



Tk 33,474cr Padma barrage set for govt nod

Project to alleviate water crisis in 26 southwestern districts

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is set to implement the much anticipated Padma barrage project at an initial cost of Tk 33,474 crore, aimed at reviving five major river systems and storing 2,900 million cubic metres of water in the Padma river.

The project, to be executed in two phases by 2033, will require a total investment of nearly Tk 50,443 crore.

Covering about 37 percent of Bangladesh's land area, spanning 26 districts and 163 upazilas across four divisions, the Padma-dependent region has long suffered from water shortages due to upstream diversions.

The barrage is expected to be a game-changer for agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity, and economic growth.

- 2,900 million cubic metres of water can be stored in the Padma
- Five river systems will be revived
- Irrigation for 2.88 million hectares will be ensured
- Annual production of rice to be boosted by 2.39 million tonnes
- Fish production will likely improve by 2.34 million tonnes

The project gained momentum after a meeting on May 6 with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, where he highlighted the project's potential impact on GDP and gave directives for its implementation.

The feedback was incorporated and the proposal for the first phase is set to be placed before the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council on Wednesday for approval.

The first phase would be paid from the government's own funds and it includes the construction of the 2.1km-long Padma barrage at Pangsha in Rajbari district.

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PHOTO: STAR

Shabnur Begum rushes two of her seven-month-old triplets to DNCC Dedicated Covid-19 Hospital in Mohakhali yesterday after all three contracted measles. Shabnur, from Cumilla's Debidwar upazila, was finally able to admit her two boys, who were in critical condition, to the ICU, while the girl was admitted to a general ward.

Measles death toll now 409 after revision

11 more children die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of deaths from measles and measles-like symptoms saw a sharp rise yesterday as health authorities adjusted previously unrecorded deaths, taking the total number of confirmed and suspected measles deaths to 409.

A total of 11 confirmed and suspected measles deaths were recorded in the 24

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Care gaps push patients to crowd Dhaka hospitals

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Nine-month-old Tariqul from Narsingdi was rushed to a local health facility last Thursday after developing fever and other measles-like symptoms. The baby was later transferred to Narsingdi District Sadar Hospital.

On Saturday night, he was moved again, this time to Dhaka, following doctors' advice.

Yesterday, the baby was asleep on a mattress close to the staircase outside the Infectious Diseases Hospital's third floor ward.

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'Won't stand extrajudicial activities'

PM tells police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday asked the police administration to remain neutral and operate strictly as per the law so that police stations can be trusted by people as reliable support centres in times of need.



"My message is clear: the police administration does not belong to any political party, and it must be run in accordance with the law. It's your responsibility to ensure that no innocent person becomes a victim of harassment," he said.

Tarique made the remarks while addressing the "Welfare Parade" organised as part of Police Week-2026 at the Bangladesh Police Auditorium in the Rajarbagh Police Lines. The PM also inaugurated Police Week-2026, first during his tenure, reports UNB.

Police members placed various demands before the prime minister, including a separate pay scale, overtime allowances equivalent to 50 percent of basic salary, and honorary promotions for personnel from constable to inspector ranks upon retirement.

Speaking at the event, Tarique said the relationship between police personnel and the public must be legal and humane, based on trust and confidence.

"In case of trouble or crisis, people should be able to consider police stations as their reliable place of shelter, this is what I expect from you."

He stressed the need to make police stations more accessible and people-friendly, so that people can lodge complaints without fear and receive remedies.

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Traditional sampan boats race across the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram yesterday. People gathered along the riverbanks to witness the 20th "Sampan Race and Chattgaiya Culture Fair". Many were seen cheering their teams on.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

SC upholds Ivy's bail in 10 cases

No bar on release, lawyer says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld the High Court bail of former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Selina Hayat Ivy in 10 cases.

The apex court dismissed five petitions filed by the state challenging the HC verdicts that on November 9 last year granted bail to Ivy in five cases and vacated its chamber judge's orders that stayed her HC bail in other five cases.

This means that Ivy's HC bail in total 10 cases will remain effective, Deputy Attorney General Fatima Akhter and Ivy's lawyers Md Motaher Hossain Sazu

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Tehran sends US truce response to Islamabad

Vows retaliation against new strikes; drones hit several Gulf region targets

UAE, Kuwait air defences deal with drones coming from Iran

Iran war 'not over,' uranium must be removed: Netanyahu

ARAMCO warns 1 billion barrels lost, it will slow oil market recovery

AGENCIES

Iran responded to Washington's latest peace proposal yesterday, after drones threatened several Gulf region targets and Tehran warned it would not hold back from retaliating against any new US strikes.

According to state broadcaster IRIB, Tehran's response, passed to Pakistani mediators, focuses on ending the war "on all fronts, especially Lebanon" -- where Israel has kept up its fight with Iran-backed Hezbollah -- as well as on "ensuring shipping security".

Pakistan has received Iran's response to the United States' proposal on the war and the response has been sent to the US, a Pakistani government official involved in the talks said.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in an interview yesterday that Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium must be "taken out" before the US-Israeli war against Iran can be considered over. "It's not over, because there's still nuclear material -- enriched uranium -- that has to be taken out of Iran," he said.

US President Donald Trump has said it would only take two weeks to hit "every single target" in Iran, adding that the Islamic republic was "militarily defeated."

Trump was expecting Iran's reply by Friday, but as the wait dragged on, the ceasefire in the Gulf came under increasing strain, including from yesterday's drone strikes, one of which

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