



USA football's global scale in full display

AGENCIES

Evan Hand had watched viral sports moments before, the kind that flicker across platforms and fade just as quickly. But one clip from a World Cup match refused to behave like the rest. It didn't feature a global superstar or a historic final. It showed an aging goalkeeper standing between Cape Verde and Spain, and somehow rewriting the rules of attention.

Vozinha, Cape Verde's 40-year-old keeper, produced a seven-save masterclass in a goalless draw against heavily favoured Vozinha. Within hours, his name surged across feeds, turning into a global talking point. Followers stacked up in the millions, faster than anyone expected for a player from a nation many viewers struggled to locate on a map.

"The big moment for me was the Vozinha thing," said Hand, a sports content creator. "It was seeing this dude gain 15 million followers basically overnight playing for a team where if you were to look on a map, you could not tell me where Cape

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Argentina captain Lionel Messi trains at the Compass Minerals National Performance Center in Kansas City yesterday ahead of his side's final FIFA World Cup Group J match against Jordan in Arlington, Texas. The tournament's top scorer with five goals, Messi is expected to begin the match on the bench after Argentina secured top spot in the group with victories over Algeria and Austria. Coach Lionel Scaloni said the decision was purely to manage his captain's workload and give other squad members an opportunity ahead of the knockout stage.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Knockouts beckon as WC lives up to hype

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Following a hectic 17-day schedule featuring 72 group-stage matches, the FIFA World Cup 2026 is finally entering its business end, as hosts Canada take on South Africa in the opening Round of 32 match at Los Angeles Stadium tonight.

Before the mega event kicked off, much of the discussion centred around off-the-field issues, including soaring ticket prices, visa complications, fixture scheduling and the United States' treatment of the Iran national team. However, once the football began, those concerns largely faded as the action on the pitch captured the world's attention.

From Lionel Messi becoming the World Cup's all-time leading goalscorer to Cristiano Ronaldo extending his record by scoring in six different World Cups, the 23rd installment of the tournament has already produced countless memorable moments. A total of 196 goals, 10 red cards, three hat-tricks and 12 own goals had been recorded by the end of 66 of the 72 group-stage matches,

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Trump unveils new US passport with picture of himself

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump on Friday unveiled a rendering of a new limited-edition US passport to mark the country's 250th anniversary of independence – featuring his stern-faced likeness.



"The USA's New Passport, which says, 'Welcome, but be good!'" Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform featuring the passport mock-up.

The image features a glowering Trump leaning on his desk and his signature, with the text of the Declaration of Independence in the background. It appears to be based on a portrait taken by White House photographer Daniel Torok.

The opposite page shows a painting depicting the declaration's signing in 1776, with the words "United States of America 250."

The White House posted the same passport rendering, with the words "PATRIOT PASSPORT."

Charging gaps stalling EV adoption

Say experts at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is struggling to expand electric vehicle (EV) adoption due to inadequate charging infrastructure, unreliable electricity supply, weak data systems, and no long-term policy, experts said.

The country has only 669 registered EVs, excluding electric three-wheelers, out of the 67.24 lakh registered vehicles, according to a keynote paper presented by Taskeen Ahmed, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), at a seminar yesterday.

The DCCI and the Bangladesh Sustainable and Renewable Energy Association organised the seminar titled "The Electric Vehicle: Challenges and Prospects in Bangladesh".

The keynote paper identified six key barriers to EV adoption: the energy crisis, limited charging infrastructure, depot shortages, high upfront costs, uncertainty over

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CASES OF CUSTODIAL TORTURE, DEATHS 'Cops shouldn't probe themselves'

Say rights campaigners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights campaigners have called for a radical change to how Bangladesh investigates allegations of torture and custodial deaths, saying that the current flawed system allows the police to investigate themselves.

Speaking at the 12th Human Rights Conference in Dhaka yesterday, lawyers and activists said the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) or an independent body should handle investigations instead. Referring to the 2014 custodial death of Ishtiaque Hossain Jonny and his family's decade-long legal battle, Supreme Court lawyer Sara Hossain highlighted challenges within the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act, 2013.

"It is nearly impossible for ordinary citizens to file a case against the police. Even if a case is recorded, the investigation process remains a major hurdle."

Rocky's [Jonny's brother]

case saw a verdict because there was a judicial inquiry.

"Otherwise, would the police investigate themselves?" she questioned, emphasising the need to empower the NHRC to independently investigate law enforcement agencies.

sentiment.

Despite video evidence of a bomb recovery at the Uttara TFI cell, the chemical report found no trace of explosives because the police were in charge of the investigation, he said.

"It is nearly impossible for ordinary citizens to file a case against the police. Even if a case is recorded, the investigation process remains a major hurdle."

Barrister Sara Hossain



Police had offered a settlement after the death, said Jonny's brother Imtiaz Hossain Rocky. When his family refused, the police declined to file a murder case.

Tajul Islam, former chief prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal, cited a practical example to echo this

Meanwhile, lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir highlighted a study on 2,176 police crimes between 2000 and 2023.

In 28 cases where police officers were the accused, final reports declared them

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Bangladeshi couple, child stabbed to death in Italy

Son survives knife attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Three Bangladeshi nationals from Companiganj upazila in Noakhali were stabbed to death by miscreants at their residence in Italy on Friday.

The deceased were identified as Kamal Uddin Babul, 39, of Purba Charkakra village; his wife, Arju Begum, 35; and their five-year-old daughter, Arisha Islam.

The couple's son, Amir Hossain Ayon, 20, was injured in the incident, according to family members.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Babul's relative in Bangladesh, Afnan Hossain Nayeem, said a group of miscreants entered Babul's residence in the Aurelio area, near Italy's capital, Rome, at around 8:00pm local time on Friday.

The attackers stabbed Babul, his wife, and their daughter. Ayon was outside at the time. When he entered the house a short while later, he too was attacked.

Alerted by the commotion, neighbours rushed to the house to rescue the victims, but by then the attackers had fled.

The victims were taken to Gemelli Hospital, where doctors declared three of them dead. Ayon is now

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BMU hospital set for corporate model

Treatment costs likely to be higher than public hospitals

TUHIN SHUBHIRA ADHIKARY

The Super Specialised Hospital of the Bangladesh Medical University (BMU) is set to be run as a corporate entity, and its treatment costs will be higher than those of government or autonomous hospitals, officials said.

To facilitate the move, the cabinet has approved an amendment to the existing BMU law. The amendment is likely to be placed before the parliament during this ongoing session, they said.

The corporate model is necessary to ensure administrative and financial autonomy, allowing the hospital to attract highly qualified doctors with competitive salaries, said BMU officials.

"It would be run under the company act once the amendment of the act is passed in the parliament," Prof Abul Kalam Azad, pro vice chancellor (administration) of BMU, told The Daily Star yesterday.



The decisions on the hospital's mode of operation and manpower recruitment should have been taken much earlier, said Prof Syed Abdul Hamid of the Institute of Health Economics at the University of Dhaka.

"Were those decisions made earlier, the facility would not have remained non-functional for such a long time," he told this correspondent yesterday.

The 750-bed hospital, established under a Tk 1,868 crore project, was inaugurated in September 2022. However, no dedicated workforce has been appointed so far, and limited services are being provided using BMU's existing staff and budget.

Running the hospital under a private company model is likely to help prevent middle-class patients from going abroad for treatment, but the government should introduce a package and give a

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PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

People take part in the traditional Tazia procession at Hussaini Dalan in Old Dhaka on Friday to mark the sacred observance of Ashura. Held in remembrance of the tragedy of Karbala, the procession drew members of the Shia community as well as people from different walks of life.