



Vendors and parked motorcycles occupy the footpath in front of BIRDEM General Hospital in Dhaka's Shahbagh area, obstructing patient and pedestrian movements. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN



FROM THE JS GALLERY

Tk 20 crore allocated for opposition-held seats

Fakhrul tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LGRD Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday told parliament that nearly Tk 20 crore has been allocated for constituencies represented by opposition lawmakers. "Our honourable prime minister has sanctioned nearly Tk 20 crore from his discretionary fund for the constituencies represented by opposition members, excluding city corporation areas," the minister said in a statement delivered under Rule 300. The allocation would be used for mosques, graveyards and Eidgahs, he added. SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Teesta plan a national priority Says PM at parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday said the government would implement the Teesta barrage master plan at any cost, treating it as a matter of national priority. Speaking in parliament during the discussion on the proposed 2026-27 budget, the Leader of the House said the government had also taken steps to construct the Padma barrage, which would store excess monsoon water for use during the dry season. Tarique said water remains one of the biggest concerns for people in the northern districts, particularly in Rajshahi and Rangpur, where MPs regularly raise issues related to the Padma and Teesta rivers. On national security, Tarique said the SEE PAGE 9 COL 3



Karnaphuli Tunnel costs twice the toll revenue

Rabiul tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Shaikh Rabiul Alam yesterday informed the parliament that the monthly expenditure for operation and maintenance of the Karnaphuli Tunnel is nearly double the revenue generated from its tolls. On average, monthly toll revenue amounts to Tk 3.37 crore, while expenses reach Tk 6.95 crore, he said in response to a query from lawmaker Hasnat Abdullah. The higher costs are due to continuous SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

পূবালী কর্ম-উদ্যোগ

- ঋণ সীমাঃ ২ লক্ষ টাকা থেকে সর্বোচ্চ ১০ লক্ষ টাকা
- ঋণের মেয়াদ ১২/২৪/৩৬ মাস, সমান মাসিক কিস্তিতে পরিশোধযোগ্য
- ঋণেলাভ্যুক্ত ও দ্রুততম সময়ে ঋণ প্রক্রিয়াকরণ
- সহ-জামানত (Collateral Security) বাধ্যতামূলক নয়

পূবালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
PUBALI BANK PLC.

Dhaka has long expanded faster than it has planned. Wetlands have been filled, low-lying areas built over, and high-rises have been raised that may not withstand a major earthquake. In the first instalment of a six-part series, Star examines the city's fragile ground, soil liquefaction, and construction gaps that could turn a powerful tremor into a disaster.

A city standing on fragile ground

Over half of Dhaka lies in high liquefaction zones, raising risk of severe damage in major earthquake

HELEMUL ALAM

Residents across large parts of Dhaka face serious risks during a major earthquake, as much of the city stands on hazardous, liquefaction-prone soil, experts have warned. They called for strict compliance with the Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC), particularly proper piling and soil improvement, before buildings are constructed in high-risk areas. A recent study by Rajuk and Buet shows that about 55-60 percent of Dhaka falls within the red and magenta zones of the city's liquefaction hazard map, indicating highly vulnerable soil conditions.

"These areas also face high seismic amplification, as both hazards are linked to loose or artificially filled ground," said Prof Mehedi Ahmed Ansary of Civil Engineering at Buet. Within the 1,528 square kilometres under Rajuk's jurisdiction, Buet researchers found that more than half the area is highly susceptible to soil liquefaction during a major earthquake. Geologists said Dhaka's soil profile, mainly red Pleistocene clay and soft alluvial deposits, is not suited to the city's dense and largely unplanned expansion. A strong earthquake could therefore cause widespread structural failure. Experts recommended proper

piling and soil improvement, especially within the top five to six metres, in high-risk areas. Buet classified Dhaka's ground conditions into four colour-coded zones using the Liquefaction Potential Index. Red, with an LPI above 15, indicates the highest risk; magenta, with 10-15, indicates moderate to high risk; blue, with 5-10, indicates lower risk; and green, below 5, indicates the lowest risk. Prof Ansary said red-zone areas could suffer severe ground failure during a magnitude 7.5 earthquake, particularly where groundwater levels are high, such as areas near ponds, canals and rivers. Explaining seismic SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



2024 JULY UPRISING Judgement in case against Inu today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 is set to deliver its verdict today against Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president and former information minister Hasanul Haq Inu in a crimes against humanity case. Inu, currently in jail custody, is the sole accused in the case linked to the killing of six people in Kushtia during 2024 July uprising. Chief Prosecutor Md Aminul Islam yesterday told The Daily Star that the prosecution expects the tribunal to hand Inu the appropriate punishment. Defence counsel Sifat Mahmud, however, said the prosecution had failed to prove any of the charges against his client. "We hope the tribunal will acquit Mr Inu of all charges," he said. The tribunal framed eight charges against him on November 2, 2025.



Power cuts grip Ctg amid heat

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

For Shuvechchha Ghosh, a resident of Askar Dighir Par in Chattogram city, life has become unbearable due to frequent power outages amid sweltering heat and high humidity. "Load shedding has been occurring seven to eight times daily over the past week. My five-year-old child can hardly sleep at night because of the outages in this heat," she said. Shuvechchha's ordeal is shared by thousands of residents across the port city, including those in Askar Dighir Par, Chawk Bazar, Panchlaish, Katalganj, Bakalia, Kazir Dewri, Oxygen, Chatteshwari Road, and Lalkhan Bazar, among other areas. "Even during the monsoon, the temperature remains unusually high. Frequent load shedding

makes the situation worse," said Md Rajib of the City Gate area. The maximum temperature in the city was recorded at 33 degrees Celsius yesterday, with average humidity at 69 percent, said Bishwajit Chowdhury, forecast officer at the Chattogram Met Office. Akbar Hossain, assistant director of PDB, said the region was receiving roughly 100 MW less than its daily demand, forcing rotational load shedding. SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



A worker harvests hybrid grass for cattle feed at Gutudia in Dumuria upazila, Khulna yesterday. Farmers say the nutritious, fast-growing, high-yielding, and cost-efficient fodder supports better livestock health and increases milk production. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN