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16 PAGES: Tk 15.00



**Ukraine's robots sow fear among Russia's troops**

P5



**How earthquakes, disease and war shaped Bengal's slave trade**

P10



**PSG, kings of Europe again**

P11



**Leather sector loses billions to compliance gaps**

B1

## ADP for health doubles, delivery still a concern

Experts call for improving efficiency of agencies, simplifying processes for project approval, procurement

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government's decision to nearly double the health development budget for the next fiscal year has been welcomed as a step in the right direction though serious doubts persist over the implementation capacity of health authorities.

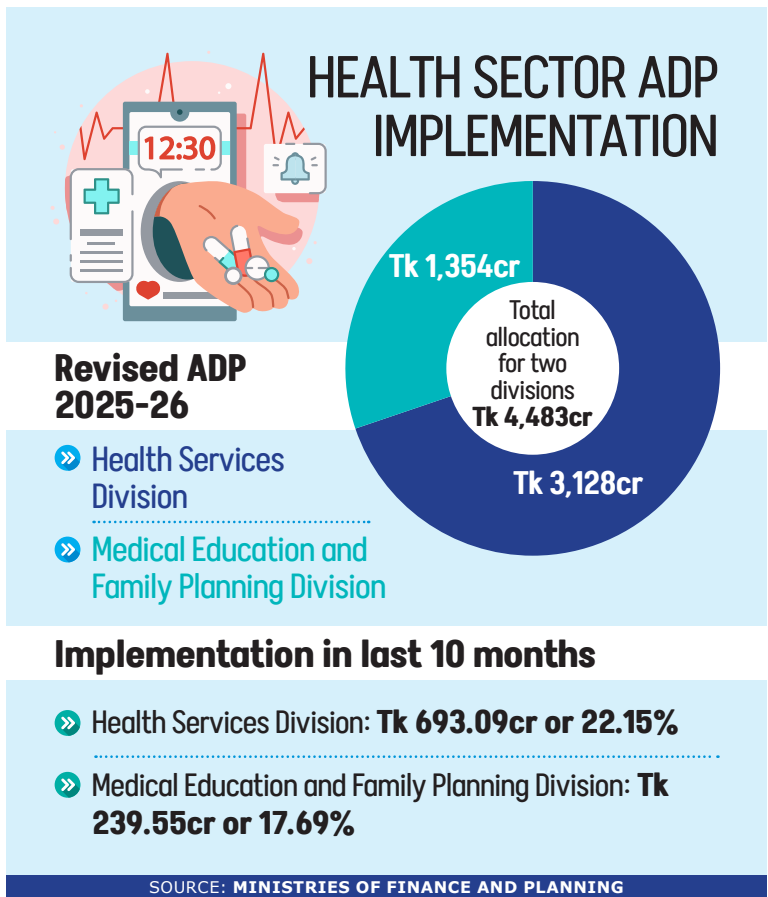
Under the new Annual Development Programme (ADP), the health sector has been allocated Tk 35,530 crore for fiscal 2026-27 -- up from Tk 18,148 crore in fiscal 2025-26 -- representing 11.86 percent of the total ADP outlay. It is the third-largest sectoral allocation, behind transport and communication and education.

The budget increase, however, comes against a backdrop of poor expenditure performance by the two divisions under the health ministry, the primary users of health funds. In the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, the two divisions spent approximately Tk 933 crore -- less than one-tenth of their annual allocation.

Experts attribute the shortfall to weak implementation capacity, cumbersome procurement and approval processes, and outdated budgeting practices. While a larger health budget is necessary, they argue that institutional reform and sound financial management are equally -- if not more -- critical to ensuring funds are used effectively.

Health campaigners and experts have long pressed for greater investment in the sector, which has languished below one percent of GDP for over a decade. The Health Sector Reform Commission, constituted during the interim government's tenure, called for raising health spending to 5 percent of GDP -- a target mirrored in the BNP's election manifesto.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



With offices set to reopen today, the Kamalapur Railway Station saw city dwellers return in droves at the end of the seven-day Eid holiday yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## No deal with US until Iran's rights secured

Iran negotiator warns Washington cannot be trusted; Trump says US 'shouldn't have been in Iran'

AGENCIES

Iran's chief negotiator warned yesterday the United States is not to be trusted, saying Tehran would not agree to any deal with Washington unless it fully secures Iranian rights.

Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf's remarks came as reports emerged that US President

development and re-opening the Hormuz shipping lane, over which Iran has sought to impose control since the war began.

"The one guarantee that I have to have is that there will be no nuclear weapons. They've agreed to that, and it was very interesting," he told his daughter-in-law Lara Trump in an interview on her Fox News show.

|                                                       |                                                              |                                                          |                                                     |
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Donald Trump had sent a tougher peace proposal back to Iran and underlined the rift that the parties still need to close.

Any further tweaks to the draft could further delay an agreement to formally end the Middle East war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz after weeks of fraught negotiations marked by sharp rhetoric and occasional flare-ups of violence.

The New York Times and Axios reported on Saturday that Trump had sent back a "tougher" new framework to be considered by Iran, though details remain unclear.

Trump has said his priorities include stopping Iran from any nuclear weapon

"You look at what happened with Iraq. We did so bad. It was such a foolish thing what we did. We shouldn't have been there in the first place, by the way," Trump said, before adding, "We shouldn't have been in Iran, but Iran has the capability."

Tehran has previously cast doubt on Trump's assertions and the sides remain far apart on key issues.

"We will not approve any agreement until we are certain that the rights of the Iranian people have been secured," Ghalibaf said, in a video broadcast on state television.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## AD-DIN NEWBORN DEATHS Poor airflow and management likely to blame

Say DGHS, victim families

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Shortcomings in management and ventilation in the post-operative room of Ad-din Medical College Hospital may have contributed to the deaths of six newborns last Wednesday, health officials and the families of the victims said.

The post-operative room, where two babies died and four others' conditions deteriorated before they ultimately died, lacked any alternative ventilation system besides air conditioners. Apparent management deficiencies also raised concerns, health officials said after visiting the hospital several times in recent days.

They further said the 700-bed private hospital has infrastructural weaknesses in several areas, including narrow corridors and poor ventilation, creating a suffocating environment and increasing its vulnerability to fire and other disasters.

The issues came to light as a government probe committee continued investigating the unusual deaths of six newborns, aged between one and four days.

The committee, led by a joint secretary of the health ministry, has almost completed its investigation but decided to interview the victims' families to verify its findings, as no post-mortem examinations or inquest reports were conducted.

Committee members yesterday recorded the statement of the mother of twin babies in Dhaka and were on their way to Keraniganj to meet another victim's family around 4:30pm, said Md Mohsin, head of the probe committee.

RELATED STORY ON PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



## A record-breaking rout

Only Hungary has ever achieved the feat of scoring 10 goals in a single FIFA World Cup match. In the group stage of the 1982 World Cup, they crushed El Salvador 10-1. Coming on as a second-half substitute, Laszlo Kiss scored a hat-trick in just seven minutes.

**\*\*Visit the Star website to also read: 'Garrincha: 1962's flying feet of Brazil'**



With 10 days to go before the FIFA World Cup, football fans are thronging Dhaka's clothing markets after the Eid-ul-Azha holidays to buy jerseys of their favourite teams. The photo was taken yesterday in the capital's Gulistan area.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Mob killings hit six-month high in May

32 killed; 326 incidents of violence against women, children recorded in the month, says MSF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 32 people were killed in mob violence in May -- the highest monthly death toll in the past six months.

Another 71 people were critically injured in at least 69 incidents of mob violence, according to the Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF).

In its monthly report released yesterday, the rights body said, "The number of people killed in mob violence rose from 21 [in April] to 32 in May, while the number of injured increased from 49 to 71, reflecting a clear rise in the tendency of people taking the law into their own hands."

Law enforcers are also being attacked during incidents of mob violence, it said.

In April, 21 people were killed and 49 were critically injured in mob beatings across the country, while 19 people were killed and 31 were injured the month before.

According to MSF's tally, 18 people were killed in February and 21 in January, up from 10 deaths recorded in December 2025.

Mob violence has continued unabated despite repeated assurances from Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed that such acts would not be tolerated.

The issue has also been discussed in parliament on several occasions.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4