



The Strait of Hormuz must immediately reopen without restrictions and without tolling... This is vital for the entire world.

Antonio Costa
European Council president

The Daily Star

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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GENEVA CAMP

Drug trade thrives despite crackdowns

Ringleaders still at large

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

A few yards away from the rear gate of Geneva Camp in Mohammadpur, several men were selling heroin, cannabis and yaba in broad daylight. Holding polybags full of narcotics, they called out to potential buyers as pedestrians walked past.

This was the scene at midday in the

law enforcement following the July mass uprising, say camp residents. At least 10 people have been killed in clashes over the last 19 months, according to media reports.

Despite frequent raids and installation of police checkpoints in Mohammadpur area, the drug trade continues almost uninterrupted.

Inside the camp, many believe that information



Straws scatter into the air as farm workers feed bundles of freshly harvested boro paddy into a threshing machine to separate the grains. The rice, still in its husk, will go on to be boiled in large steel pots to make later processing easier. The photo was taken yesterday in Itna upazila of Kishoreganj.

PHOTO: TAFSILUL AZIZ

Narco trade has spread to roads outside the camp
Drugs worth over Tk 1.5cr sold daily
Rival gangs fight for control of lucrative spots
At least 10 killed in clashes over the last 19 months
Around 500 people inside the camp directly involved in the trade
Info on raids leaked to kingpins in advance, allege locals



neighbourhood on April 20.

For decades, Geneva Camp has been known as one of Dhaka's most notorious drug hubs, with the illegal trade surviving successive governments and countless "special drives."

Residents say the scenario changed after August 2024. The narcotics trade, which was mostly confined to the camp's narrow alleys, has spilled onto the main streets. And it has become more organised.

To control lucrative spots, rival groups get locked in clashes, which have intensified amid lax

on raids is leaked to the kingpins beforehand. Only drug carriers, sellers and buyers are frequently arrested, while those controlling the flow of narcotics remain untouched.

Camp sources said a section of law enforcers and their informants have helped the ringleaders evade arrest in exchange for money. This is why the drug network could not be dismantled.

Some people who once struggled to make ends meet have amassed huge wealth, thanks to the illegal trade. For them, punishment or

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Heatwave to linger

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mild to moderate heatwave is sweeping across the Khulna division and several districts, including Dhaka, Faridpur, Madaripur, Rajshahi, Pabna, Sirajganj, Feni, Laxmipur, Rangamati, Bandarban, and Patuakhali, and is expected to stay for a few days.

Meteorologist Md Shaheenul Islam of the Bangladesh Meteorological Department yesterday said the ongoing heatwave, affecting large parts of the country, is likely to persist today and may begin to ease from tomorrow.

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Hope rekindles for US-Iran peace talks

Trump says he is sending envoys to Pakistan as Iran's FM arrives in Islamabad

AGENCIES

Hope for renewed peace talks between the United States and Iran rose yesterday as reports said Donald Trump was sending his special envoy Steve Witkoff and son-in-law Jared Kushner to Pakistan for talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

"I can confirm Special Envoy Witkoff and Jared Kushner will be off to Pakistan again tomorrow morning to engage in

talks... with representatives from the Iranian delegation," White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told Fox News on Friday.

Earlier, Araghchi said in a statement on X that he was embarking on visits to Pakistan, Oman and Russia to coordinate with partners on bilateral matters and consult on regional developments. He arrived in Islamabad early yesterday.

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PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Nazmul and Fatema are overwhelmed with grief after their seven-month-old son Nafiz passed away due to post-measles pneumonia at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in the capital's Mohakhali on Thursday afternoon. Three more patients died of measles in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, raising this year's death toll to 42.



Bangladesh remains at high risks from measles

Says WHO, calls for urgent action, 95% vaccine coverage, stronger surveillance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Health Organization has assessed the national risk of the ongoing measles outbreak as high, citing continued transmission, a large pool of susceptible children, immunity gaps, and suspected measles-related deaths.

Continued spread of the disease is likely unless urgent measures are taken to strengthen surveillance, rapidly detect and respond to cases, and close immunity gaps through an integrated vaccination campaign, WHO said in a report on Thursday.

"Despite Bangladesh's progress towards measles elimination, the current outbreak highlights the vulnerability of the population and underscores the fragility of immunisation gains," it said.

WHO says high transmission rate, number of susceptible children worrying

The UN body issued several recommendations, including maintaining at least 95 percent coverage of target children with both doses of the measles vaccine across all municipalities and strengthening integrated epidemiological surveillance to bring the situation under control.

The observations came as the country continued to see a rise in measles cases and deaths, with hospitals overwhelmed by patients.

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Unethical practices behind fuel crisis

Says Fakhrul

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

LGRD Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday attributed the ongoing fuel crisis to unethical practices by a section of people and vowed action to normalise the situation.

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CHITTAGONG PORT AUTHORITY

139th PORT DAY

To all officers, employees, port users, valued domestic & international stakeholders, & well-wishers on this proud occasion

Warm Greetings, Heartfelt Congratulations

Chittagong Port is implementing a modernisation roadmap through business-friendly port management, rapid and secure handling, digital transformation, extensive automation, good governance, new employment, modernised equipment, expanded infrastructure, and long-term investment. The vision is to become a safe, environmentally friendly, and globally competitive regional logistics hub, advancing Bangladesh's transformation into a global factory for high-end products.

In the fiscal year 2024-25 and in 2025, the port broke a 48-year record by handling 3.4 million TEU containers. Efficient management and technological integration have been the driving forces behind this achievement. Terminal Operating Systems, uninterrupted 5G networks, e-gate passes, e-billing, and e-payment systems have revolutionised service delivery. Through the 'CPA Sky' Port Single Window platform, all import-export-related services, including those of the NBR, have been brought under an integrated framework. Pre-arrival processing now enables customs clearance before vessels reach the port, reducing unloading time and increasing capacity. Vessel waiting time has effectively dropped to zero. Implementation of ISPS Code security has achieved 'zero observation'. As a result, logistics costs have been reduced by almost half. Direct shipping to destination countries will further reduce costs.

In line with the new government's manifesto, the port authority has adopted an extensive action plan. By enhancing trade capacity, attracting investment, and driving sustainable economic transformation, Chittagong Port is becoming a catalyst for national development, propelling Bangladesh's economy to unprecedented heights.

COUNTRY MOVES WITH US