natural systems.

environmental extraction. The question is not whether the law can be written. It is whether it can be enforced against those who can resist it.

For countries like Bangladesh, this tension is particularly stark. Bangladesh contributes a fraction of global emissions and absorbs a disproportionate share of the consequences. Floods intensify, cyclones strengthen, and salinity advances inland with quiet persistence. The damage is measurable, visible, and ongoing. Even still, there is no courtroom where this harm can be fully argued. Ecocide offers a way to reframe that reality. It shifts the narrative from vulnerability to injustice, from adaptation to accountability. It suggests that environmental destruction is not merely unfortunate, but wrongful. But it also introduces an uncomfortable mirror since Bangladesh is not a mere victim. Its rivers are polluted, its wetlands encroached upon, and its air quality routinely ranks among the worst in the world. These are not distant harms. They are local, visible, and in many cases preventable. If ecocide is to function as a meaningful legal concept, it cannot be selectively applied. Accountability, like pollution, does not respect borders.

We like to imagine that the most serious crimes announce themselves loudly; that they disrupt, shock, and demand immediate attention. Ecocide does none of these things. It is gradual, normalised, and, in many ways, convenient, which is precisely what makes it dangerous. It is because the hardest crimes to prosecute are not always the ones we cannot prove. They are the ones we have quietly decided not to name.

How to grow more rice without draining the land



Dr SB Naseem is former head of Rice Farming Systems Division under Bangladesh Rice Research Institute in Gazipur. He can be reached at sbnaseem@hotmail.com.

SB NASEEM

Over the past 25 years, Bangladesh has added nearly five crore people to its population, intensifying pressure on the country’s staple: rice. While production has grown, its pace has lagged behind population growth, raising fresh questions about long-term food security and sustainability.

Bangladesh’s population rose from about 12.9 crore in the year 2000 to roughly 17.6 crore in 2025, an increase of more than one-third. Over the same period, national rice output increased from around 3.6 crore tonnes to 3.7-3.9 crore tonnes, indicating only modest net growth. Experts say yield growth has slowed in the last decade as land constraints, climate stress, and resource limitations intensified. Total rice demand continues to rise due to population growth, meaning even small production fluctuations can influence prices and imports.

This long-term pressure is now amplified by the ongoing energy crisis. With the critical Boro paddy season disrupted by acute diesel shortages, increased fuel costs, and power outages, traditional, resource-heavy farming is proving dangerously vulnerable. Thousands of irrigation pumps have lain idle and state-run fertiliser factories have faced forced shutdowns. This immediate crisis underscores that shifting to sustainable agriculture is no longer just a future environmental goal, but an urgent necessity. As the country looks for ways to produce more rice with fewer resources, adopting modern, resilient practices can offer a vital lifeline.

The central challenge facing Bangladesh is compounded by the fact that the relationship between rice production and the environment is a dangerous two-way street. The drive for

higher yields through traditional methods is actively harming the ecosystem in several ways.

Methane emissions: Traditional rice cultivation requires fields to remain flooded for long periods. Under these waterlogged conditions, soil microorganisms decompose organic matter without oxygen, producing methane (CH₄)—a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide in trapping heat. Globally, rice cultivation contributes roughly 10-12 percent of agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, and Bangladesh is a significant contributor.

Groundwater depletion: Dry-season Boro rice, which accounts for more than half of Bangladesh’s total output, depends heavily on groundwater. Millions of tube wells pump water from underground aquifers, causing water levels to decline precipitously in regions like northwestern Bangladesh. Pumping this water requires immense energy, contributing to carbon dioxide emissions and leaving farmers vulnerable to fuel shortages.

Fertiliser pollution and nitrous oxide: Inefficient use of chemical fertilisers, particularly urea, releases nitrous oxide (N₂O) into the atmosphere, another powerful greenhouse gas. Over-application also leads to nutrient runoff into rivers and wetlands, destroying water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

Ecosystem loss: Expanding agricultural footprints can lead to the loss of biodiversity and the reduction of vital wetlands, which play a crucial role in natural carbon storage, flood control, and supporting rural fisheries.

Simultaneously, climate change is increasingly threatening the very rice farming that contributes to it. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, frequent floods, droughts, and salinity intrusion in coastal regions are already affecting crop yields. Studies suggest that temperature increases during the growing season can significantly reduce yields, particularly for Boro rice, while sea-level rise threatens soil fertility through

Climate-tolerant varieties: Deploying rice strains resistant to floods, salinity, and drought is one of the most effective tools. These varieties help stabilise yields in vulnerable regions such as coastal belts and flood-prone haor areas, reducing the risk of crop loss.

Smarter irrigation: Techniques like alternate wetting and drying (AWD), where fields are not kept continuously submerged, can cut

management can significantly improve fertiliser efficiency. Applying nutrients precisely when and where crops need them reduces chemical waste and nitrous oxide emissions.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM): Using biological controls and monitoring pests before spraying helps farmers reduce toxic pesticide use without sacrificing productivity, protecting biodiversity and human health.

Reducing post-harvest losses: A massive portion of rice is lost during harvesting, drying, storage, and milling due to outdated practices. Upgrading to modern milling facilities and hermetic storage technologies could save millions of tonnes annually, effectively increasing food availability without growing a single additional crop.

Mechanisation: The use of rice transplanters, combine harvesters, and other modern equipment can increase efficiency, offset rural labour shortages, and support resource-saving practices like direct-seeded rice.

Opportunistic expansion: While the primary focus must remain on intensifying yields on existing farmland, Bangladesh can also strategically explore new agricultural frontiers. Newly emerging river char lands and parts of the coastal region offer opportunities for expanding cultivation, provided climate-resilient varieties and community-based irrigation are used.

Bangladesh’s success in increasing rice production over the past few decades has been vital for national food security, serving as a global example of agricultural progress. However, the environmental and energy costs of intensive, traditional cultivation can no longer be ignored.

The path forward for our rice sector is not about producing at any cost, but about producing smarter. By combining scientific innovation, efficient resource management, and strong agricultural policies, Bangladesh can achieve sustainable growth—increasing yields even under a constrained environment while safeguarding the natural resources its people depend on.



PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

‘The central challenge facing Bangladesh is compounded by the fact that the relationship between rice production and the environment is a dangerous two-way street.’

seawater intrusion.

How can Bangladesh produce more rice to feed a growing population without damaging the environment on which agriculture depends? The answer lies in adopting a strategy of sustainable intensification—increasing productivity from existing farmland while actively reducing environmental stress. Agricultural specialists point to several key strategies.

water use significantly while drastically lowering methane emissions. Pairing this with solar-powered pumps and better field levelling helps farmers reduce energy costs and bypass grid failures.

Precision nutrient management: Modern techniques such as site-specific nutrient management, leaf colour charts for nitrogen application, and integrated soil fertility

Global buyers must share the cost in RMG’s green transition



Mostafiz Uddin is the managing director of Denim Expert Limited. He is also the founder and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo and Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE).

MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

For years, Bangladesh’s export success was built on a simple promise to global buyers. We would deliver at scale, at speed, and at low cost. In return, the buyers invested, expanded, and hired millions of workers and helped turn the country into one of the world’s leading sourcing destinations.

The times, however, they are a changin.

Across the global supply chain, decarbonisation is becoming a new commercial test. Buyers increasingly want suppliers to cut emissions, install renewable energy, upgrade machinery, improve energy efficiency, recycle effluent, track data more closely, and meet a growing list of environmental requirements. In principle, this is understandable. Climate change has posed many real challenges for us and the apparel sector, like many other industries, must reduce its environmental impact. However, I believe there is a serious problem in how this transition is unfolding.

Too often, decarbonisation and sustainability are being treated not as a shared responsibility but as a cost to be pushed down the supply chain. My personal observation is that, in Bangladesh, that means the burden

is falling hardest on small and medium-sized enterprises. This is creating a dangerous divide especially when larger suppliers, with stronger balance sheets and easier access to finance, are better placed to respond to the pressing demand to go greener. They can invest in solar energy, efficient boilers, water recycling, modern machinery, energy audits, and compliance teams. Smaller factories, even if they are efficient, reliable, and vastly experienced, often cannot move at the same speed. They may lack access to affordable finance or not have the land, internal technical capacity, or margin room to fund major upgrades on their own. This means buyers are consolidating their sourcing base around bigger partners who can promise rapid progress on decarbonisation. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including many that have served customers loyally for years, are being quietly edged aside. This should concern all of us.

Bangladesh’s SME manufacturers are the backbone of the economy. They create employment, support local communities, and often provide flexibility, specialised production, and entrepreneurial energy that

larger groups alone cannot replace. If these businesses are slowly phased out because they cannot self-fund the green transition, then the country risks building a two-tier industrial model. One tier will consist of large suppliers able to keep pace with rising buyer demands while the other will be made up of smaller firms struggling to survive not because they are unwilling to improve, but because they are being asked to finance a global transition without any support.

For decades, international buyers benefited from Bangladesh’s low wages, competitive overheads (operating costs such as factory rent, utilities, staff salaries, and maintenance), and relentless pressure on prices. That cost advantage helped global brands, retailers and importers build profitable sourcing models. Now, when major investment is needed to decarbonise those same supply chains, many buyers appear to want the producing side to absorb the bill alone which is not entirely fair. If decarbonisation is genuinely a strategic priority, then it cannot be treated as a free add-on extracted from suppliers through tougher scorecards and shifting compliance demands. A factory cannot install new systems, reconfigure operations or invest in cleaner energy simply on goodwill. These are commercial decisions with real costs.

If the buyer still expects the lowest price, the fastest lead time and the highest compliance standard, while contributing nothing to the investment required, then decarbonisation becomes another mechanism for putting more pressure on the suppliers. And this will widen the existing gaps in the industry when it comes to being just and inclusive as many suppliers might fail to meet the goal, some

might lose orders, while the rest may leave the industry altogether. This issue is not limited to ready-made garments. Similar pressures are emerging across other export-oriented sectors. Wherever global supply chains adopt stricter environmental standards, the same question arises: who pays? If the answer is always the supplier, then developing-country producers will once again carry a disproportionate burden. However, I believe there is a better way.

First, buyers should move towards genuine co-investment models. If a supplier is expected to make measurable decarbonisation upgrades, then the commercial relationship should reflect that. This could include longer-term sourcing commitments, preferred supplier agreements, shared financing structures or direct support for approved projects. A buyer that wants cleaner production should be prepared to help create the conditions for it.

Second, pricing must become more honest. For years, sustainability has been discussed as if it can be delivered without any serious cost implications, which is unrealistic. Cleaner production often requires capital expenditure and operational adjustment. Suppliers cannot be expected to deliver lower emissions while prices remain detached from the cost of achieving them.

Third, SME-focused green finance needs to expand. Bangladesh’s policymakers, financial institutions, and development partners should work together to design instruments that are practical for smaller manufacturers. Credit guarantees, concessional lending, pooled financing platforms, and technical assistance programmes can help here.

Financial schemes should be easy for SMEs to access without requiring extensive technical or financial expertise, while also avoiding overly strict or impractical conditions.

Fourth, technical support must be widened beyond the largest players. Many SMEs need help with energy mapping, emissions data, equipment selection, project design and verification. Shared service platforms, industry associations and public-private partnerships could play a bigger role here.

Finally, buyers should adopt transition pathways that are realistic and inclusive. Not every supplier can transform overnight. But many can make meaningful progress if expectations are clear, timelines are sensible, and support exists. The right question is not which factories are already perfect; it is which factories are committed and capable of improvement if given a fair chance.

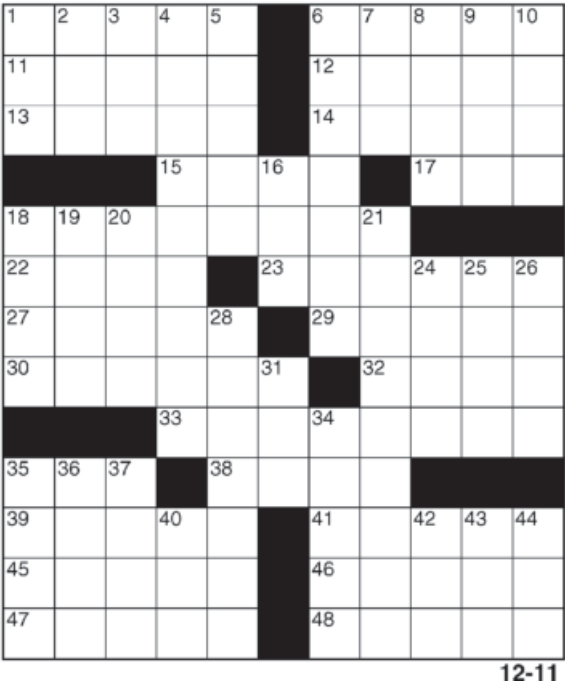
Bangladesh should not accept a future in which only the largest suppliers are allowed to remain in the game while smaller firms are left behind. That would weaken the diversity and resilience of our industrial base. It would also send the wrong message to the businesses that helped build this country’s export strength over decades. If global buyers want cleaner supply chains, they should not merely demand change from afar; they should contribute to the transition they say they want. They should support the suppliers, including SMEs, that have stood by them for years. They should also acknowledge that a truly sustainable global supply chain cannot be achieved if costs, risks, and responsibilities are distributed unfairly.

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS
1 Taken --- (surprised)
6 Of the kidneys
11 Praline nut
12 Sports venue
13 Tick off
14 Burger part
15 Heaps
17 Bro’s sibling
18 Chihuahua, for one
22 Leslie Caron film
23 Jazz pianist
Garner
27 Less friendly
29 Mideast peninsula
30 Paris subways
32 Letter after epsilon

- 33 More disreputable
35 --- Vegas
38 Boat part
39 Entertain
41 Human, for one
45 “Water Lilies” painter
46 Christopher of “Superman”
47 Cart pullers
48 Rockies resort
DOWN
1 Phone download
2 Hive dweller
3 Star pitcher
4 Cleveland cagers
5 Ring
6 Toronto cagers
7 History stretch
8 Brooklyn cagers

- 9 Opposed
10 Puts down
16 Poem of praise
18 Narrow
19 Maze runners
20 Stepped down
21 Memphis cagers
24 “Dedicated to the --- Love”
25 Past due
26 Deceitful person
28 Houston cagers
31 Take to court
34 Horse’s cousin
35 Tibetan monk
36 Singer Tori
37 Phoenix cagers
40 Spot
42 Energy
43 Genesis woman
44 Cub’s cave



YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

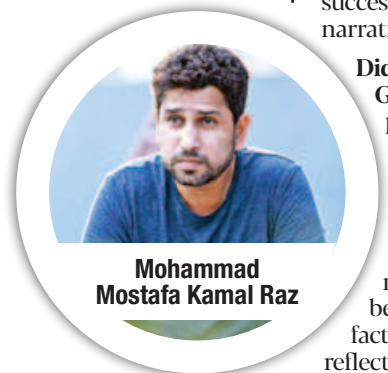


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OPINION PIECES TO
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Audiences saw their own lives in ‘Eta Amaderi Golpo’:

MOSTAFA KAMAL RAZ

I want to ensure that whatever comes next maintains the same beauty and meaning before making any final decision.



SHAH ALAM SHAZU
Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Raz's latest drama, *Eta Amaderi Golpo*, has emerged as one of the most talked-about and widely appreciated productions, resonating deeply with viewers.

Did you expect ‘Eta Amaderi Golpo’ to become this popular?

To be honest, when I began working on it, my only intention was to create something meaningful. I never imagined it would receive this much love or be embraced so widely. The fact that viewers have found reflections of their own lives in the story is what has taken it this far. For that, I am truly grateful.



Cast of ‘Eta Amaderi Golpo’

Why do you think audiences have connected with the drama so strongly?

I believe the simplicity and authenticity of the story are the key reasons. There's no exaggeration in it. Instead, it portrays familiar people, relationships, and emotions from our everyday lives.

Your work is being widely discussed again after a long time. How does that feel as a director?

It feels incredibly rewarding. When audiences accept a work as their own, it makes all the effort worthwhile. At the same time, it also increases the responsibility to deliver even better work in the

future.

Will there be a second season of the drama?

There won't be a second season, but something new is definitely coming. However, I want to ensure that whatever comes next maintains the same beauty and meaning before making any final decision.

As a director, what is your greatest achievement?

The greatest achievement is the love of the audience. Especially the comments on YouTube—when people share how deeply they feel the story or how it reflects their own lives, nothing can be more rewarding than that.

To be honest, the drama will conclude next month. For all of us who have been part of this journey, working together for so long, it had begun to feel like a family. That is why, the ending feels quite emotional.

‘Domm’ set for nationwide single-screen release



Following its Eid release, *Domm* has drawn strong audiences in multiplexes across the country. The film is now set to expand its reach, with a nationwide release in single-screen theatres from tomorrow (April 24).

Production houses SVF Alpha-i Entertainment Limited and Chorki confirmed that the Redoan Rony directorial will be screened in more than 50 theatres across Bangladesh, making it more accessible to general audiences.

The film has also performed strongly overseas, with releases in Australia, the United States, and Canada. In North America, the number of theatres screening the film increased significantly within a week due to audience demand.

Domm stars Afran Nisho, Puja Chery, Chanchal Chowdhury, and Dolly Zahur among others.



Aranyak to stage ‘Rarang’ on May Day

Theatre troupe Aranyak will stage its 45th production, *Rarang*, on May 1 at the Experimental Theatre Hall of the National Theatre Hall complex, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, marking International Workers’ Day.

Written and directed by Mamunur Rashid, *Rarang* examines the marginalisation of Santals, portraying their daily hardships, resistance and fight for dignity. The cast includes Mamunur Rashid, Shamim Zaman, Arif Hossain Apel, Sajjad Saju, and Sujat Shimul, among others.

As part of its May Day programme, Aranyak will also stage a street play titled *Murkho Loker Murkho Kotha*, written and directed by Mannan Hira, at the Central Shaheed Minar at 10 am. The programme will include Baul music performances by Bhabanagar Sadhusanga. Fauzia Moslem, president of the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, is expected to attend as a guest.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘Siddhartha’

Aarshinagar revives its acclaimed *Siddhartha*, a lucid stage adaptation of



Hermann Hesse's novel. Directed by Reza Arif, the production follows a restless seeker through austerity, doubt, and awakening—refusing doctrine in favour of lived truth. Restrained, character-driven, and intellectually precise, it frames a timeless inquiry into meaning, faith, and the cost of self-realisation.

Date: Today | April 23, 2026

Time: 4 pm and 7 pm onwards

Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA

NEWS

13 top police officials

FROM PAGE 12
officers were retired in the public interest under the relevant provisions of the government service rules. The order took effect immediately.

The notification, however, did not disclose specific reasons behind the move, but added that the officers will receive retirement benefits as per rules.

Since the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5, 2024, more than 60 police officials have been sent into retirement under Section 45, according to police sources.

24 SENIOR COPS TRANSFERRED

The government, in a major reshuffle, has also transferred 24 senior police officials, including one additional inspector general of police, seven DIGs, three additional DIGs, and

13 superintendents of police.

The home ministry issued three separate orders yesterday, marking the second consecutive day of administrative changes in the police force.

With yesterday's orders, 30 police positions have been reshuffled in two days.

Among them, Police Telecom DIG Rezaul Karim has been made chief of the Naval Police, while Police Headquarters DIG Khondoker Nazmul Hasan has been appointed commandant of Tangail Police Training Centre. Outgoing commandant Ashfakul Alam has been posted to Police Headquarters as DIG.

On Tuesday, six SPs were transferred to different units.

Govt eyeing \$2b

FROM PAGE 12
place in one go, will be sent once Prime Minister Tarique Rahman signs off on key conditions.

While funds under RFI would be provided without conditionality or reviews, a commitment to continuing with key reforms under the \$5.5 billion loan programme is needed.

The government is weighing the implications of implementing the conditions for the emergency funding, the finance ministry officials.

The reforms that the IMF is insisting on are articulated in the Article IV Consultation in January.

The IMF pressed for continuation of tight monetary policy, further market-based exchange rate reforms, faster restructuring of weak banks asset quality reviews of state-owned banks and amendments to the Bangladesh Bank autonomy law.

The other conditions include reducing subsidies on electricity and fertiliser, and raising revenue collection by 0.7 percent of GDP in the next fiscal year.

Recent IMF Technical Assistance on tax policy indicates scope to raise revenue by more than 2 percent of GDP in the short-term through unifying the VAT rate at 15 percent and narrowing VAT exemptions; raising the minimum turnover tax rate to 2 percent and applying it to all companies; introducing a modern excise act for tobacco; and introducing excise taxes on imported motive fuels at the equivalent of \$50 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions plus the pollution cost, says the Article

IV report.

Rationalising non-energy subsidies could help create fiscal space.

With no premium between the official and the market exchange rates, the remittance subsidy (about 0.15 percent of GDP) is no longer necessary to encourage repatriation through official channels and should be phased out.

A comprehensive strategy to optimise production capacity and adjust fertiliser prices would help reduce fertiliser subsidies, which reached 0.8 percent of GDP in fiscal 2024-25.

Enhancing targeted transfers while broadening the social safety net is vital to protecting the vulnerable, the IMF said.

The authorities have consolidated social programmes from 150 to 95 and improved beneficiary eligibility. However, the coverage of the poor population is low. The recently started development of a dynamic social registry will support better targeting and coverage of social assistance.

In the near-term, the government could use the poverty map to inform the allocation of social transfers while rationalising energy tariffs.

The Bangladesh Bank should establish procedures for bank viability assessments and engage reputable local and international experts to support restructuring/resolution work and strengthen operational capacity.

Non-viable banks should not be merged before cleaning up their balance sheets and evaluating the cost of integrating banks and their systems.

Tarique flags measles test

FROM PAGE 12
other facilities, measles detection systems have been shut down.

As a result, samples are being sent from different institutes and hospitals to the National Polio and Rubella Laboratory at the Public Health Centre in Dhaka. This means patients must wait for diagnosis even after vaccines are available.

In reply, the prime minister said all political parties – in and outside parliament – worked together to remove an autocratic regime from the country.

“The sad reality is what happened during that autocratic period. Even more unfortunate is that the interim government we supported, hoping it would ensure a fair and neutral election, failed in a crucial

responsibility. During its tenure, measles vaccines for children were not imported,” he said.

“Naturally, when this crisis emerged, we had to act quickly,” he said, adding that Unicef provided support by sending measles vaccines on an urgent basis.

“As a result, we were able to vaccinate nearly two crore children.

“Many kits have already arrived. One kit can be used to test three children. Some kits are stuck at customs at the Dhaka airport, and we are taking steps to release them quickly,” Tarique added.

“Tragically, many children have already lost their lives. But going forward, the government is making every effort to manage this situation and has taken necessary measures,” the prime minister said.

Breaking out of ‘phone jail’

FROM PAGE 12

But in the end, he said, it was liberating.

“I was bored sometimes, and that’s okay,” West recalled one recent evening at a city community garden where detox participants met to share their struggles and joys of disconnecting. “It’s okay to be bored.”

Sitting beside him was Rachael Schultz, 35, who had to ask strangers on bicycles for directions. There was also Lizzie Benjamin, 25, who dug out old CDs her father had burned so she could listen to music without Spotify.

Before the detox, Bobby Loomis, 25, who works in real estate, struggled to watch even a single episode of a TV series without checking his phone.

But now, without his headphones, he enjoyed listening to birds sing as he took walks around Washington. And when the detox ended, his daily screen time dropped from six to four hours, roughly in line with the

average for American adults.

Scientists have long been sounding the alarm, warning that cell phone addiction is associated with shortened attention spans, sleep problems and anxiety.

In a landmark ruling in late March, a California court ruled Instagram and YouTube are liable for the addictive nature of their platforms.

An increasing number of young Americans are finally taking note. According to a YouGov poll conducted last year, more than two-thirds of people aged 18 to 29 would like to reduce their screen time.

And new tools are available to make that happen: digital detox apps, phone-blocking gadgets, and groups, such as the one in Washington, that facilitate month-long detoxes. On university campuses, weeks-long social media diets have become popular and screen-free evenings among friends have become a thing in big cities.

28th death anniv

FROM PAGE 12

of Women and Children Repression delivered the verdict in September 2003, sentencing six accused to death for the rape and murder.

They are domestic worker Shahidul; contractor Syed Sajjad Mainuddin and his assistant Badal, who were tasked with renovating the house; housemaid Estema Khatun Minu and her sister Parvin; and carpenter Shaniram Mandal.

After the lower court verdict, the death reference reached the High Court for confirmation of the sentences. At the same time, the accused appealed to the High

Court against their convictions and sentences. The HC acquitted Shaniram.

Later, Hasan, Badal, Minu and Parvin appealed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC verdict, while Shahidul filed a jail appeal.

On August 2, 2016, the Appellate Division granted the appeals of Hasan, Badal, Minu and Parvin and dismissed Shahidul's.

On March 5, 2017, the apex court rejected Shahidul's petition for review of the verdict. He sought presidential mercy, which was turned down.

He was executed on November 29 that year.

West Bengal goes to polls

FROM PAGE 12

a comfortable lead for the TMC, with 174–184 seats in the 294-member assembly – well above the 148 needed for a majority.

The survey also indicates a strong showing by the BJP, projecting 108–118 seats.

In the 2021 elections, the TMC won 215 seats, while the BJP secured 77. Although the BJP failed to unseat Banerjee, the result marked a

significant rise for the party from its previously marginal presence in the state.

A C-Voter survey also suggests a close contest, projecting the TMC at 44 percent of the vote share and the BJP close behind at 40 percent.

Voting will be held in two phases – on April 23 and April 29 – covering 152 and 142 constituencies, respectively. Counting is scheduled for May 4.

Baby’s life gone in moments

FROM PAGE 12

roadside tree.

The baby was in the lap of Dulali at that time, said Irin's father Akhtarul Islam.

“A bus was parked a few yards away. All of a sudden, the bus started and abruptly reversed,” said Akhtarul.

The grandmother tried to move away quickly, but in the confusion and panic, the baby slipped from her arms and fell to the ground.

Before anyone could reach her, the bus ran over the infant, killing her on the spot, added Akhtarul.

Three injured – Irin, Dulali, and Shimu – were hospitalised, he said.

Even the bystanders stood frozen in shock, as if the loss belonged to everyone who witnessed it.

Shariful Islam Shakil, sub-inspector of Birol Police Station, said the accident occurred when the bus helper tried to reverse the vehicle without checking what was behind him.

Police seized the bus, but its driver and helper managed to flee.

No case was filed till filing of this report around 8:00pm yesterday, he said.



Notice
ICT-BD Form No.1B
The International Crimes Tribunal-1, Bangladesh
web: www.ict-bd-org

ICT-BD Case No. 01 of 2026
{Arising out of ICT-BD Misc. Case No. 04 of 2025}

[Notice to the accused under Rule-31 of the International Crimes (Tribunal-1) Rules of Procedure, 2010 to appear in the Tribunal]

Whereas the Chief Prosecutor of the Tribunal submitted formal charge(s) against accused
1. Mohammad Habib Hasan, former Member of the Parliament, Dhaka-18, son of late Abdul Latif and late Mst. Asirun Nesa of village-Ahalia, House No. 1098, Apon Nibas, Police Station-Turag, District-Dhaka, at present- House No. 13, Road No. 2A, Sector 5, Uttara Model Town, Post Office-Uttara-1230, Police Station: Uttara West, District: Dhaka;

2. Kazi Ashraful Azim, BP-7505116489, former Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Dhaka, son of Kazi Ashraful Azom and Most. Rizia Begum, of Village-Mohammadpur Kazipara, Post Office: Shoilokupa-7320, Police Station-Shilokupa, District- Jhenaidoho;

3. Md. Alauddin Al Sohel, Awami Leage Leader, Uttara Paschim Thana, Dhaka, son of late Abdul Latif and late Asiron Nesa of Village: Ahalia, House No. 1098, Apon Nibas, Post Office: Uttara-1230, Police Station: Turag, District: Dhaka. at present-House No. 13, Road-2/A, Sector-05, Uttara Model Town, Post Office: Uttara-1230, Police Station: Uttara Paschim, District: Dhaka;

4. Jahangir Hossen @ Juboraj, former counselor, Ward No. 54, North City Corporation Dhaka and Awami Leage leader, Turag Thana, son of Jumma Khan and Jahanara Begum of Village: Kamarpara, Shaplar Mor, Jumma Khaner Bari, Khayertek, Bazar Road, Post Office: Nishatnagar-1711, Police Station: Turag, District: Dhaka;

5. Md. Farid Ahmed, former counselor, Ward No. 52, North City Corporation Dhaka and Joint Secretary, Turag Thana Awami League, son of Md. Abdul Latif and Most. Jomila Khatun of Village: Pakuria Sesh Matha, Bailjuri, Post Office: Badaldi-1230, Police Station: Turag, District: Dhaka. at present-House No. 1098, Uttara Nibas-01, Pakuria (besides of Dolipara Pump station. Post Office: Badaldi-1230, Police Station: Turag, District: Dhaka;

6. D. M. Shamim, former counselor, Ward No. 50, North City Corporation, Dhaka and former vice president Dhaka Mohanagar Jubo Leage, son of late D. M. Ismail and late Firoza Begum of Village: 325, North Azampur Dewan City, Hazi Ismail Dewan Road, Post Office: Azampur-1230, Police Station: Dakshinkhan, District: Dhaka;

7. Md. Anisur Rahman Nayeem, former counselor, Ward No. 49, North City Corporation, Dhaka and General Secretary Dhaka Mohanagar Uttar Seccha Sebok Leage, son of Mofiz Uddin Ahamed and Mst. Nazneen Akter of Village: 327, Kawlar Bepari Bari, Nur Modina Moshjid Road, Post Office- Khilkheth-1229, Police Station: Dakshinkhan, District: Dhaka;

8. Md. Afsar Uddin Khan, former counselor, Ward No. 01, North City Corporation, Dhaka and former executive member Dhaka Mohanagar Uttar Awami Leage, Counselor, son of Sondor Khan and Asia Khatun, House No. 12, Road No. 10, Sector 9, Post Office-Uttara 1230, Police Station: Uttara West, District: Dhaka;

9. Murtafa Bin Omar @ Sathil, Vice President, Uttara Pashchim Thana Chattro League, son of Md. Omar Faruk and Roksana Lipi of Village: Badshartek, Dholipara, Police Station: Turag, District: Dhaka;

10. Zakir Hossen @ Mithu, Jubo League Leader, Uttara Thana Awami Leage, Dhaka Mohanagar Uttar, son of Jumma Khan and Jahanara Begum of Village: Kamarpara, Shaplar Mor, Jumma Khaner Bari, Khayertek, Bazar Road, Post Office: Nishatnagar-1711, Police Station: Turag, District: Dhaka;

11. Habibur Rahman, BP-6798104554, former Commissioner, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Dhaka, son of late Abdul Ali Mollah and late Rabeya Begum, of Village-Digholia, Police Station-Gopalganj Sadar, District- Gopalganj, at present-of village-Nichu Para, Ghulli Bari Mor, Ward No. 09, Gopalganj Pourashava, Police Station-Gopalganj Sadar, District- Gopalganj;

12. B M Forman Ali, BP No. 7501034536 former Officer-in-Charge, Uttara West Police Station, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), son of late Biswas Layek Ali and late Sahera Khatun, of Village: Gimadanga, Post Office-Gimadanga-8120, Police Station: Tungipara, District: Gopalganj;

13. Md. Abdul Sayem, BP No. 0020237546, former constable/DMP 35111 (Wireless Operator), Uttara East Police Station, Uttara, DMP, Dhaka, son of late Abul Hossen Akand and Most. Monowara Begum of village-Karhuakati, Police Station-Nolchiti, District-Jhalokhati;

14. Md. Towhidul Islam, BP No. 8513166184 former Additional Deputy Commissioner, Uttara Zone (Biman Bandar), Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), son of late Amzad Ali and Sayeda Begum, of Village: Binodpur (Chamatola), Post Office-Binodpur-6342, Police Station: Shibganj, District: Chapai Nababganj;

15. Sumon Kor, BP No. 8417198824 former Assistant Police Commissioner, (now Additional Superintendent of Police) Uttara Zone, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), son of late Arun Kanti Kor and Shikha Rani Kor, of Village: House No. 363, Road No. 19, Nirala residential Area, Post Office-Khulna-9100, Police Station: Khulna Sadar, District: Khulna;

16. Mahmudul Hasan, BP No. 8211135711 former Police Inspector (Operations). Uttara East Police Station, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), son of late Ali Ahmed and Nasrin Ahmed, of Village: Patch Rukhi Bhuiyan Para, Post Office-Patch Rukhi Bazar-1460, Police Station: Araihaazar, District: Narayanganj;

17. Khaled Anowar, BP No. 8714165955 former Sub Inspector (unarmed), Uttara East Police Station, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), son of Md. Moslem Mia and Nazmun Nahar, of Village: Kalai Sarder Kandi, Post Office-D M Khal, Police Station: Sokhipur, District: Sariatpur;

18. Md. Rokunuzzaman, BP No. 8304114476 former Sub Inspector (unarmed), Uttara East Police Station, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), son of late Ahmed Ali @ Mohammad Ali and late Anowara Begum, of Village: Basati, Nayapara, Post Office-Horinadi-2250, Police Station: Fulpur, District: Mymensingh under section 3(2)(a), 3(2)(g) 3(2)(h), 4(1), 4(2), 4(3), punishable under sections 20(2) and 20A of the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973 and Rule....of the International Crimes (Tribunal-1) Rules of Procedure, 2010 and the Tribunal has taken cognizance thereof and whereas the Tribunal has reason to believe that the said accused(s) absconded or has/have been in hide out with a view to avoid the warrant of arrest issued by the Tribunal under Rule 30 and therefore the said accused(s) is/are hereby directed to appear before the Tribunal on **29th April, 2026 at 10.00 AM** to take lawful measures failing which trial of the said offences shall be held in their absence.

Given under my hand and seal on 22th April, 2026 by order of the Tribunal-1.

(A.S.M. Ruhul Emran) 22/04/26
Registrar
(Senior District & Sessions Judge)
International Crimes Tribunal, Bangladesh.
Phone: 41054030, Fax: 9514009

GD-891



Rupali Bank PLC
Procurement Division
Head Office

Eunoos Trade Center (Level-14), 52-53, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000
Telephone: +8801789706550; E-mail: ho-procurement@rupalibank.org;
Website: www.rupalibank.com.bd

Ref. No. Proka/Prokibi/2026/810

Dated: 22.04.2026

e-Tender Notice
Open Tendering Method (OTM)
(Invitation Ref. No. 2026/Mechanical/09, Date: 12.04.2026)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods:

Tender ID	Name of work	Tender/ proposal publication date & time	Tender/ document last selling date & time	Tender closing and opening date & time
1257933	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of VRF (Variable Refrigerant Flow) Type Air Conditioning System Comprising 21.25 Ton 10 Indoor Units of Various Capacities and 25.5 Ton 01 Outdoor Unit for Rupali Bank PLC. at Rented Level-8 (South-East Side) of Eunoos Trade Center for Accommodation of Discipline & Appeal Division, Vigilance & Intelligence Division and Newly Formed Treasury (MID) Division of Head Office.	20.04.2026 17:00	04.05.2026 17:00	05.05.2026 15:00

- This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
- The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branch.
- Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
- **Corrigendum of e-Tender Notice and Tender Document in e-GP System:**
In the part of Information for Tenderer/Consultant: Eligibility of Tenderer (1) "Interested suppliers that have been enlisted as suppliers under the Mechanical category of the Procurement Division, Rupali Bank PLC, Head Office in 2026" and in the part of Tender Data Sheet ITT Clause: 20.1 (j) (7) "Valid Enlistment Letter of Rupali Bank PLC, Procurement Division, Head Office, Dhaka" is hereby omitted. All other terms and conditions of the e-Tender Notice and Tender Document in e-GP system shall remain unchanged.

Md. Shahidur Rahman
Deputy General Manager
Procurement Division, Rupali Bank PLC
Eunoos Trade Center (Level-14)
52-53, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000

GD-890



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Police Telecommunication Organization
Police Telecom Bhabon, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
web: telecom.police.gov.bd

Invitation for e-Tender

Memo No-44.01.0000.057.11.061.25/3194/Betar

Date: 22-04-2026.

For the financial year 2025-2026 e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following items.

SL	Description	e-Tender ID	Procurement Method	Online Tender Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	Designing, Supplying and Installing of 250 & 150-feet 3-Leg Self-Supported Tower.	1263021	OSTETM (One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method)	23 Apr 2026 15:00	11 May 2026 12:00

This is an online Tender, Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Systems Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd>).

**The Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders.
If the fund is insufficient/unavailable in that case the tender will be cancelled.**

(Shahriar Bin Saleh)
BP 7810126915
SP (Logistics)
Police Telecommunication Organization
Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Mobile: 01320020041
E-mail: splog.telecom@police.gov.bd

GD-887



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Police Telecommunication Organization
Police Telecom Bhabon, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
web: telecom.police.gov.bd

Invitation for e-Tender

Memo No-44.01.0000.057.11.062.25/3195/Betar

Date:22-04-2026.

For the financial year 2025-2026 e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following items.

SL	Description	e-Tender ID	Procurement Method	Online Tender Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	Designing, Supplying and Installing of 150-feet 3-Leg Self-Supported Tower.	1263022	OSTETM (One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method)	23 Apr 2026 15:00	11 May 2026 12:10

This is an online Tender, Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Systems Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd>).

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(Shahriar Bin Saleh)
BP 7810126915
SP (Logistics)
Police Telecommunication Organization
Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Mobile: 01320020041
E-mail: splog.telecom@police.gov.bd

GD-888



Local litchis in Rajshahi have begun ripening, but intense heat and dry weather are causing the fruits to crack despite earlier rainfall in the region. The photo was taken at an orchard near the Faculty of Fine Arts at Rajshahi University recently.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Woman’s body found in sack in Jashore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Police recovered the body of a 55-year-old woman from a roadside in Jashore early yesterday.

The deceased, Sakina Begum, wife of Lal Chand Khalifa of Bejpara Main Road, was found stuffed inside a sack near her home in the Bejpara area. The body was sent to Jashore General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Her son, Shahidul Islam, said after returning home from outside around 11:00pm, he could not find her and later informed police.

Around 2:30am, Shahidul spotted a sack by the roadside beside their house. On opening it, he found his mother’s body. He and his sister, Shahida Begum, identified the body.

Shahida alleged that her mother was murdered in a premeditated manner and dumped in the sack.

Officer-in-Charge of Jashore Kotwali Police Station Masud Khan said the cause of death would be known after investigation and the autopsy report.

AL-picked fertiliser

FROM PAGE 3
Responding to a question from Tangail-6 lawmaker Robiul Awal, the PM said the government had launched the Farmer’s Card on April 14 to address these challenges and transform agriculture into a sustainable and profitable sector by boosting production and productivity.

Responding to a supplementary question from Narail-2 lawmaker Ataur Rahman, the PM said the cards would allow support to be delivered directly to farmers, enabling them to collect allocated fertiliser, seeds, pesticides and other inputs from designated local shops without travelling long distances, while the government would have detailed information on their land and requirements.

Replying to a question from Munshiganj-3 lawmaker Kamruzzaman, the PM said the government’s election manifesto included publishing a comprehensive white paper into money laundering and corruption during the Awami League regime.

Citing findings of the White Paper Preparation Committee formed by the interim government, he said that between 2009 and 2023, a total of \$234 billion – averaging \$16 billion

annually, or approximately Tk 1.8 lakh crore – had been siphoned off.

Tarique Rahman also said the foreign ministry was working closely with relevant ministries and agencies to conclude Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties and exchange Mutual Legal Assistance Requests with other countries to repatriate laundered funds.

Also, an inter-agency task force, chaired by the Bangladesh Bank governor, had been formed, with legal proceedings underway in 11 prioritised cases on money laundering identified by the body, he added.

The cases involve ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her family, former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, S Alam Group, Beximco Group, Sikder Group, Bashundhara Group, NASSA Group, Orion Group, Nabil Group, HBM Iqbal and his family, and Summit Group, along with individuals and institutions linked to their interests.

In response to Natore-4 MP Abdul Aziz, Tarique Rahman said within five years, 1,000 people would be trained as freelancers and two million freelancer cards would be distributed. Already, 7,500 cards have been issued.

Govt mulls

FROM PAGE 3
primary curriculum centred on learning through play and storytelling was underway. The ministry would move carefully on curriculum changes and seek support from stakeholders, he added.

Hajjaj mentioned existing challenges regarding infrastructural issues in the primary education sector. He also said financial support would be essential for children from low-income families to continue schooling, as many families would opt to send their children to work instead without cash incentives.

Hajjaj highlighted the government’s midday meal programme, now being implemented on a pilot basis in 151 upazilas, and said it would be expanded in phases nationwide within the next year.

Students are being provided different meals on different days following a menu designed to maintain roughly similar nutritional value each day, with support from the World Food Programme and nutrition specialists at Dhaka University, he noted, adding that the government also aims to introduce hot cooked meals in the future.

He, however, said scaling such a programme from a limited number of schools to more than 65,000 nationwide remains a major challenge.

Professor Emeritus Manzoor Ahmed and State Minister for Planning Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki were also present, while Campe Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury moderated the event.

Two special

FROM PAGE 3
Gani confirmed the appointment.

Ziauddin, a former senior official of the World Bank, also served as an adviser to BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman and was a member of the party’s central election steering committee.

Saimum Parvez, who currently serves as a special assistant to the BNP chairman’s Foreign Affairs Advisory Committee and was also a member of the party’s central election steering committee, has been appointed on a one-year contractual basis.

Previously, on April 2, the government appointed four special assistants to the prime minister on a contractual basis.

Dhaka district

FROM PAGE 3
this report, authorities have not announced his next posting.

According to public administration ministry sources, the appointment marks a milestone in the capital’s field administration, with Farida becoming the first female officer to serve as Dhaka’s deputy commissioner.

Long-delayed BMU facility

FROM PAGE 3

speaking to reporters after attending a Memorandum of Understanding signing event at the hospital, alongside Health Minister Sardar Md Sakawat Husain.

The hospital’s director Prof Saifullah said many highly sophisticated procedures, such as kidney transplants, are supposed to be conducted at the facility, requiring highly skilled personnel.

“But we will not get such manpower if we offer salaries under the existing government pay scale. So

we have proposed hiring staff on a contract basis with relatively higher pay,” he told this correspondent yesterday.

However, the university’s last syndicate did not approve the proposal, further delaying the process, he added.

“We need special concessions to make this hospital a model facility where people can receive services like top private hospitals, but at a much lower cost,” he added.

Officials said they are working on resolving

the issue and hope for progress under the new administration.

They are still working on the issue and hope for a better outcome in the changed situation, he added.

MoU SIGNED
BMU and the Second Affiliated Hospital of Kunming Medical University signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to run a joint surgical clinic at BMU.

Speaking at the event, the health minister said the agreement reflects the

long-standing relationship between the two countries and sought further Chinese support, particularly to improve healthcare in rural areas.

Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen said China has long been investing in the development of Bangladesh’s health sector, including establishing facilities such as robotic rehabilitation and cardiovascular clinics.

The programme was chaired by the BMU vice chancellor and attended by officials from both countries.

অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক নিয়োজিতকরণ পুনঃবিজ্ঞপ্তি

জাপান, রাশিয়া, ব্রাজিল ও ইউরোপের বিভিন্ন দেশে গমনেচ্ছুদের জন্য জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যুরো (বিএমইটি) এর নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন ইনস্টিটিউট অব মেরিন টেকনোলজি (আইএমটি)/কারিগরি প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্র (টিটিসি)/শিক্ষানবিশ প্রশিক্ষণ দপ্তরসমূহে ভাষা শিক্ষা কোর্স পরিচালনার জন্য অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক নিয়োজিতকরণ ও প্যানেল তৈরির লক্ষ্যে যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে কাজ করতে আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যুরো (বিএমইটি) এর ওয়েবসাইট www.bmet.gov.bd হতে নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম ডাউনলোড করে সঠিকভাবে পূরণপূর্বক আবেদনপত্রের স্বাক্ষরিত শর্তাবলীর ১নং অনুচ্ছেদে বর্ণিত নির্দেশনা মোতাবেক বিজ্ঞাপন প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে আগামী ১১-০৫-২০২৬ খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে bmettrs@gmail.com ই-মেইল/ডাকযোগে/কুরিয়ারে/সরাসরি নিম্ন স্বাক্ষরকারীর ঠিকানায় প্রেরণ করতে হবে।

ক্রমিক নম্বর	পদ ও ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক কোর্সের নাম	পদের সংখ্যা	ঘট্টা প্রতি সম্মানীর হার	আবেদনের যোগ্যতা
০১	০২	০৩	০৪	০৫
১	অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক (পর্্তুগিজ ভাষা)	০৬	প্রতি ঘণ্টা ৮০০/- (আটশত) টাকা	নূনতম এইচএসসি/সমমান পাশসহ পর্্তুগিজ ভাষাগত দক্ষতা পরীক্ষায় নূনতম Level- B1 পাশ থাকতে হবে। ব্রাজিল,পর্্তুগাল বা পর্্তুগিজ ভাষাভাষি দেশে ও বছর বা অধিক সময় কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা/স্বনামধন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় পর্্তুগিজ ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাবে। অধিক যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ও শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা শিথিলযোগ্য।
২	অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক (স্প্যানিশ ভাষা)	০৬	[দায়িত্ব পালন সাপেক্ষে প্রতি কার্য দিবসে সর্বোচ্চ ৪ ঘণ্টার সম্মানী ভাতা প্রাপ্য হবে।	নূনতম এইচএসসি/সমমান পাশসহ স্প্যানিশ ভাষাগত দক্ষতা পরীক্ষায় নূনতম Level- B1 পাশ থাকতে হবে। স্পেন, মেক্সিকো বা স্প্যানিশ ভাষাভাষি দেশে ও বছর বা অধিক সময় কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা/স্বনামধন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় স্প্যানিশ ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাবে। অধিক যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ও শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা শিথিলযোগ্য।
৩	অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক (জাপানিজ ভাষা)	৪০		নূনতম এইচএসসি/সমমান পাশসহ জাপানিজ ভাষাগত দক্ষতায় JLPT N3/সমমান স্কেলে পাশ হতে হবে। জাপানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় অবস্থানকারীগণ/স্বনামধন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় জাপানিজ ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে দায়িত্ব পালনকারীগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাবেন। অধিক অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ও শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা শিথিলযোগ্য।
৪	অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক (রাশিয়ান ভাষা)	০৬		নূনতম এইচএসসি/সমমান পাশসহ রাশিয়ান ভাষাগত দক্ষতা পরীক্ষায় Level-B1/ সমমান পাশ হতে হবে। রাশিয়ায় ও বছরের অধিক সময় অবস্থানকারীগণ /স্বনামধন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় রাশিয়ান ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে দায়িত্ব পালনকারীগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাবেন। অধিক অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ও শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা শিথিলযোগ্য।
৫	অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক (ফ্রেঞ্চ ভাষা)	০৬		নূনতম এইচএসসি/সমমান পাশসহ ফ্রেঞ্চ ভাষাগত দক্ষতা পরীক্ষায় Level-B1/ সমমান পাশ হতে হবে। ফ্রান্স অথবা ফ্রেঞ্চ ভাষাপ্রধান দেশে ও বছরের অধিক সময় অবস্থানকারীগণ /স্বনামধন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় ফ্রেঞ্চ ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে দায়িত্ব পালনকারীগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাবেন। অধিক অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ও শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা শিথিলযোগ্য।
৬	অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক (ইটালিয়ান ভাষা)	০৬		নূনতম এইচএসসি/সমমান পাশসহ ইটালিয়ান ভাষাগত দক্ষতা পরীক্ষায় নূনতম Level-A2 পাশ থাকতে হবে। ইতালিতে ও বছর বা অধিক সময় কাজের/স্বনামধন্য কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে ও বছরের অধিক সময় ইটালিয়ান ভাষা প্রশিক্ষক হিসেবে কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাবে। অধিক যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ও শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা শিথিলযোগ্য।

আবেদনের শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলী:

- আবেদনকারীকে মন্ত্রিপরিালক, জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যুরো (বিএমইটি), ৮৯/২, কাকরাইল, ঢাকা বরাবর নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন করতে হবে। আবেদনপত্র বিএমইটির www.bmet.gov.bd এ প্রদত্ত লিংক হতে পাওয়া যাবে <https://bmet.gov.bd/pages/notices>।
- বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত তারিখের পর প্রাপ্ত কোন আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না। অসম্পূর্ণ ও ভ্রুটিপূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য করা হবে।
- বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়স ২২ হতে সর্বোচ্চ ৪৫ বছর এর মধ্যে হতে হবে।
- নির্বাচিত অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষকগণ শুমারী কার্যদিবসসমূহের দায়িত্ব পালনের জন্য ঘট্টা প্রতি উল্লিখিত সম্মানী প্রাপ্য হবেন। এছাড়া অন্যান্য ভাতা প্রাপ্য হবেন না।
- কার্যদিবস ব্যতিত অন্য কোন দিনের অর্থাৎ ছুটির দিনের জন্য কোন সম্মানী প্রাপ্য হবে না।
- প্রাপ্য সম্মানী হতে ১০% হারে আয়কর কর্তন করা হবে।
- আমন্ত্রণ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে নির্বাচিত অতিথি ভাষা প্রশিক্ষকগণ দায়িত্ব পালন করবেন। কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিত কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন সময় তাঁর আমন্ত্রণ বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা রাখে।
- প্রতিযোগিতামূলক পরীক্ষার মাধ্যমে বাছাই প্রক্রিয়া সম্পন্ন হবে, এক্ষেত্রে লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষা অন্তর্ভুক্ত হবে।
- লিখিত পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের দিন পূরণকৃত মূল আবেদন পত্রের অনুলিপি এবং ছবিসহ প্রবেশপত্রের ফটোকপি আনতে হবে।
- নিম্নে উল্লিখিত কাগজপত্রাদি (১ম স্টেপের গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত) সংযুক্ত করে আবেদন দাখিল করতে হবে। (ক) সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার মূল/সাময়িক সনদপত্রের ফটোকপি। (খ) সাম্প্রতিক তোলা পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ২ কপি রঙিন ছবি। (গ) অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্রের ফটোকপি (ঘ) সংশ্লিষ্ট ভাষার দক্ষতা পরীক্ষার সনদপত্রের ফটোকপি (ঙ) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের ফটোকপি।
- বাছাইকৃত যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের আগামী ১৫ মে ২০২৬ খ্রি. তারিখ শুক্রবার সকাল ১০-০০ ঘটিকায় ঢাকার মিরপুরের দারুস-সালাম রোডস্থ টেকনিক্যাল মোডেল ঢাকা টেকনিক্যাল টিচার্স ট্রেনিং ইনস্টিটিউট (DTTI) (বাংলাদেশ-কোরিয়া কারিগরি প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্রের ক্যাম্পাসে অবস্থিত) লিখিত পরীক্ষা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। একই দিন Listening, Speaking এবং মৌখিক পরীক্ষা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় আবেদনের সাথে জমাকৃত সকল ডকুমেন্টের মূল কপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে।
- নিয়োজিতকরণ পরীক্ষার ফলাফল পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রের নোটিশ বোর্ড/মোবাইল/বিএমইটি'র ওয়েবসাইট www.bmet.gov.bd এর মাধ্যমে প্রকাশ করা হবে।
- পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোন প্রকার ভাতা প্রদান করা হবে না।
- প্রার্থীকে দেশের অভ্যন্তরে যে কোনো উপজেলা/জেলায় কাজ করার মানসিকতা থাকতে হবে।
- পদের সংখ্যা হ্রাস/বৃদ্ধি হতে পারে।
- পাত ২৬ মার্চ ২০২৬ তারিখে দৈনিক প্রথম আলো, ডেইলি স্টার ও মানব জমিন পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তির আলোকে ইতোমধ্যে আবেদনকারী প্রার্থীদের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই।

২২/০৪/২৬
পরিচালক (প্রশিক্ষণ পরিচালনা)

জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যুরো (বিএমইটি)
৮৯/২ কাকরাইল, ঢাকা।

‘Beauty’ of pitch puzzle awaits series decider

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI from Chattogram

“How was that?” Bangladesh skipper Mehidy Hasan Miraz, having just lofted a delivery over mid-wicket, asked this reporter while batting at the nets yesterday. “You didn’t quite time it,” came the reply. Miraz did not seem convinced, but timing could again be an obvious issue for the batters heading into the series-deciding third ODI against New Zealand in Chattogram today.

Both surfaces used in Mirpur offered enough to make batters think twice, and even though Chattogram is traditionally a better batting venue, there remains uncertainty over how this pitch will behave, especially under intense heat that may demand constant in game adjustments.

“I mean, it looks good... but I don’t want to read into the wicket too much,” Bangladesh pace bowling coach Shaun Tait stated.

“One thing I have noticed in Bangladesh is that it is difficult to read wickets here in general. In Mirpur, as we saw, the first game was a little bit different to the second game. And maybe that’s the beauty of playing cricket in Bangladesh,” added the former Australia pacer.

Tait’s tentativeness was matched by New Zealand paceman Will O’Rourke. While he initially sensed pace and bounce, possibly due to the greenish centre strips, he stressed the need to reassess on the go, irrespective of “whether we bat or bowl first”, further underlining the uncertainty factor.

Bangladesh, too, are looking to keep all ends covered. Heat and humidity could open cracks faster, and the foretelling of a greenish wicket may not translate into pace and bounce.

Leg-spinner Rishad Hossain was seen working on his follow-through to generate more turn, while speedster Nahid Rana, fresh from a five-wicket haul which helped tie the series, was having a dead-on serious discussion with himself as he pointed to the surface and tried to gauge how batters would fend off his length deliveries.

The onus will remain on the batters after a sub-par show in the series opener, where Saif Hassan and several others fell into the trap of variable bounce. Litton Das, meanwhile, appeared in full flow during nets, eyeing a response.

Tait said the batting group is expected “to be good all the time” and doubted whether “that’s realistic”.

“What you obviously want to see

is a little bit more consistency,” he said. But regardless of the presence of consistent bounce, batters will have their work cut out in adapting to whatever the surface throws at them.



PHOTO: AI GENERATED

BFF’s high-profile coach hunt

RAMIN TALUKDAR

Bangladesh football stands at the foothills of a new beginning. The chapter of Javier Cabrera has come to a close, leaving behind a dugout that is now almost a blank canvas. Yet, for a country languishing near the bottom of the FIFA rankings, master tacticians from across the world are eager to leave their mark.

Around 270 applications have already been submitted for the role of national team head coach. Alongside that, more than 100 applications have come in for age-group teams, and another 30-plus for the position of goalkeeping coach.

Such overwhelming interest from world-class coaches is apparently astonishing. But beneath that surprise lies a quiet shift. The arrival of expatriate stars like Hamza Choudhury and Shamit Shome has sparked a sense of renaissance in red and green.

At this critical juncture, one thing is clear. There is no alternative to appointing a high-profile coach.

Cabrera, despite holding a UEFA Pro Licence, had limited exposure at the highest level. As a result, even with players shaped in European systems joining the squad, that pedigree failed to translate consistently onto the pitch.

A contrasting picture can be seen in the women’s team. Under the guidance of Peter Butler, the entire landscape has changed. Armed with rich experience, including his playing days at West Ham United, Butler ushered in a new awakening. The women’s team and their age-level understudies are no longer confined to SAFF dominance but competing confidently on the Asian Cup stage.

Butler’s success serves as a clear reminder that the men’s team, too, needs an experienced, high-profile tactician, especially a manager capable of understanding players raised in Europe and America while building chemistry with local talent.

While the list of names circulating on social media is eye-catching, the Bangladesh Football Federation has not disclosed any specific candidates, though it confirmed to The Daily Star that several coaches with national team experience have applied. Among the prominent names being linked

are Petar Segrt, who led the Maldives to SAFF glory, and India’s two-time SAFF winning former coach Igor Stimac. Also in the mix are former Bashundhara Kings coach Valeriu Tita and Germany’s experienced Antoine Hey. Names such as Miodrag Radulovic and Didier Olle-Nicolle, along with other European tacticians, are also believed to be on the federation’s radar.

High-profile coaches often operate differently and they rarely come alone. They are not confined to conventional training routines. Their approach is rooted in science and data, demanding a full support structure aligned with their philosophy — tactical analysts, fitness trainers, nutritionists, and goalkeeping coaches working in unison. In the dressing room, they expect complete authority, free from administrative interference.

The federation, meanwhile, appears aligned with entrusting their faith on someone who can build a seamless structure from grassroots to the national team.

“We want someone who can plan across the entire structure, from grassroots to Under-23 and the national team,” Technical Committee chairman Kamrul Hasan Hilton told The Daily Star.

“Ideally, we are looking for a coach who has developed teams from a young level and delivered results at national, AFC or World Cup stages.”

Ultimately, the psychological boost a heavyweight coach brings to a dressing room, especially when managing players like Hamza and Shamit, is irreplaceable. With that, players can buy into the idea of chasing bigger targets more wholeheartedly, not just SAFF supremacy, but success on the AFC stage and beyond.

In the coming days, the selection committee will trim the list down to a shortlist of 25 to 30 candidates.

“No coach can change everything overnight; he must be given at least two to three years to build a group capable of representing the country for the next eight to ten years,” player-turned-coach Alfaz Ahmed believes.

Who will emerge as the high-profile architect to break the shackles of stagnation in the men’s team?

SAFF WOMEN’S C’SHIP Bangladesh, India in same group again

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Bangladesh have been drawn with host India in the SAFF Women’s Championship, which will be held in Goa from May 25 to June 6.

The draw was held in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Two teams will qualify from each group for the semifinals.

Pakistan have opted not to participate in this edition.

Bangladesh first won the SAFF Women’s Championship title in 2022 in Nepal, breaking India’s dominance, under Golam Rabbani Choton. Peter Butler then helped the women in red and green defend the title in style in the 2024 edition, also held in Nepal.

Bangladesh had beaten five-time champions India in the group stage in both editions on way to beating Nepal in both finals.

GROUP A
Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

GROUP B
Bangladesh, India and Maldives.



Women’s hockey team set for historic debut

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh’s women’s hockey team are set to embark on a historic journey today as they play their first-ever senior international match, opening their Asian Games Qualifiers campaign in Jakarta.

Having impressed at under-18 and under-21 levels last year, the senior side will now step onto the international stage for the first time when they face Chinese Taipei in Pool A. The match is scheduled to begin at 4:10 pm Bangladesh time.

Apart from Bangladesh and Taipei, Pool A includes Hong Kong and Uzbekistan, while Pool B features Singapore, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and hosts Indonesia. The four semifinalists will qualify for September’s Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

Head coach Zahid Hossain Raju said the team is prepared for the challenge, while acknowledging the step up required at senior level.

“This is the toughest match of the group, Chinese Taipei are a difficult opposition,” Raju told The Daily Star over the phone from Jakarta yesterday. He added that Bangladesh won a 20-minute practice match against Indonesia 2-0 on Tuesday.

Raju admitted the lack of competitive preparation could be a concern. “We haven’t played any practice game, which is an issue,” he said. “The other thing is, these players played matches at junior level, but senior level is very different.”

Athapaththu powers Sri Lanka to series-levelling win

SPORTS REPORTER

Riding on skipper Chamari Athapaththu’s all-round brilliance, Sri Lanka staged a strong comeback in the three-match WODI series, beating hosts Bangladesh by four wickets in the second match at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium on Wednesday.

Athapaththu, who missed the opening game due to injury, returned in style, taking 3 for 36 as Bangladesh were bowled out for 165 in 45.5 overs after opting to bat first.

Nigar Sultana Joty top-scored with 58 off 101 balls, while Sharmin Sultana made 25 and Nahida Akter 20, as several batters failed to convert starts.

Malki Madara, Nimasha Meepage and Inoka Ranaweera picked up two wickets each.

In reply, Sri Lanka lost Hasini Perera for five, but Athapaththu struck a quick 40 off 39 balls to steady the chase.

Harshitha Samarawickrama (50) and Hansima Karunaratne (40) shared a 77-run stand that proved decisive.

Nahida Akter fought back with 4 for 21, but Sri Lanka reached 166 for six in 38.2 overs to level the series 1-1.

The third and final match will be played at the same venue on Saturday.

BCB seeks long-term fix for dry Chattogram outfield

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI from Chattogram

“Not too shabby,” New Zealand batter Will Young said while surveying the outfield of Chattogram’s Bir Sreshtho Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium from the boundary ropes. The surface looked dry, the grass appeared to have dissipated in patches, and large stripes could be seen from afar, where it almost mimicked the pitches.

Young showed no immediate concerns though, saying small lacerations on his arms and legs were the only minor issues to deal with.

“It’s [the outfield] going to be fast due to the dryness. Usually, injuries happen when there is wetness, as you can get stuck in the surface,” he further told The Daily Star yesterday.

Beyond player safety, however, the impact of water shortages on one of Bangladesh’s premier venues was evident.

“We haven’t had water supply in four days; it’s a regular problem during this season. WASA try their best, but at times 40 percent of people in the city cannot be served due to shortages,” curator Zahid Reza Babu told The Daily Star.

Rain has offered little relief, with only a brief five-minute spell in the past two weeks. Although the ground was watered after April 9, supply issues resurfaced amid



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

hot and humid conditions -- a pattern, according to Reza, that mirrors last season.

While the outfield appears visibly poor from a distance, ground staff believe the situation is less severe up close. According to sources, the venue requires about two lakh litres of water daily for proper maintenance.

BCB’s former facilities chairman Shahnian Taneem had earlier attempted to address the issue, but plans were stalled by the previous board’s tender and purchase processes. Under the current ad hoc committee, however, parts of that plan are now being implemented, Shahnian said.

The board is planning a water

purification plant behind the VIP stand, alongside installing a deep tube well, officials told The Daily Star.

“The purifying plant will give us relief. It’s supposed to provide two lakh litres daily, though how much remains after purification is yet to be seen. Combined with WASA supply, it should be enough,” Reza said.

By evening, as the heat subsided, the outfield was watered and began to look more even ahead of the third ODI today. The board remains optimistic that the water treatment plant will resolve many of the ongoing issues.

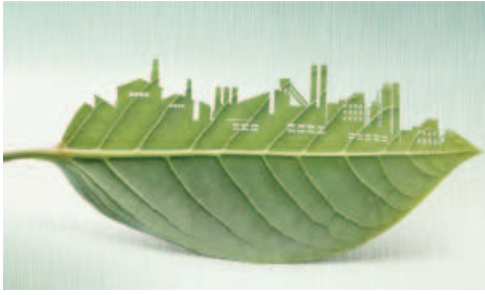
49 DAYS



Who can beat Morocco?

So far, 13 African teams have made a combined 49 appearances in the World Cup. Among them, only Morocco have reached the semifinals, achieving the feat in the 2022 edition. Cameroon have featured the most times, with eight appearances, while Nigeria, Morocco and Tunisia are joint second with six each.

****Visit The Daily Star website to also read “From the smell of gunpowder to the scent of grass: A football revolution on a bloodstained map”.**



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28th death anniv of Shazneen Rahman today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman. On this day in 1998, 15-year-old Shazneen was brutally raped and murdered in a premeditated attack at her home in Gulshan. At the time, she was a ninth-grade student at Scholastica school.



She was the daughter of late Latifur Rahman, former chairman of Transcom Group, and Shahnaz Rahman, current chairman of the group. Shazneen was the youngest among four siblings. Her elder sister Simeen Rahman is the chief executive officer of Transcom.

More than 19 years after the incident, the convict in the Shazneen rape and murder case, Shahidul Islam, alias Shahid, was hanged at Kashimpur High Security Prison in Gazipur in 2017.

A Special Tribunal for Prevention
SEE PAGE 8 COL 5



A young boy lays out dyed leather sheets at a tannery in the capital's Hazaribagh, highlighting the persistence of child labour in hazardous conditions. Although tannery factories were relocated from Dhaka to Savar's Hemayetpur due to environmental concerns, smaller operations, warehouses, and leather processing activities continue in Hazaribagh, including dyeing, drying, chemical use, and storage. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Tarique flags measles test kit shortage

Tells JS vaccines weren't imported for years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday told parliament that the country is facing a shortage of measles testing kits and that vaccine imports had been halted for years under previous governments.



He said measles vaccines for children had not been imported for several years under the Sheikh Hasina-led autocratic government and the interim administration headed by Prof Muhammad Yunus.

During the question-answer hour in parliament, the PM said some kits have arrived and steps are being taken to release those currently held at customs.

The Leader of the House made the remarks while responding to a supplementary question from Salah Uddin, Jamaat-e-Islami MP from Gazipur-4.

In his question, Salah Uddin said the issue is now a "crucial question" for the health sector. He said in Chattogram, the country's only infectious disease treatment centre and specialised institute, as well as most

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Lost for 27yrs, home at last Missing migrant returns from Malaysia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Bangladeshi migrant worker who had been missing for 27 years in Malaysia returned home yesterday, bringing an end to a decades-long wait for his family.

Amir Hossain Talukdar, 62, from Naraiapuzila of Shariatpur, reached



Dhaka around midnight on a Batik Air flight, according to a press release from BRAC.

BRAC arranged his return to Shariatpur and said it would take necessary steps to ensure his treatment and support, given his physical and mental condition.

Amir travelled to Malaysia in 1996 in search of work.

He found work as a painter, and for the first three years, he remained in regular contact with his family and sent money home. Then, without warning, communication stopped, according to the press release.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Govt eyeing \$2b in emergency aid from IMF

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh is eyeing \$2 billion in emergency aid from the IMF's Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) window to cushion the economic shock stemming from the Middle East war.

The RFI provides rapid, low-access financial assistance to countries facing urgent balance of payments needs that, if not addressed, would result in an immediate and severe economic disruption.

The Middle East war is an external shock to the Bangladesh economy, raising the import bill for fuel/LNG, fertiliser and food and increasing the subsidy and social protection pressures in real time.

As a result, there is an additional subsidy requirement of Tk 38,542 billion (about \$3.2 billion) for March-June, risks of rapid reserve drawdown and tighter external financing conditions.

The Middle East war is an external shock to the Bangladesh economy, raising the import bill for fuel/LNG, fertiliser and food and increasing the subsidy and social protection pressures in real time.

Funds under the RFI would provide bridge liquidity to preserve reserves while sustaining essential fuel, LNG, fertiliser and food imports; create fiscal space for targeted and time-bound support; and reduce the risk of disorderly adjustment.

In so doing, it would protect macroeconomic stability.

The Bangladesh delegation led by Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury discussed availing the RFI during the International Monetary Fund-World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington DC last weeks. The Daily Star has learnt from finance minister officials involved with the proceedings.

The formal request for funds under RFI, whose disbursement takes

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

13 top police officials forced into retirement

Over 60 sent on retirement under Public Service Act since Aug 5, 2024

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has sent 13 top Bangladesh Police officials, including 11 deputy inspector generals and two additional DIGs, on forced retirement.

The decision was announced yesterday in a notification issued by the Police-1 branch of the home ministry.

According to the notification, the decision was taken under section 45 of the Public Service Act, 2018, which allows the government to retire any public servant who has completed 25 years of service without providing any justification.

The officers are: AFM Masum Rabbani, DIG at Police Staff College, Dhaka; Sakhawat Hossain, additional DIG of Tourist Police; Ashrafuzzaman, commandant of Rangpur PTC; AZM Nafiul Islam, DIG of Anti-Terrorism Unit; Abul Foyez, DIG of Naval Police; Monirul Islam, DIG of Anti-Terrorism Unit; Mahfuzur Rahman, DIG at Police Headquarters; Munibur Rahman, DIG at APBn Headquarters; Iqbal Hossain, additional DIG attached to Rangpur Range office; Shamima Begum, DIG at Police Headquarters; Abu Kalam Siddique, DIG of Industrial Police; Aminul Islam, DIG of Police Telecom; and Salma Begum, DIG of APBn.

The notification further said the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

West Bengal goes to polls amid SIR row

First phase of voting today; surveys predict TMC to retain power, BJP to gain ground

AGENCIES

The Indian state of West Bengal goes to the polls today after a controversial electoral revision that critics say has stripped millions of their voting rights.

The BJP, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is hoping to seize power from the Trinamool Congress (TMC) led by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The BJP has never governed the state of roughly 100 million people and has mounted an all-out push to wrest control.

While the contest is expected to be close, the TMC, in power since 2011, is projected to retain control for a fourth term. Several opinion polls show the party maintaining an edge.

Ahead of the first round of polling, the deletion of 9.1 million names, more than 10 percent of the electorate, has drawn sharp criticism from political parties and rights groups.

The revision process, known as the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), has been carried out across states and territories, with the Modi government saying it aims to prevent "infiltrators", a pejorative term largely referring to illegal Muslim immigrants, from voting.

Experts and organisations say Muslims and other religious minorities have been disproportionately removed from the rolls in West Bengal, prompting allegations of deliberate targeting and persecution.

While the BJP has established dominance in many Indian states, analysts say, it has struggled to gain a foothold in West Bengal, in part because it lacks support among the state's sizeable Muslim population.

In some Muslim majority constituencies, nearly half the voters have been removed, including those with documents showing they are Indian citizens by birth and that they or their parents were listed on the 2002 voter roll, the cut-off for eligibility.

A Vote Tracker survey by VoteVibe, released on CNN-News18, projects

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5

Experts say Muslims and other religious minorities have been disproportionately removed from the rolls in West Bengal.

Breaking out of 'phone jail' Young Americans try digital detox

AFP, Washington

Getting around without Google Maps. No longer scrolling Instagram at the bus stop. Ditching your headphones to hear the birds sing.

In March, a group of 20- and 30-somethings in the US capital swapped their smartphones for basic flip phones and embarked on a one-month digital detox, part of an emerging movement of young Americans seeking to break free from the harmful effects of social media.

"I was waiting for a bus, and I didn't know when it would come," recalled Jay West, 29, who took part in the Month Offline challenge organised by a small startup with support from a local community group.

Old habits die hard, and West, who works as a data analyst for Washington's metro system, said he would often find himself reaching into his pocket for his cell phone, only to realise there was nothing on it.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5



A mobile food vendor selling guava to people waiting in long queues for fuel in the capital's Nilkhet, turning the crowd into a temporary market. Vendors say they are earning Tk 2,500-3,000 a day with modest profits, but worry the business will disappear once the queues ease.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Baby's life gone in moments

2-month-old crushed under reversing bus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

A life that had just begun was lost under the wheels of a bus driven by a helper in Dinaipur.

The incident took place in the Nalabari Bazar area of Birol upazila Tuesday evening. Two-and-a-half-month-old Chinia Aktar was the daughter of Md Shamim of Sajurghat Chaulliapotti in Dinaipur municipality.

The baby was taken to her maternal uncle's home at Nalabari Bazar with her mother, Irin Akhter, 25, a few days ago, said the family.

On that evening, there was loadshedding in the area. To get fresh air, Irin along with her mother, Dulali, 40, and sister Shimu, 18, came out of the house and sat under a

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1