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

Govt to provide full support for Dhaka's dev
Says Fakhrul

BSS, Dhaka

LGRD and Cooperatives
Minister Mirza

Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the government will take appropriate measures to make Dhaka more dynamic, attractive, liveable, and scenic, instead of leaving it entangled in movements, agitation, and campaigns.

Speaking at a programme titled "Dokkhiner Janala" in the capital's Bijoyanagar area, he said the government and the ministry would extend all necessary support in this regard. The programme was organised by Dhaka South City Corporation.

He said merely raising
SEE PAGE 4 COL 5**A driver places a spare tyre back inside a converted ambulance after it broke down in the capital's Palashi area yesterday while carrying an injured woman from the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation to Cumilla. The exposed tyre, gas cylinders placed beneath the patient's stretcher, and absence of standard medical equipment show the risks patients face during inter-district transfers in unregulated ambulances.**

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

65% people spared from power tariff hike
Says info minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon yesterday said the government kept 65 percent of the country's marginal consumers outside the electricity price hike, considering the global energy crisis and domestic realities.

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission raised electricity prices at three levels, wholesale, transmission and retail, last Wednesday. The new rates will take effect with the June bill.

Speaking at the Secretariat, Swapon said although BERC raised electricity prices for all consumers, the government appealed to ensure that prices were not increased for marginal consumers who use up to 75 units of electricity.

Consumers within this limit will continue to pay electricity bills at the previous rates, he said. "If there had been a proper policy for energy resource extraction over the past 20 years, we would not have to be so import-dependent now," he added.

He also said the government has taken initiatives for domestic gas exploration and offshore bidding, while also giving priority to solar and renewable energy production.

**'Mango: more than just a fruit'****Experts urge better harvesting, export practices to unlock mango's true potential at Star Itihas Adda**

PHOTO: STAR

Participants at an episode of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, titled "Aam O Aamjonota", held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mango is part of Bengal's history, culture, and daily life, but early harvesting, poor processing, and weak export facilities are preventing Bangladesh from realising the fruit's full value, speakers said yesterday.

They made the remarks at an episode of The Daily Star Itihas Adda titled "Aam O Aamjonota", held at The Daily Star Centre in

the capital.

Speaking at the event, writer and mango researcher Mahbub Siddiqi said mango has a long history in this region. Scientists trace its origin to the Indo-Burma region, including Chattogram, Arakan, and parts of Southeast Asia, he added.

He highlighted references to mango in Sanskrit and Pali literature, Buddhist texts, and

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Cut renewable energy equipment taxes to 1%

Say speakers at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society organisations yesterday urged the government to reduce taxes and duties on renewable energy equipment to a symbolic 1 percent for the next decade.

They said the current average tax burden of 37 percent is making solar power unnecessarily expensive and slowing Bangladesh's renewable energy transition.

The demand was made at a press conference titled "Renewable Energy for Energy Security: Policy Shifts Needed in the National Budget" at a Dhaka hotel.

The Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), the Bangladesh Working Group on Ecology and Development (BWGED), and several other organisations jointly organised the event.

A policy paper presented at the event said renewable energy equipment currently faces taxes and duties ranging from 26.9 percent for solar panels and inverters to over 58 percent for mounting structures, DC cables and solar power walkways.

This raises the cost of renewable energy systems by an average of 37 percent, creating a major barrier for households, farmers and small businesses seeking to invest in solar power, it said.

Presenting the keynote paper, CLEAN networking adviser Monowar Mostafa said Bangladesh remains heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels, while the current revenue

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Cut import taxes, duties on solar equipment
- Launch Tk 25,000cr BB revolving fund
- Offer solar loans below 5pc interest
- Provide Tk 25,000/kW rooftop solar subsidy
- Support women, indigenous-led projects

structure penalises clean energy technologies.

The groups called for reducing customs duties, VAT, advance income tax, advance tax, and regulatory duties on all renewable energy

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

Govt launches nationwide anti-dengue drive

UNB, Dhaka

The government launched a three-month nationwide campaign yesterday to raise public awareness about dengue prevention, eliminate Aedes mosquito breeding sites, and ensure a clean environment.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain inaugurated the campaign at Rabindra Sarobar in the capital.

"The government is launching a nationwide awareness campaign, including announcements through loudspeakers, to prevent dengue. We want to convey the message to everyone that maintaining cleanliness and preventing water from accumulating are the most effective ways to combat dengue," he said at the inauguration.

DSCC Administrator M Abdus Salam said citizens have the most important role in preventing the spread of dengue. A DSCC survey identified 28 of the corporation's 75 wards as high-risk areas, he said.

A week-long special "crash programme" will begin in those wards from today to intensify anti-dengue measures.

Abdus Salam also said the prime minister had warned authorities about potential dengue risks two months ago, prompting the city corporation and health authorities to take advance preparations.

**Star journo wins Agro-Industry Media Award**

STAR REPORT

Sukanta Halder, staff reporter at The Daily Star, has won the Bangladesh Agro-Industry Media Award 2025 in recognition of his outstanding reporting on Bangladesh's agriculture and agro-processing sectors.

Sukanta won the award in the print media category for his report titled "Potato Paradox: Just another curry on the rice plate? This will not solve the price problem," published in The Daily Star on December 27, 2025.

Alongside Sukanta, six other journalists were also recognised for excellence in reporting across print, television, and online media platforms.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon handed over the awards yesterday at a ceremony at the MCCI Conference Hall in Gulshan, Dhaka.

In the print media category, awards were also presented to Rafikul Islam and M Munir Hossain of The Daily Sun.
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Sukanta Halder

3 more die with measles-like symptoms
Death toll rises to 613

UNB, Dhaka

Three more children died from measles-like symptoms in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, raising the fatalities from the disease and similar symptoms to 613.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) classified the latest deaths as suspected.

As such, the total number of suspected measles deaths has reached 522, while the confirmed deaths remained unchanged at 91.

A total of 915 suspected measles cases and 117 confirmed measles cases were recorded during these 24 hours, bringing the overall total to 77,791 and 9,620, respectively.

Since March 15 this year, a total of 63,134 suspected measles patients have been hospitalised, of whom 58,964 have recovered, according to the DGHS.



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Farmers, traders and buyers crowd Kansat mango market in Chapainawabganj yesterday as baskets and crates filled with freshly harvested mangoes arrive from different orchards in the district. Known as one of the country's major mango trading hubs, the market draws buyers and traders during the peak season, with large volumes of the fruit changing hands every day. Despite the heavy supply, traders said high prices have kept many general buyers away from the market this year.