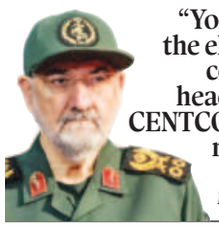
DHAKA MONDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2026



"You lost the war and the election. Vance has conceded, Rubio is heading for the exit... CENTCOM commander is now a podcaster!"

Top Iranian security official **MOHSEN REZAEI** warns US

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The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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As world leaders gather in Antalya, Turkey, today to chart the next course in the fight against global warming, residents of Shyamnagar in Satkhira, one of the world's climate frontlines, are focused on a more immediate challenge: survival.

Trapped between salinity and debt



PHOTO: **PINAKI ROY**

Farmland that generations of villagers cultivated in Shyamnagar upazila, Satkhira, has gradually been converted into shrimp and crab farms, allowing salinity to spread further inland. The photo was taken recently at Datinakhali village.

PINAKI ROY

Burdened with mounting debt, thousands of people in Satkhira's Shyamnagar upazila, one of Bangladesh's worst climate-hit areas, are struggling to sustain their traditional livelihoods as rising salinity continues to transform the coastal landscape.

Over the decades, sea-level rise, recurrent cyclone surges, and the expansion of brackish-water shrimp and crab farming have steadily pushed up salinity across the region, contaminating groundwater and rendering once-fertile farmland barren.

By 2024, salinity intrusion degraded two-thirds of the 17.03 lakh hectares of cultivable land in 18 southern districts, affecting an area nearly six times the size of Faridpur, shows the Soil Salinity Map of Bangladesh 2024 prepared by the Soil Resources Development Institute (SRDI).

SRDI officials said that in some affected areas, salinity levels reached up to eight times the tolerable limit of two deciSiemens (dS/m), a scientific unit used to measure soil salinity, indicating the amount of dissolved salt present in the moisture surrounding plant roots.

An estimated 50 lakh people have been internally displaced in Bangladesh, with natural disasters and climate impacts serving as the primary drivers, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre report 2026.

For many in Shyamnagar, migration has emerged as a last resort in the face of dwindling livelihood opportunities. Their journey from their ancestral home often begins with mounting debt or loss of land due to erosion. And in most cases, it ends in an urban slum.

One of them is Reshma Begum. She moved from Hajrakhali village to Itagachha Purbapara slum in Satkhira town after her home was lost to erosion along the Kabadak River following Cyclone Amphan in 2020.

Her husband, Ariful Islam, who once relied on agriculture and fishing for a living, now works as a day labourer.

Like Reshma, Rupa Begum and her husband Abu Musa had to move from Shyamnagar's Henchi village to Satkhira to make a living as their land became unsuitable for growing crops.

"My husband now sells seasonal fruits on a rickshaw van," said Rupa who lives in

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COP31 climate summit begins in Turkey today

AGENCIES

The 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change begins today in Turkey's Mediterranean resort city of Antalya, bringing together heads of state, senior officials, academics, and civil society representatives from around the world.

First held in Berlin in 1995, the annual summit provides a platform for countries party to the convention to assess progress in combating climate change, develop common solutions, and make decisions shaping global climate policies.

Turkey will preside over this year's conference, which runs on November 9-20 and addresses key decisions on sustainable development and

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- Salinity affected 11.56 lakh hectares of cultivable land in 18 dists by 2024
- 50 lakh people internally displaced in Bangladesh
- In some areas, salinity levels reached eight times the tolerable limit
- The figure was 10.56 lakh hectares in 2009



BANGLADESHI WOMEN IN SAUDI ARABIA

Back home dead or scarred

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Nargis Begum travelled to Saudi Arabia hoping to repay debts and secure a better future for her children. Instead, she says, she spent months surviving on two handfuls of coarse rice and boiled potatoes in each meal while working as a house help.

The woman from Savar left in May 2022 after she had to borrow money for her daughter's wedding. With her husband ill, she had been struggling to support her two sons and daughter.

Nargis alleged that she was denied adequate food and medical treatment despite her deteriorating health in Saudi Arabia. She recalled becoming dizzy and falling on a staircase, injuring her back.

"I am a human being. I need strength to work. How can I work without food?" she said. She also alleged that an employer filed a theft complaint against her, resulting in detention for a day and a night.

She returned with the help of the Bangladesh embassy in October 2023. BRAC later provided medical assistance and Tk 80,000 in reintegration support, which she used to open a grocery shop.

Her ordeal reflects longstanding concerns over the safety of Bangladeshi women working in homes abroad, particularly in Saudi Arabia, where allegations of abuse and questions surrounding migrant deaths have persisted for years.

A 2023 study by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), based on Wage Earners' Welfare Board (WEWB) records, found that labour-receiving countries repatriated 705 bodies of Bangladeshi women migrant workers between 2017 and 2022.

Of them, 110 deaths were recorded as suicide, including 68 in Saudi Arabia. Overall,



32 percent of the deaths were classified as unnatural, including accidents, murders and suicides. Among 100 bereaved families interviewed, 48 questioned the causes recorded on death certificates, while 11 sought second post-mortem examinations but were told these were not possible.

WEWB documents obtained by The Daily Star show that 101 women's bodies were repatriated in 2023 and 88 in 2025. Of them, 20 deaths were recorded as suicide in 2023 and 14 in 2025, including 13 from Saudi Arabia in each year.

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IMPEACHMENT THREAT

Trump orders DOJ probe of Democrats

Offers UFC boss press secretary post

AFP, *Washington*

US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that he was ordering the Department of Justice (DOJ) to examine Democratic threats to impeach members of his administration and was offering his friend and "violent fighter" Dana White the job of White House press secretary.

White is a loyal supporter and head of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), a mixed martial arts organisation.

Trump faces a radically transformed and hostile political landscape after Democrats seized both the

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Buses burn, crude bombs go off in city again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals yesterday exploded crude bombs in several areas in Dhaka, including inside Dhaka University and the Criminal Investigation Department headquarters, and torched a school bus in Bhatara and two buses in Dhamrai and Savar.

No casualties were reported.

Witnesses and police said a series of explosions rocked at least six different parts of Dhaka University in the evening.

Police detained Rezaul Karim, 42, of Natore; Sohel Rana, 33, of Rajshahi; and Nazmus Saad, 33, of Gopalganj in this connection.

Shahriar Mostak Didar, a witness, said students caught the three in the TSC area.

Miscreants hurled a crude bomb into the compound of the CID headquarters in the Malibagh area from the adjacent Moghbazar-Mouchak Flyover around 7:30pm, said Ariful Alam, officer-in-charge of Paltan Model Police Station.

The bomb exploded near a vehicle belonging to the Special Branch (SB) that was parked inside the compound, he said.

Another crude bomb went off near a car in front of Sony Cinema Hall in the Mirpur-1 area around 8:35pm yesterday, said Mizanur Rahman, inspector (operation) of Mirpur Model Police Station.

The incidents follow a series of crude bomb blasts and attacks on public transport in Dhaka the day before, which the Dhaka Metropolitan Police said were aimed at creating panic among the public.

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FIXING HEALTH SERVICES

Family planning dept to be carved out for primary healthcare

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government has decided to create a new department for primary healthcare and formed a seven-member committee to work out its organisational structure, staffing, career plans, and responsibilities.

The department will be established by restructuring the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), another major body under the health ministry.

The decisions were made at a ministry meeting on October 6, following a proposal to bring primary healthcare services under a unified administrative structure, according to the meeting minutes.

The proposed department will be named the Department of Primary Healthcare (DPHC).

The workforce will operate through proposed health and wellbeing centres at union and ward levels.

It will bring together the health assistants (HAs) under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), community health care providers (CHCPs) under the Community Clinic Health Assistance Trust, and family welfare assistants (FWAs) and family planning inspectors (FPIs) under the DGFP.

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