Years of indiscriminate waste dumping have left the Zia Sarani canal in the capital's Shanir Akhra in a filthy state, polluting the water and spreading a foul smell in the area. Locals say the clogged canal has also contributed to a surge in dengue cases in the neighbourhood. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

UNION PARISHAD

Draft polls code likely next week

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission is likely to publish the draft of code of conduct within next week, following a meeting ahead of the upcoming union parishad elections expected to begin in October this year.

The EC will publish the draft on its website for public opinion before approval and finalisation.

EC officials said the draft would then be sent to the law ministry for vetting. The commission would prepare and bring amendments to the rules of the other four tiers of local government bodies -- municipality, zilla parishad, upazila parishad, and city corporation -- to reflect the final code for the union parishad election.

EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed shared these developments with The Daily Star on Monday afternoon at his office in EC headquarters.

Asked when the commission meeting would be held, he said, "We expect to hold

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1.5% commission for bringing foreign investment: PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday said anyone bringing foreign investment into Bangladesh would be entitled to a 1.5 percent consultancy fee or commission as an incentive to boost foreign direct investment.

Responding to a question from MP Joharat Adeeb Chowdhury during the question-and-answer session in parliament, the premier said the initiative would encourage expatriate Bangladeshis to invest in the country and enable skilled and qualified individuals to attract foreign investors.

The session was presided over by Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad.

The prime minister said foreign investors had previously been reluctant to invest in Bangladesh as they could not repatriate dividends.

"We have solved this problem through legislation," he said.

"Just a few days ago, we decided that if any Bangladeshi or foreign national brings foreign investment into the country, they will receive a 1.5 percent consultancy fee or commission as an incentive."

The cabinet on June 4, 2026, approved the Foreign Direct Investment Incentive Scheme Policy, 2026, aimed at encouraging Bangladeshi citizens, including expatriates, to bring foreign direct investment into the country.

Replying to another question from MP Mobashwer Alam Bhuiyan, Tarique said the government had taken several measures to simplify the investment process and attract both domestic and foreign investors.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Draft NHRC law may weaken commission: TIB

Graft watchdog submits 19 recommendations to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has expressed concern that the institution proposed under the draft National Human Rights Commission Act, 2026, would not function as an independent commission.

In a statement issued on June 8, TIB said the draft law, prepared by the government on May 17, contains several fundamental changes from the 2025 ordinance that undermine public expectations for an effective human rights commission free from government influence.

The organisation also noted that several provisions are inconsistent with the Paris Principles and other international standards governing national human rights institutions.

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A worker sprays insecticide around a small pond during a special cleanliness drive launched by Rajshahi City Corporation to prevent dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases. The two-week programme was formally inaugurated yesterday. PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

HSBC/HKU CASE CHALLENGE

'Team Bangladesh' second runner-up

CITY DESK

"Team Bangladesh" has secured the second runner-up position at the HSBC/HKU Business Case Challenge 2026, one of the world's leading undergraduate business case competitions jointly organised by HSBC and the University of Hong Kong (HKU).

The team, comprising Shakhawat Salim, Naveed Abrar, Md Ridwan Sakib Anjum, and Mohammad Faiyad Hossain from Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP), represented the country after emerging as champions at the Business Case Competition 2026 organised by HSBC Bangladesh and BRAC University in April.

The global competition, held in Hong Kong from June 1 to 5, brought together 24 undergraduate teams selected from a pool of more than 12,000 students who competed in local rounds across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Australia emerged as champion, while Thailand secured the first runner-up position. Bangladesh finished as the second runner-up.

During the competition, teams worked on four business cases reflecting contemporary corporate challenges: managing founder-dependency risks at an investment firm, helping Pop Mart sustain profitability beyond its initial popularity, educating the public about stablecoins in Hong Kong, and transforming an influencer-led fashion brand into a global business.

3 July case verdicts likely this month

Hopes ICT chief prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal Aminul Islam yesterday expressed hope that verdicts in three crimes against humanity cases linked to the July 2024 uprising would be delivered within June.

In one case, former minister Hasanul Haq Inu, now in custody, is the sole accused. Another case names Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif and three other Kushtia AL leaders, all absconding, as defendants.

The third case involves five former police officers, including former Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman, accused of killing two people and injuring two others in Rampura during the uprising. Only ASI Chanchal Chandra Sarkar is in custody, and the trial is in its final stage.

Speaking after the conclusion of arguments in the case against Hanif and others, the chief prosecutor said the tribunal, scheduled to go on annual vacation from July 1 to 20, had been requested to deliver the judgments before then.

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63% retailers still rely on polythene bags

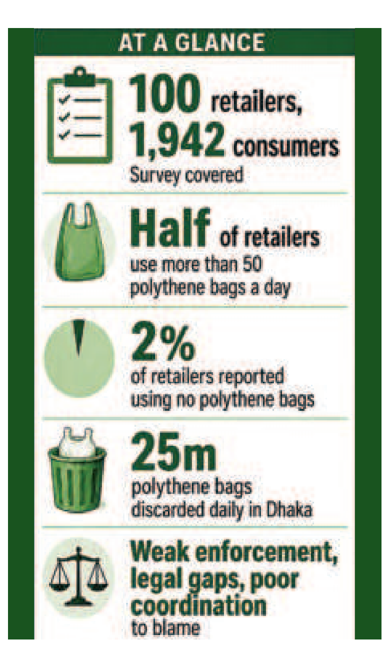
Finds ESDO study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 63 percent of retailers continue to use banned polythene shopping bags despite being aware of the prohibition, as per a recent survey, suggesting that awareness alone is not enough to ensure compliance.

The study, conducted by Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) among 100 retailers and 1,942 consumers between July 2025 and June 2026, found that half of the retailers use more than 50 polythene bags a day, while only 2 percent reported not using any.

It said affordability, accessibility, convenience and long-standing habits remain the main drivers of polythene use among both consumers and retailers. Rural and informal markets are particularly dependent on polythene bags due to their low cost and convenience for small purchases.



The study also identified weak enforcement of the ban, legal loopholes, lack of environmental education, limited availability of alternatives, political influence, and coordination gaps among responsible institutions as key structural reasons behind continued widespread use of polythene bags.

The findings were presented in a report titled "Beyond the Ban: Unpacking Polythene Dependency in Bangladesh" at ESDO's Lalmatia office yesterday.

Presenting the findings, project lead Noshin Naila said Bangladesh emerged as a global environmental pioneer by introducing a ban on polythene shopping bags in 2002, yet around 25 million bags are still discarded daily in Dhaka alone.

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