DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 20, 2026



"Next year, I will give one of my SpaceX shares to every kid in America. This will be the first of many."

Tech billionaire
ELON MUSK

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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Unapologetic, Ishraque quits

Vows to continue anti-drug drives in Dhaka-6

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka-6 lawmaker Ishraque Hossain resigned from the council of ministers yesterday after facing growing criticism over his role in an "anti-drug drive" in which he was seen brandishing a firearm.

Ishraque, who on Sunday denied reports that Prime Minister Tarique Rahman had earlier instructed him to resign, said he had voluntarily expressed his intention to quit as state minister for Liberation War Affairs.

"The official version would naturally be that I was asked to resign on the prime minister's instructions, rather than at my own request," he said at a media briefing at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon.

He said he wanted to resign to focus more on an anti-drug campaign and other public activities in Dhaka-6 and surrounding areas, and the prime minister had agreed to let him do that.

Defending his actions, Ishraque, son of former Dhaka City mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, said he would apologise if he had done anything wrong but maintained that he had committed no mistake during the drive.



Ishraque's resignation letter was sent after the media briefing, said his press officer, Mahfuz Kabir Mukta.

The letter reached the cabinet division at 6:00pm yesterday, said one of its top officials, adding that it was forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office.

A gazette notification related to the resignation could be issued at any time.

The controversy erupted after Ishraque posted a video on his Facebook account on Saturday of himself getting out of a vehicle with a pistol during an anti-drug drive in the capital's Gendaria area.

Other footage appeared to show people accompanying him carrying firearms. In one video, a person was seen threatening to shoot, while another showed a bodyguard kicking a young man.

The following day, several media outlets reported that the prime minister had instructed him in the afternoon to step down.

Ishraque dubbed the news as false and fabricated, but at around 8:30am yesterday, he called the press conference.

There, he said confusion had arisen over the timing and process of the

STRONG MESSAGE ON ACCOUNTABILITY; IT'S TOO HARSH ... PAGE 2 SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Hundreds of illegal battery-run rickshaws lie impounded in an open field in Dhaka's Postogola area. Traffic police have stepped up a crackdown on these unauthorised vehicles to ease congestion and improve road safety. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Controversy his middle name

ARAFATH SHETU

Inheriting his father's political legacy and popularity in Old Dhaka, Ishraque Hossain rose quickly from party activist to parliamentarian in 2026. But the 39-year-old Dhaka-6 MP had repeatedly embarrassed his party over the years, even as his popularity among its rank and file grew.

Ultimately, it was his pistol-wielding, drug-busting "operation" that cost him his post as state minister for Liberation War affairs.

Ishraque's father, Sadeque Hossain Khoka, was an influential BNP leader with a strong following in the constituency. Ishraque became active in politics around the 2018 national election and soon established himself as a formidable organiser on the streets.

In 2020, he ran for mayor of Dhaka South but lost to the Awami League candidate before challenging the result. He was declared victorious by a court in 2025 but was never sworn in. He then contested the 2026 parliamentary election and won the Dhaka-6 seat.

Here is a look back at some of his most talked-about moments.

THE HERO WHO SNATCHED A WORKER FROM POLICE

On February 13, 2023, a rally was held in front of the National Press Club

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'Our son was killed without a fair trial'

Family demands return of body from KSA; Dhaka seeks explanation

MASUK HRIDOY

The family of Nazrul Islam, one of the two Bangladeshis executed in Saudi Arabia on October 14, yesterday alleged that Saudi authorities had executed him without notifying them beforehand or giving him an opportunity to defend himself.

Nazrul, 22, the eldest of four siblings, left for Saudi Arabia on November 10, 2022, and worked as a cleaner, according to his family.

Six months after his departure, Saudi police arrested him and a Bangladeshi woman for allegedly committing an "immoral act" at a mosque in Makkah.

More than three years later, his family said it learnt from media reports that he had been executed in Makkah on October 14.

His mother said he spoke to the family by phone from prison every Sunday, but they received no advance notice of his execution.

However, it could not yet be

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

Curfews in cities as cost of living riots rock France

REUTERS, *France*

French authorities yesterday set curfews in parts of several cities, including Paris, Lille and Nice, as they faced pressure over security failings after a weekend of riots and looting stemming from nationwide anti-government protests.

Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu had ruled out a blanket curfew in Paris but not a state of emergency, and had said it was more appropriate for now to apply partial and localised curfews.

"My determination to restore order is absolute," he told reporters.

Paris police said they had issued orders barring protests in certain areas of the French capital from 8:00pm (1800 GMT) yesterday and had issued a curfew around the Place de la Republique and Les Halles from 11:00pm Both would remain in effect until 6:00am today.

Italy, Spain and Portugal, where anger over rising prices has also led to protests, were keeping a nervous eye on the developments.

"A police deployment is in place to ensure strict compliance with these measures," the police said in a statement.

A source in Lecornu's office said a curfew for minors had been set between 8:00pm and 6:00am for the next two days in Lille, Douai, Wattignies and Denain with the agreement of the local mayors.

In Nice, mayor Eric Ciotti said in a video posted online that he had signed an order installing a curfew for minors in central Nice overnight.

Marseille banned gatherings and demonstrations. French unions meanwhile called for a new round of strikes and rallies on November 5.

The weekend of looting and violence between some protesters and police followed weeks of student

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WE DEEPLY MOURN



Abu Nasar Altaf Hossain Siddiqui FCA

(01 March 1942 - 19 October 2026)

From all at

RRH

Rahman Rahman Huq
Chartered Accountants

Houthi attack kills 53 at Yemen govt training camp

More than 200 injured

REUTERS

Fifty-three people were killed and 200 were injured in an attack yesterday by the Iran-aligned Houthis on a government security forces training camp in Yemen's Shabwa province, according to the local authority, as fighting in the impoverished country intensifies.

Video verified by Reuters from Shabwa province showed injured people and bloodied bodies scattered across the ground.

The Houthis and the internationally recognised government, which is backed by a Saudi-led coalition, have been trading attacks since the group advanced in September towards territory near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a shipping chokepoint at the mouth of the Red Sea.

Local authority sources who spoke on condition of anonymity said the Houthis had launched three ballistic missiles at security forces during a training exercise.

Shabwa, an energy-rich province in south-central coastal Yemen overlooking the Gulf of Aden, is home to the Balhaf liquefied natural gas facility, Yemen's largest industrial investment.

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said on X that the group had targeted the training camp, which he said was run by Saudi forces.

Government forces this month began a campaign aimed at recapturing areas controlled by the Houthis, recovering ground near the strait, while the group besieges Taiz, the last major urban stronghold of anti-Houthi forces in the southern highland area of Yemen.

WE MOURN
Mrs. Rowshan Ara Hanif
(1954–2026)



Dhaka Bank family deeply mourns the sad demise of **Mrs. Rowshan Ara Hanif,** wife of late Mohammed Hanif, Former Sponsor Director of Dhaka Bank PLC and mother of Mr. Asif Hanif, Director of Dhaka Bank PLC.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

May Almighty Allah grant her Jannat-ul-Firdous and eternal peace. Ameen.

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