

PM hands over appointment letters to three persons with disabilities

Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman today began his official engagements by handing over appointment letters to three persons with disabilities for making physically challenged people self-reliant and their integration to mainstream society.

The premier provided the appointment letters to them at his Cabinet Division office at the Bangladesh Secretariat here this morning, said Deputy Press Secretary Hasan Shiplu.

Shiplu said the appointments were made to help persons with disabilities become self-reliant through employment and integrating them into the mainstream society.

The three recipients are Ayesha Akter from Saghata upazila of Gaibandha, Neela Khatun from Kamarkhand upazila of Sirajganj and Md Hasmat Ali from Narail Sadar upazila.

The recipients expressed their joy after receiving the appointment letters directly from the Prime Minister, describing the day as the beginning of both a new professional journey and new aspirations.

Neela Khatun, who was born without both hands, completed her master's degree by writing with her feet. She has been appointed as a teacher at the National Foundation for the Development of the Disabled in Mirpur, Dhaka.

Ayesha Akter also completed her master's degree by writing with her feet. As she has no hands, she received her appointment letter with her mouth. She has been appointed as a class supervisor at BIAM Laboratory School and College in Gaibandha.



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman handed over the appointment letters to three disabled people today. Photo: BSS

Meanwhile, visually impaired Md Hasmat Ali has been appointed as a Union Social Worker under the Department of Social Services.

Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs Minister Prof Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Farzana Sharmin Putul, Social Welfare Secretary Dr Mohammad Abu Yusuf, Managing Director of the National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons (NFDD) Md Tarikul Alam and Director General of the

Department of Social Services Shah Mohammad Mahbub, among others, were present.

Founder of the Bangladesh Protibondhi Kalyan Somity Abdus Sattar Dulal thanked the Prime Minister for providing employment opportunities to the three persons with disabilities.

Dulal called on the Prime Minister immediately after the appointment letter handing over ceremony to express his gratitude, the Deputy Press Secretary said.

Swapon urges all not to misuse July spirit

Staff Correspondent

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon today urged all not to commercialise or exploit the spirit of the July sacrifice, saying the enduring spirit of the Liberation War is embodied in the spirit of July's sacrifice.

"The enduring spirit of the War of Independence is inherent in the spirit of the July sacrifice, and no one should forget the contribution of the Liberation War to Bangladesh's political development," he said.

The minister made the remarks while presiding over a publication unveiling ceremony, photo exhibition and discussion marking July Martyrs' Day 2026 at the DFP Auditorium here.

Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister and BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir attended the programme as the chief guest.

State Minister for Information Yasser Khan Choudhury and PSC member Dr Chowdhury Sayma Ferdous were present as special guests.

Addressing the function, Swapon said everyone must remain vigilant so that no one can derive any personal or political benefit from the spirit and achievements of

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LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir addressed a public unveiling ceremony, photography exhibition, and discussion as the chief guest.

PM raises hopes for social change in post-July Bangladesh: Fakhru

Staff Correspondent

Local Government, Rural Development (LGRD) and Cooperatives Minister Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir today said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman is raising hopes for social change in the post-July Bangladesh.

He said the Prime Minister is also trying to change the behavioral culture to build a new and non-communal Bangladesh.

The minister made the remarks while addressing, as chief guest, a publication unveiling ceremony, photography exhibition and discussion at the DFP Auditorium here on the occasion of the July Martyrs' Day 2026.

He said the Prime Minister himself asked people to throw garbage in dustbins to build a clean city and instructed the city corporations to build a clean city.

Mirza Fakhru, also the BNP Secretary General, said the premier is raising hopes for change among the youth.

The minister also commented that it is difficult to move the country forward if the

mentality cannot be changed.

He said there has been no visible change in the implementation of the aspirations of the July Uprising in the last five months.

"Only the Prime Minister is holding the change to build the country and society. Many who used to take bribes, commit corruption, and used opportunities are changing their stance from fascists to take advantage of the July changes. All this is sad," he said.

The Prime Minister is trying to change these cultures, he said.

Mirza Fakhru said since 1947, the lives of the people of this country have had to be sacrificed to change the fate of the people.

Even though the country was separated several times at the cost of countless lives, including Khudiram Bose and Pritilata, the long-cherished inequality-free society was not established, he said.

He said countless people from 1952 to 2024 sacrificed their lives to change the society.

"Pakistan was divided, and Bangladesh was led by leaders like Maulana Bhashani and AK Fazlul

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Govt takes hardline stance against human trafficking, online scams: Home Minister

Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed today said the government has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy against human trafficking and technology-enabled transnational scam networks.

"Protecting citizens from trafficking and cyber-enabled exploitation remains a top priority," he said.

The minister made the remarks while speaking as the chief guest at a high-level national dialogue titled "Trapped behind the Scam: Ending Human Trafficking for Forced Criminality" at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the capital, marking the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2026.

He said trafficking syndicates are increasingly using fake online recruitment platforms and social media to



Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed delivered the chief guest speech at a high-level national dialogue at a hotel in the capital today. Photo: Ministry

lure job seekers, particularly young people, with false promises of overseas employment.

Many victims are later confined in cyber scam cen-

tres abroad, where they are subjected to torture, intimidation and forced criminal activities, Salahuddin said.

He said conventional law enforcement alone is no

longer sufficient to tackle the evolving threat and called for stronger collaboration among technology companies, financial

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CCGP approves LNG, urea fertilizer import proposals

Staff Correspondent

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) today approved several procurement proposals, including the import of one cargo of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and 30,000 metric tons of urea fertilizer, to help meet the country's energy and

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Multiple intermediaries widen farm-retail price gap, says CPD

Staff Correspondent

Multiple layers of intermediaries and heavy dependence on urban wholesalers are major factors behind the wide gap between farm gate and retail prices of essential food commodities in Bangladesh, a study by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) revealed on Thursday. History

The findings were presented at a seminar titled 'The Food Price Chain: Markets, Margins and Intermediaries in Bangladesh,' held at the BRAC Centre in the capital with CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun in the chair.

It calls for fewer middlemen, stronger oversight to curb food prices

Foqoruddin Al Kabir, Senior Research Associate of CPD, presented the keynote paper, which traced the supply chains of 10 essential food commodities: rice, lentil, onion, potato, green chilli, brinjal, egg, beef, fish and

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Govt attaching highest priority to ADR to reduce case backlog: Asaduzzaman

Staff Correspondent

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Md Asaduzzaman today said the government is attaching the highest priority to alternative dispute resolution (ADR) to reduce the longstanding backlog of cases in the country's judiciary and ensure speedy justice for ordinary people.

"Government's various initiatives and the effective use of ADR have resulted in a more than 62 per cent decline in the filing of cases under certain laws during the current period of 2026 compared with 2025," he said.

The minister made the remarks as the chief guest at the signing ceremony of two separate memoranda of understanding (MoUs) between the Directorate of Bangladesh Legal Aid,



Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and BRAC's Social Empowerment and Legal Protection (SELP) at the ministry this morning.

"At present, nearly 45 lakh cases are pending before courts across the country, posing a significant burden on the judicial system.

The government has been

working continuously to reduce this backlog," the law minister said.

He added that the government's legal aid programme was first introduced through an administrative order in 1994 during the tenure of the Begum Khaleda Zia government and was subsequently enacted into law in 2001. "We have now

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Extreme heat puts South Asia's jobs, growth at risk: WB

Staff Correspondent

Extreme heat is costing South Asia nearly the equivalent of 31 million full-time jobs every year and is on track to reduce the region's economy by nearly 7 per cent by 2050, according to a new World Bank report released.

As South Asia prepares to add 280 million working-age people by 2050, rising temperatures are one of the greatest threats to jobs, productivity, and long-term economic growth in the region.

A Liveable Future: Protecting Jobs and Growth from Extreme Heat in South Asia's Cities finds that by 2070, around 520 million people across South Asia could experience at least one month of dangerous heat each year, four times as many as today, said a World

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Climate finance paradox: Why billions pledged still fall short for vulnerable nations

Staff Correspondent

Climate finance has become one of the defining pillars of global climate diplomacy. Despite record international commitments, countries such as Bangladesh continue to struggle to access the funding needed for climate resilience and low-carbon development.

Experts describe this growing disconnect as the "Climate Finance Paradox"—a situation in which global financial commitments continue to expand while the countries most in need remain constrained by complex funding procedures, institutional barriers, and limited implementation capacity.

The issue is expected to feature prominently as countries move toward implementing the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) agreed at COP29 in Baku.

Climate finance has evolved significantly since developed countries pledged to mobilize \$100 billion annually under the 2009 Copenhagen Accord. The Paris Agreement later placed finance at the center of global climate action by linking it to mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. At COP29, governments agreed to raise the collective target to \$300 billion annually by 2035.

Yet the gap between commitments and actual needs remains enormous. Climate economists estimate that developing countries require between \$5 trillion and \$6 trillion annually to meet climate goals while sustaining economic development.

"The debate has shifted from whether finance should exist to whether the existing financial architecture is capable of delivering what vulnerable countries actually need,"



Experts say vulnerable countries such as Bangladesh continue to face major barriers in accessing climate finance despite growing international pledges

policy experts at the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) have repeatedly argued.

Bangladesh, widely recognized as one of the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, faces recurring cyclones, floods, river erosion, sea-level rise, and salinity intrusion. Although it has adopted an extensive policy framework—including the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Delta Plan 2100, and its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)—the country continues to face a substantial financing gap for

resilient infrastructure, renewable energy, disaster risk reduction, food security, and climate-induced migration.

The late Dr Saleemul Huq, founder of ICCCAD, consistently argued that climate finance should be judged not by the size of global pledges but by its ability to strengthen resilience on the ground. He frequently warned that vulnerable countries spend years preparing funding proposals instead of implementing climate solutions.

Professor Navroz K. Dubash of India's Centre for Policy Research has similarly argued that the challenge is no longer simply mobilizing

finance but ensuring it supports national development priorities rather than creating parallel systems. Likewise, Dr Rachel Kyte, the UK's special representative for climate, has repeatedly stressed that predictable, long-term financing is essential to unlock private investment.

Meanwhile, Mafalda Duarte, executive director of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), has acknowledged that accreditation and access procedures remain overly complex for many developing countries and has called for simpler processes that strengthen country ownership.

Unlike conventional development assistance, climate finance often requires extensive feasibility studies, environmental safeguards, fiduciary standards, gender assessments, procurement plans, audits and monitoring frameworks. Researchers say preparing a single proposal for major multilateral climate funds can take several years, leaving many local institutions without the technical capacity to compete successfully.

These challenges are particularly significant because climate adaptation largely takes place at the local level. Communities build embankments, municipalities improve drainage systems and local governments oversee disaster preparedness. Yet only a small share of global climate finance reaches local authorities directly. Most funding is channelled through national or international agencies, often delaying implementation and weakening local ownership.

The debate extends beyond economics. Developing countries increasingly frame climate finance as an issue of climate justice, arguing that nations responsible for the

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Long queues of vehicles form at a CNG filling station in Gabtoli as a gas supply shortage leaves drivers waiting for hours to refuel.

Fuel queues empty Dhaka's roads as ride fares soar

Staff Correspondent

The capital's worsening gas crisis has spilled far beyond household kitchens, crippling public transport across Dhaka as hundreds of CNG-powered buses, auto-rickshaws and ride-sharing vehicles disappear from the streets after spending hours in fuel queues, leaving commuters stranded and driving transport costs sharply higher.

Across major corridors -- including Rampura, Badda, Airport Road, Banasree and Mirpur -- passengers waited for hours on Monday as fewer buses operated, CNG auto-rickshaws demanded inflated fares and app-based rides became increasingly difficult to secure.

The shortage has also pushed thousands of commuters towards the metro rail, leading to unusually crowded stations and trains.

Transport operators say the crisis stems from prolonged waits at CNG filling stations, where drivers often spend four to five hours only to receive enough gas for a handful of trips before returning to the queue.

The impact is particularly severe on routes where a large share of buses operate on compressed natural gas.

On the Banasree-Demra corridor,

Commuters faced long waits on Monday as bus services dwindled, CNG fares soared and ride-sharing became scarce

employees of Ashim, Alif, Swadhin and Asmani Paribahan said many gas-powered buses now complete only a single morning trip after spending the entire night waiting at filling stations.

Abbas Uddin, a line checker for Ashim Paribahan, said nearly half of the company's more than 50 buses run on CNG, but many now remain idle because pumps cannot supply sufficient pressure.

Drivers and transport workers from several operators

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NCC announces record Tk 1,060 crore budget for FY 2026-27

Staff Correspondent

Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) today announced a record budget of Tk 1,060 crore for the 2026-27 fiscal year, marking the 15th budget of the city corporation and the largest in its history.

The budget was formally announced today at the Nagar Bhaban auditorium by NCC Administrator Advocate Sakawat Hossain Khan. The city corporation's budget for the previous fiscal year was Tk 775.33 crore.

The administrator said the new budget has given the highest priority to reducing public suffering. Priority sectors include road and drain construction, expansion of safe water supply, modernisation of waste management, canal restoration, mitigation of

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GPS mandatory in all public transport from 1 August

Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has made GPS mandatory for all public transports across the country from 1 August.

Under the new directive, proof of Global Positioning System (GPS) devices installation must be submitted when applying for the registration of new vehicles or renewing fitness certificates.

Vehicle owners will also be required to demonstrate through a mobile application that the GPS device is functioning properly.

The information was disclosed in a public notice issued by the BRTA on Tuesday (28 July).



According to the notice, the Road Transport and Highways Division issued a gazette notification on 11 June to ensure safer road transport and promote the use of modern information technology in public trans-

port. In line with that notification, all public transport vehicles must have an operational GPS device installed from 1 August.

The BRTA said the technical specifications for GPS devices are available at its

local offices and on its website. During registration or fitness certificate renewal, vehicle owners must submit proof of GPS installation to the relevant BRTA office and demonstrate through a mobile application that the device is active.

The notice further states that, under Section 25 of the Road Transport Act, 2018, and Rule 55 of the Road Transport Rules, 2022, registration and fitness certificates will be issued or renewed only after authorities verify that the required GPS device has been installed in the vehicle.

The BRTA has urged transport owners and their representatives to take the

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Bangladesh-Japan PPP Platform includes new infrastructure projects

Staff Correspondent

The 8th meeting of the Bangladesh-Japan Joint Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Platform was held in the capital on Wednesday, with both sides agreeing to expedite implementation of key infrastructure projects and include several new initiatives to strengthen regional connectivity and promote sustainable investment.

The meeting, held at Hotel InterContinental Dhaka, was attended by Principal Secretary to the Chief Adviser A B M Abdus Sattar as the chief guest, according to a press release issued today.

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Turkey's Sanko eyes \$300m textile investment in Mirsarai Economic Zone

Staff Correspondent

Turkish textile giant Sanko has expressed interest in investing \$300 million to establish an integrated textile manufacturing facility in Bangladesh's Mirsarai Economic Zone, marking a major potential boost for the country's textile and jute industries.

The investment proposal was discussed at a meeting on Tuesday between Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Textiles & Jute and a Sanko delegation at the Secretariat. State Minister for Textiles and Jute Md Shariful Alam also attended the meeting.

Sanko representatives said the company plans to expand its production capacity in Bangladesh in response to growing demand from international buyers and its existing business links with the country. While the company currently exports textile products from Türkiye, it now sees Bangladesh's skilled workforce, export competitiveness and investment potential as strong incentives for local manufacturing.

The proposed facility will produce fabrics, process textiles and manufacture high-value-added textile products, helping strengthen Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) and textile sectors.

The delegation said local production would enable the company to bring new international buyers to Bangladesh while



supporting domestic textile manufacturers through technology transfer, skills development and market expansion.

Sanko said it has already identified a potential project site and held discussions with prospective partners. Subject to regula-

tory approvals and infrastructure support, the company expects to begin the next phase of the project

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Child mortality falls to 33 per 1,000 births: BBS

Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh's under-five mortality rate has declined to 33 deaths per 1,000 live births, down from 39 deaths recorded during the 10-14 years preceding the latest survey, according to the Bangladesh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2025.

The findings were published in the final report of MICS 2025, titled Progotir Pathay, released online by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) on Monday.

The survey, conducted by BBS in collaboration with UNICEF, provides nationally and internationally comparable data on children, women and households across Bangladesh.

However, the neonatal mortality rate remains high at 22 deaths per 1,000 live births, indicating that newborn survival continues to be a major policy challenge.

The survey found that 71% of recent births took place in health facilities. However, significant socioeconomic disparities remain, with facility deliveries ranging from 52.6% among women in the poorest wealth quintile to 86.9% among those in the richest quintile.

Only 59.2% of children under five had their births registered with civil

The survey also found that 9.1% of children aged 5-17 were engaged in labour under the MICS/SDG definition

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Swapon urges all not to

the July Mass Uprising.

He said that whenever injustice and oppression intensified in society, people stood against them, inspired by the spirit of independence.

He called on all to work together to uphold justice, democracy and human values by embracing the spirit of July.

The information and broadcasting minister said the party's former chairperson and former prime minister, late Begum Khaleda Zia, Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, he himself, and countless party leaders and activists had endured imprisonment and repression in the struggle to free the country from fascism.

He said that after the July Uprising, party Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia departed this world with immense respect, along a path strewn with the flowers of the people's love.

He said the people of the country had successfully carried out the anti-fascist movement under the banner of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement. "Now the work of rebuilding the country is underway," he added.

the beginning of the programme, the guests unveiled a publication on July Martyrs' Day and visited the photo exhibition.

Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Managing Director and Chief Editor Kamal Uddin Shabuj, Dainik Pratidiner Bangladesh Editor Maruf Kamal Khan, Bangladesh Federal Journalists' Union Secretary General Kader Gani Chowdhury, Bangladesh Sangbadik Kallyan Trust Managing Director Bachhir Jamal, heads of various departments and agencies under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, senior ministry officials, officials and employees at different levels, media personnel, and invited guests were present at the event.

PM raises hopes for

Haque, but the society did not change. After 1971, the fascist ruler was ousted in 2024 at the cost of countless lives," the minister said.

He also talked about changing consumerist behaviour to implement the spirit of July.

"The chair of power is very strange. Sitting in the chair of power creates a different feeling....the chemistry changes after coming to power. The youth of 2024 have demanded a change in the character of the chair of power."

Mirza Fakhrul said he had held many meetings and always stated where are the youth who will change the country.

The youth in 2024 had come out in the movement and ousted the fascists from this country with their lives.

"If we go back to that previous society, the sacrifice of hundreds of lives will go in vain. We should value those who sacrificed their lives," the minister said, adding the spirit of that sacrifice must be upheld.

The veteran BNP leader said the late former Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, was the first female freedom fighter in this country.

He said when Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman declared independence, the soldiers went to Begum Khaleda Zia and she said 'all the orders of your commander are the final. The call for independence must be followed'.

Fakhrul said Begum Zia had to be imprisoned but she fought till her death for the people of this country.

After Sheikh Hasina fled, he said, Begum Zia in a video message called for building a country free of revenge despite her serious illness.

Chaired by Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapon, the meeting was attended, among others, by State Minister for Information Yasser Khan Choudhury and PSC member Dr Chowdhury Saima Ferdous.

At the beginning of the event, the guests unveiled the packaging of the July Martyrs' Day related publication and visited a photography exhibition.

Heads of various departments and organisations under the ministry, senior officials of the ministry, officials and employees of various levels, media personnel and invited guests were present at the event.

Multiple intermediaries

chicken, from retail markets back to producers, covering 10 markets in Dhaka Division and 820 market agents.

The study found that prices rose between 10 percent and 116 percent from farm gate to retail depending on the commodity, with green chilli recording the steepest escalation at 116 percent, followed by onion at 87 percent and rice at 100 percent.

Commodities with shorter supply chains, such as eggs, chicken, beef and Rui fish, showed comparatively lower price margins, while those with longer chains, involving middlemen (farias, beparis, aratdars), millers and wholesalers before reaching retailers, saw larger price increases.

According to the study, urban wholesalers emerged as the primary procurement source for six of the 10 commodities surveyed: onion, potato, green chilli, brinjal, egg and Rui fish, a concentration that the researchers said could heighten bargaining power imbalances and price volatility, particularly if disruptions, hoarding or collusion occur at that level.

The paper further noted that supply shortages, trader collusion and hoarding were cited most frequently as causes of high prices, while commission payments were evident across market agents for onion, brinjal, green chilli, fish and beef.

In the case of chicken and beef, farmers recorded negative net marketing margins, driven largely by high feed costs, the study said.

Speaking at the event, Fahmida said low-income households in Bangladesh are spending nearly all of their savings just to keep food on the table amid soaring prices of essential items, warning that this is taking a heavy toll on overall living standards. History

She said persistent inflation is severely undercutting savings, healthcare access, essential services and the quality of life for lower-income families.

Fahmida described the market dynamics behind rising food prices, spanning production, supply chain bottlenecks and demand, as caught in a vicious cycle, pointing to the steep gap between the prices farmers receive at the farm gate and what consumers ultimately pay at retail.

She said food inflation has been the primary driver of the country's elevated overall inflation over the past four to five years, and cautioned that unless it is brought down to a manageable level, it will cripple the economy and hit ordinary citizens hardest.

The CPD study recommended reducing unnecessary layers between farmers and consumers, increasing competition in wholesale markets, expanding market choices for farmers and retailers through cooperatives and direct linkages, and improving transparency of prices and market information.

It also called for stronger monitoring against collusion and hoarding, investment in storage and cold-chain infrastructure, and measures to ease production cost pressures faced by farmers, particularly for feed and veterinary services.

CCGP approves LNG,

agricultural requirements.

The approval came from this year's 34th meeting of the CCGP held at Cabinet Division with Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury in the chair.

Under a proposal from the Energy and Mineral Resources Division, the committee approved the purchase of the 42nd LNG cargo for delivery on August 15-16, 2026.

The cargo will be procured from Vitol Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore, through an international quotation process at an estimated cost of Tk 949.43 crore, with a unit price of US\$22.35 per MMBtu.

The committee also cleared a proposal from the Ministry of

Industries to procure 30,000 metric tons of bagged granular urea fertilizer from Kamaphuli Fertilizer Company Limited (KAFCO) for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

The fertilizer will be purchased at US\$357.25 per metric ton, involving an estimated expenditure of Tk 132.62 crore.

Govt takes hardline

institutions, the private sector and civil society.

Highlighting government initiatives, the minister said Bangladesh has enacted the Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling (Prevention and Suppression) Act, 2026, aligned with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its protocols.

The law brings online scam-related trafficking, technology-enabled deception and forced criminality under stricter legal penalties, he said.

Salahuddin also said the government is updating the Human Trafficking Prevention and Suppression Rules, 2017, while finalising the National Action Plan (2026-2030) focusing on prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership.

To strengthen victim support, he said the government is enhancing the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to ensure timely rescue and provide legal, medical, psychological and rehabilitation services.

A digital trafficking information management platform is also being developed to improve case tracking and evidence-based policymaking, he added.

He urged the media and civil society to raise awareness among youths, women and prospective migrant workers about safe migration and the risks posed by fraudulent recruitment networks.

The dialogue, chaired by Senior Secretary of the Home Ministry Manzur Morshed Chowdhury, was attended by senior government officials, diplomats, law enforcement representatives and international partners, including the European Union, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Special guests included Secretary of the Law and Justice Division Liaquet Ali Molla, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md. Ali Hossain Fakir, Charg, d'Affaires of the European Union Baiba Zarina, and Dr. Laura Tomm-Bonde, IOM's new Chief of Mission in Bangladesh and Coordinator of the UN Migration Network.

Among those present were Director General of the Bangladesh Coast Guard Rear Admiral Md Ziaul Hoque and Additional Director General of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Brigadier General Md Sohrab Hossain Bhuiyan.

The welcome address was delivered by Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, while Shah Mohammad Naheekaan, Head of the UNODC Programme Office in Bangladesh, presented this year's World Day Against Trafficking in Persons theme in detail.

A panel discussion on trafficking for forced criminality, deceptive recruitment and online exploitation was also held as part of the programme.

Extreme heat puts South

Bank press release.

Extreme heat is already reducing labor productivity, disrupting businesses, and jeopardizing the competitiveness of South Asia's cities. It is also putting growing pressure on health systems and critical infrastructure, while hitting low-income households, informal workers, women, the elderly, and children the hardest.

"South Asia's cities are central to the region's future, but rising temperatures are putting jobs, livelihoods, and economic growth at risk," said Johannes Zutt, World Bank Vice President for South Asia.

"Building heat-resilient cities is not only about protecting people from rising temperatures. It is about safeguarding jobs, boosting productivity, attracting investment, and ensuring cities continue to drive economic growth. By acting now, countries can build more resilient, competitive, and livable cities that create opportunities for future generations."

The report examines extreme heat through the lens of jobs, productivity, and economic growth. It shows how rising temperatures affect workers, businesses, infrastructure, public services, and urban economies.

The report argues that heat should no longer be treated as a seasonal emergency. Instead, it should become a core development priority that is integrated into urban planning, infrastructure investment, public policy, and private sector development.

The report provides policymakers with a practical roadmap that can be implemented through existing institutions and financing mechanisms.

It recommends investing in heat resilient infrastructure, strengthening Heat Action Plans, protecting vulnerable workers, expanding sustainable cooling, improving early warning systems, and mobilizing public and private investment to build more resilient cities.

This report was prepared with support from the Resilient Asia Program (RAP), funded by the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) through its flagship Climate Action for a Resilient Asia (CARA) program.

The World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the City Resilience Program (CRP) also supported the preparation of the report.

"Across South Asia, extreme heat is destroying livelihoods, impacting public health, depressing productivity, and pushing the most vulnerable further into poverty," said John Warburton, Climate Resilience Lead for Asia Pacific at UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

"This is a development crisis that calls for sustained action across sectors. That is why the UK government, through our flagship Climate Action for a Resilient Asia programme, is committed to working with the World Bank and other partners to build knowledge, inform policies, and unlock the investment needs in the region to adapt to a warming planet."

Many of the solutions already exist. Cities across South Asia are showing how Heat Action Plans, resilient infrastructure, urban greening, early warning systems, and efficient cooling can save lives, protect workers, and reduce economic losses. Scaling these approaches will require stronger institutions, better coordination, and greater public and private investment.

As South Asia continues to urbanize, the choices governments make today will determine whether cities remain engines of jobs, innovation and growth, or become increasingly constrained by rising temperatures. Investing in heat resilience is essential to protect people, strengthen economies, and secure the region's long-term prosperity.

Govt attaching highest

modernity that law to make it more responsive to present-day needs," Asaduzzaman further said.

The MoUs were signed today as part of the implementation of the Legal Aid Services (Amendment) Act, 2026, which, for the first time in the country, has created an opportunity to develop professional mediators and ensure their training and legal recognition.

Under the first MoU, the Directorate of Bangladesh Legal Aid (DBLA) and the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) will jointly recruit and deploy three court paralegals in Dhaka, Gazipur and Chattogram. Working under BLAST's supervision, the paralegals will provide only essential legal information to workers seeking assistance at labour law support cells. They will, however, adhere to the "Do No Harm" principle and will not be permitted to provide legal advice directly.

The MoU also stipulates that if mediation conducted by BLAST in compoundable disputes is successful, the DBLA will grant it official legal recognition. If the mediation fails, the concerned legal aid officer will issue a certificate of unsuccessful mediation, enabling the dispute to be filed as a regular case before the court.

Under the second MoU, BRAC will organise six regional training programmes for professional mediators with its own funding. The DBLA will award certificates to successful participants. Settlement documents prepared by BRAC-certified mediators will acquire legal validity after being verified by the respective Chief Legal Aid Officer (CLAO).

In cases where the respondent fails to appear, or mediation remains unresolved, the legal aid office will issue a report, allowing the dispute to proceed to court.

Speaking at the ceremony, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Md Asaduzzaman said the institutional collaboration between the government's legal aid system and the country's leading NGOs would play a transformative role in delivering prompt legal services to marginalised communities and workers seeking justice.

"Government wants to leverage the expertise and extensive grassroots experience of organisations such as BLAST and BRAC. International development partners, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the German international cooperation agency GIZ and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), are also supporting efforts to strengthen alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms," he added.

Among others present at the MoU signing ceremony were Additional Secretary of the Law and Justice Division Md Khadem Ul Qayes, Additional Secretary SM Ershadul Alam, Director General of the Directorate of Bangladesh Legal Aid (DBLA) Md Monjurul Hossain, BLAST Executive Director Barrister Sara Hossain, and BRAC SELP Programme Associate Director Shashwata Biplab.

Climate finance paradox

majority of historical greenhouse gas emissions have an obligation to support those bearing the worst impacts despite contributing little to global emissions. This principle underpins the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's doctrine of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR).

Bangladesh now faces the difficult task of expanding renewable energy, maintaining affordable electricity, attracting investment, building resilient infrastructure, creating jobs, and reducing poverty simultaneously. Climate economists argue that these objectives cannot be pursued in isolation, as low-carbon development is fundamentally a development challenge.

While international institutions increasingly promote private investment, analysts caution that private finance cannot replace public climate finance. Adaptation initiatives—including cyclone shelters, mangrove restoration, flood protection, and community resilience—deliver immense social benefits but often generate limited commercial returns, making grants and concessional finance indispensable.

Another concern is the project-based nature of existing climate finance. Many initiatives run for only three to five years before funding ends. Researchers increasingly advocate shifting support toward national institutions, public budgeting systems, long-term planning, policy reforms, and institutional capacity instead of isolated pilot projects.

Policy experts broadly recommend simplifying application procedures, expanding direct access for vulnerable countries, strengthening local government financing, increasing grant-based support, improving transparency, aligning funding with national development priorities, encouraging blended finance, and investing in institutional capacity.

Speaking to Dhaka Tribune, Md Abul Basar, team leader of Swisscontact Bangladesh, said climate finance should be viewed as a strategic development opportunity, particularly as traditional official development assistance continues to decline.

"Climate finance is a strategic opportunity for Bangladesh. However, accessing global climate finance requires strong technical and institutional capacity. Therefore, climate finance readiness and capacity building should be a national priority," he said.

Echoing that view, Md Shamsuddoha, chief executive of the Center for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD), said global financing mechanisms must become far more accessible.

"Climate finance must become simpler, more accessible, and aligned with the development priorities of climate-vulnerable countries like Bangladesh," he .

Bangladesh has developed an extensive climate policy framework, but experts say the country's success will ultimately depend not only on how much finance is pledged at future COP negotiations but also on whether those resources become predictable, accessible, and aligned with national priorities.

Unless climate finance becomes easier to access, more predictable, and better aligned with national priorities, the gap between international promises and on-the-ground resilience will continue to widen. For climate-vulnerable countries such as Bangladesh, the challenge is no longer securing ambitious pledges—it is turning those pledges into meaningful action.

Fuel queues empty

said buses that once made multiple daily trips now struggle to complete even one before running short of fuel, reducing fleet availability across the city.

Similar shortages were reported on the Gulshan-Mirpur, Gabtoli, Shahbag, Airport and Sayedabad routes, where commuters were forced to endure long queues and overcrowded buses as available services fell sharply.

The crisis has hit CNG auto-rickshaw drivers even harder.

Drivers say waiting five hours at a filling station often yields only Tk100 to Tk150 worth of gas --barely enough for a few trips.

Yet vehicle owners continue to demand daily garage deposits of around Tk1,200 regardless of whether drivers can earn enough to cover the cost.

"If the vehicle cannot run, how will we pay the owner or feed our families?" asked drivers Kawsar Ahmed and Rahim while waiting at a filling station.

Transport workers estimate that more than half of the capital's 10,000 to 12,000 registered CNG auto-rickshaws are now operating irregularly or remain off the road because of the fuel shortage. With fewer vehicles available, fares have surged.

Commuters said trips that normally cost Tk200 from Banasree to Gulshan-1 are now being quoted at around Tk300, while fares to the airport have risen from about Tk350 to as much as Tk500.

Ride-sharing services have also been severely affected.

Many Uber and Pathao vehicles depend on CNG, leaving drivers trapped between spending hours in fuel queues or switching to expensive petrol that significantly erodes their earnings.

Uber driver Suman Mia said contract drivers must generate enough monthly income to cover vehicle rental payments, making petrol operation financially unsustainable.

"After waiting four or five hours, we receive only enough gas for a few trips before returning to the pump again," he said. As buses, auto-rickshaws and ride-sharing vehicles become increasingly scarce, thousands of commuters have shifted to the metro rail.

Passengers at Mirpur stations said journeys that once began with a short CNG or app-based ride now often involve long waits before eventually boarding crowded metro trains.

Residents Yusuf Ahmed and Ujjwal said ride-sharing cars that previously arrived within minutes are now difficult to

find, while many CNG drivers refuse to travel without demanding excessive fares.

Commuters say the crisis is no longer simply about fuel shortages but about the growing inability to move around the city.

With no clear indication of when gas supplies will normalize, many expressed frustration over the absence of a clear government roadmap while calling for urgent, coordinated measures to restore fuel supply and ease mounting disruption to everyday life.

Bangladesh-Japan PPP

PPP Authority Chief Executive Officer Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun and Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser (Secretary rank) Dr Md Shakirul Islam Khan were also present.

The Japanese delegation was led by Special Adviser to the Prime Minister Uno Yoshimasa and included Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Saïda Shinichi, Assistant Vice Minister for Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Fujita Masakuni, Assistant Vice Minister for International Aviation Nakayama Reiko and senior officials from both countries.

The meeting reviewed the progress of several ongoing PPP projects, including the Kamalapur Multimodal Transport Hub, the operation and maintenance of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport Terminal-3, the Outer Ring Road and the Local Bridge Development Project under the Roads and Highways Department.

The two sides agreed to expedite implementation of the revised master plan for the Kamalapur Multimodal Transport Hub and complete the remaining contractual process for Terminal-3 at the earliest through regular monitoring under the joint PPP platform.

The platform also included the Shariatpur-Chandpur Bridge and the Barishal-Bhola Bridge as new priority projects aimed at improving connectivity and supporting economic growth in the country's southern region.

Both sides also expressed interest in the Chattogram City Corporation's Waste-to-Energy Project and the Bhola-Lakshmipur Bridge Project. They further agreed to examine a proposal for the rehabilitation of old railway bridges with Japanese technical assistance.

Speaking at the meeting, PPP Authority CEO Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun said the Bangladesh-Japan PPP partnership has evolved into a reliable platform for attracting quality foreign investment.

In his closing remarks, Principal Secretary A B M Abdus Sattar reaffirmed the government's commitment to implementing the priority projects under the joint PPP platform within the stipulated timeframe.

GPS mandatory in all

necessary preparations and cooperate in implementing the new requirement.

NCC announces record

waterlogging, dengue control, reduction of traffic congestion, environmental protection, and tree plantation.

The principal source of financing for the budget has been identified as the city corporation's own revenue earnings. Income from the water supply sector, government development assistance, foreign-assisted projects, and allocations under the Annual Development Programme (ADP) have also been considered key sources for implementing the budget.

The budget announcement programme, moderated by urban planner Moinul Islam, was attended by Narayanganj-5 lawmaker Abul Kalam, Chairman of Narayanganj Development Authority Masukul Islam, Administrator of Narayanganj Zila Parishad Professor Mamun Mahmud, Acting Chief Executive Officer of NCC Nur Kutubul Alam, Supervising Engineer Azgar Hossain, and Chief Accounts Officer Hemayet Hossain.

Leaders of BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Andolan, and various political, social, and citizens' organisations were also present.

Turkey's Sanko eyes

within the coming months, with commercial operations targeted 12 to 18 months after construction begins.

The company also sought government support in ensuring gas and electricity connections, energy supply and other necessary approvals. It emphasised the importance of environmentally friendly technologies and sustainable, coal-free energy solutions to meet international buyers' environmental standards.

Minister Khandaker Abdul Muktaadir welcomed the investment interest and assured the delegation of the government's full support, saying Bangladesh remains committed to attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and facilitating industrial development.

Officials said the proposed investment could introduce advanced technologies, create significant employment opportunities and enhance Bangladesh's export competitiveness, while opening a new chapter for the country's textile and jute industries.

Child mortality falls to

authorities, meaning that more than two in five young children remained without birth registration at the time of the survey.

Among children aged 7–14, 50.2% demonstrated foundational reading skills. Girls performed better than boys, with rates of 54.5% and 45.6% respectively.

The survey also found that 9.1% of children aged 5-17 were engaged in child labour under the MICS/SDG definition.

Access to at least basic drinking water was high at 98.6%. However, 85% of household members were using drinking water contaminated with E coli at the point of consumption.

A major concern was exposure to lead. Blood testing found that 38.4% of children aged 12–59 months had blood lead levels of at least 5 micrograms per decilitre, with prevalence considerably higher in urban areas and among children living near industrial and lead-related activities.

MICS 2025 covered 62,980 sampled households, of which 61,207 were successfully interviewed, achieving a response rate of 99.6%. The survey provides representative estimates at national, urban-rural, divisional and district levels, as well as for Dhaka North, Dhaka South and Chattogram City Corporations.

The final report presents 173 indicators, including 27 directly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. The findings are expected to support government agencies, development partners, researchers and civil society organisations in planning, resource allocation and monitoring national priorities.

"This is a development crisis that calls for sustained action across sectors. That is why the UK government, through our flagship Climate Action for a Resilient Asia programme, is committed to working with the World Bank and other partners to build knowledge, inform policies, and unlock the investment needs in the region to adapt to a warming planet."

Many of the solutions already exist. Cities across South Asia are showing how Heat Action Plans, resilient infrastructure, urban greening, early warning systems, and efficient cooling can save lives, protect workers, and reduce economic losses. Scaling these approaches will require stronger institutions, better coordination, and greater public and private investment.

As South Asia continues to urbanize, the choices governments make today will determine whether cities remain engines of jobs, innovation and growth, or become increasingly constrained by rising temperatures. Investing in heat resilience is essential to protect people.



Root named England Test captain, Fleming appointed coach

Sports Desk

Joe Root was reappointed as England's Test captain on Thursday, with ex-New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming named as head coach as the team embark on a new era. The announcement from the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) follows the sacking of Brendon McCullum as Test coach and the shock retirement of former skipper Ben Stokes from international cricket earlier this month. McCullum, who remains in charge of England's white-ball teams, lost his job after a 2-1 home series loss to New Zealand in June, which followed a disastrous Ashes campaign in Australia. Root will resume his role as skipper in the three-match series with Pakistan starting next month but Fleming is not scheduled to arrive until later in the year. Yorkshireman Root holds the record for captaining England in the most Tests (65) and to the most wins (27). He skippered the team from 2017 to 2022 and took the role on an interim basis at the Oval during the recent series against New Zealand. The 35-year-old is second behind India's Sachin Tendulkar on the all-time Test scoring list, with more than 14,000 runs. "It is a great honour and privilege to be asked to be England men's Test captain again," said Root. "The Test captaincy is a difficult but hugely rewarding job and, after enjoying a brief taste of it again working with Baz McCullum last month, I am excited to lead this next generation of players forward." Root described Fleming, 53, as an "exceptional leader with a great knowledge of the game".

Marcus Trescothick will be interim head coach for the Pakistan series, which starts at Headingley on August 19, ahead of Fleming's arrival later this year. The ECB said Fleming, who led Chennai Super Kings to five Indian Premier League titles, was one of the "most highly regarded coaches in world cricket". Fleming, who retired as a player in 2009, made 111 Test appearances for New Zealand. "The ambition is always to win now," said Fleming. "But equally, it's about ensuring the team is well placed for the medium and long-term future." He added: "I'm particularly looking forward to working with Joe Root as captain -- a generational talent who has achieved so much already. "There is still plenty more to come from him, and I'm excited to support him so he can enjoy and thrive in the role in what is a different context to his first stint." Managing director of England men's cricket Rob Key hailed Fleming as one of the most highly respected figures in cricket. "I believe he is the best person to guide a team stacked full of potential and turn that talent into a world-class outfit that can not only achieve success but sustain it," Key said. Key said Root was "passionate about leading this team into a new era". The two appointments draw a line under the ultra-attacking 'Bazball' era of McCullum and Stokes, which started in 2022. The two men injected new energy into a floundering Test team that had won just one match in 17 under Root. England won 10 out of their first 11 Tests under the pair but gradually lost momentum, crucially failing to win a series against Australia or India.

Taekwondo champion Santona Rani Roy inspires new generation

Sports Desk

Rising from a poor farming family in Lalmonirhat, taekwondo practitioner Santona Rani Roy has earned national and international recognition through her achievements in martial arts and is now training young women while working to promote self-defence, prevent child marriage and support women's employment. Born in Haridas village under Sarpukur Union of Aditmari upazila in Lalmonirhat, Santona grew up in hardship. Her parents could not afford to buy her new clothes during her childhood. From an early age, she struggled against poverty and later worked as a private tutor alongside her studies to support the education expenses of her younger siblings. Although many of her personal aspirations remained unfulfilled, she dreamed of doing something significant for the country and its people. Determined to realise that dream, she took up taekwondo. Along with developing herself through the martial art, she earned national and international recognition. She also began teaching taekwondo to girls, and under her guidance, many students have won gold, silver and bronze



medals. Altogether, they have secured 60 medals, earning her recognition across the country. Santona Rani Roy is the daughter of farmer Subash Chandra Roy and housewife Jamuna Rani Roy, who was once associated with the Mass Education Programme as a volunteer. Jamuna Rani knew yoga, and Santona learned it from her mother during her teenage. Santona is the eldest among three sisters and one brother. One of her sisters is married. Her work now centres on taekwondo, public service and the prevention of child marriage. Her achievements in taekwondo are among the key reasons for her

growing reputation. Between 2011 and 2020, she participated in various national and international competitions and won 14 medals, including 10 gold, two silver and two bronze. Students of the Lalmonirhat Taekwondo Association (LTA), founded by Santona, have also achieved remarkable success in different competitions, winning 46 medals. The government recognised her consistent achievements. She achieved different awards from the government. Santona said, "I want every household in Bangladesh to produce a martial arts daughter like me. The

Lalmonirhat Taekwondo Association is working toward that goal. Many people are supporting me in different ways." Santona has won 14 medals in national and international competitions, including 10 gold, two silver and two bronze medals. Students of the Lalmonirhat Taekwondo Association have won another 46 medals in various competitions. She is now actively involved in preventing child marriage in her area through awareness campaigns. She has also established "Santona Handicrafts" to create employment opportunities for underprivileged women. How she began taekwondo: Asked why she became interested in taekwondo despite having opportunities to play football and other sports, Santona said that while studying at Rangpur Government College in 2005, she noticed students receiving martial arts training on the college campus. After making inquiries, she learned that martial arts teach self-defence techniques while promoting discipline and physical fitness. This motivated her to pursue taekwondo.

Son at the double as MLS All-Stars beat Liga MX 4-3

Sports Desk

Son Heung-min scored twice to lead the Major League Soccer All-Stars to a 4-3 win over their Liga MX counterparts on Wednesday in the MLS All-Star Game in Charlotte, North Carolina. Los Angeles FC's South Korean star Son struck in the 20th and 23rd minutes to flip the script after Luis Gabriel Rey put the Liga MX All-Stars ahead. "I'm very happy, and I just want to say thank you to everyone," Son said after he was named All-Star MVP. The 34-year-old former Tottenham star had shouldered the blame for South Korea's failure to make it to the knockout rounds of the World Cup. But he's been in red-hot form since MLS resumed in the wake of its World Cup break with three goals in three matches for LAFC. Son pulled the MLS side level in the 20th, collecting a pass from



Carles Gil on the left and firing a low shot past goalkeeper Carlos Acevedo. He put the MLS All-Stars ahead for good just minutes later with a spectacular volley off another assist from New England Revolution playmaker Gil. Chicago Fire midfielder Philip Zinckernagel's 42nd-minute strike

sent the MLS side into half-time ahead 3-1. Salomon Rondon scored in the 55th minute to keep the Liga MX side within striking distance, but FC Cincinnati's playmaker Evander restored the two-goal advantage in the 55th minute, shortly before Vancouver's German star Thomas Mueller took the field.

The MLS side needed the cushion, with Jose Paradelas adding some late drama with a stoppage time goal for Liga MX. The second straight victory for the MLS All-Stars in the mid-season exhibition extended their record over Liga MX teams to 4-1. Superstar Lionel Messi and his Inter Miami teammate were excused from the mid-season exhibition, 10 days after Argentina fell to Spain in the World Cup final. Miami posted a video on social media on Wednesday showing Messi back in training with his club teammates. But it remains unclear when the 39-year-old will return to competition. MLS's biggest draw Messi has never appeared in the All-Star Game. The 2023 All-Star squad had already been announced when he arrived in the league that year and in 2024 he was sidelined by an ankle injury.

Entertainment



Priyanka Chopra confirms project with Angelina Jolie

Entertainment Desk

After years of hard work, Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra has made a name for herself in Hollywood. However, after a seven-year gap, the actor is making a comeback to Indian films with the massive pan-Indian action-adventure film "Varanasi", directed by SS Rajamouli. But that doesn't mean the Barfi star will be any less focused on her Hollywood projects. In fact, she recently shared a major update. Speaking to Fortune India, Priyanka confirmed that she will be working with Hollywood A-lister Angelina Jolie. However, the actor refrained from sharing any more details about the project, leaving fans wondering whether she will collaborate



with Jolie on a film, an advertising campaign, or a philanthropic venture. During the conversation, Priyanka also shared how she finds Jolie, along with Penelope Cruz and Salma Hayek, inspiring. Meanwhile, Priyanka is set to return to Indian cinema with Varanasi. One of the most expensive Indian films

ever, the Rajamouli directorial is being made on a massive budget of Rs1,200-1,400 crore (\$135-150 million), and the globe-trotting adventure has been shot in Georgia, Antarctica, Africa, and Hyderabad. The film will be released worldwide on 7 April 2027. Priyanka will also star

alongside Lord of the Rings and Pirates of the Caribbean star Orlando Bloom in a PPP co-production. She also has Mira Nair's biographical drama Amri in the pipeline. She will additionally be seen in Nicholas Stoller's Judgment Day, which also stars Will Ferrell, ZacEfron, Regina Hall, and others. Priyanka has been choosy lately when it comes to picking projects, and she admits that after years of hard work, she is at a stage in her career where she has earned the liberty to pick and choose. She said, "When I started, scripts were not customised for me. My husband Nick (Jonas) recently said (quoting singer Beyoncé) that 'You are on the other side of your sacrifice' I can now pick and choose and create my own projects."



Maybe not everything went according to plan: Sunerah

Entertainment Desk

Popular actress of present generation, Sunerah Binte Kamal, who has won the National Film Award for her acting skills, has made a place in the hearts of the audience in a very short time. In addition to acting on the big screen, she is also very active on social media. Sunerah stays close to her fans by constantly sharing updates and pictures of her work. Recently, Sunerah posted a new picture of herself on social media, giving a life-oriented and inspiring message to her fans. The actress captioned the photo posted on Facebook, "You know, yesterday is gone. And what's meant to happen, happens. I know you made some mistakes and things may not have gone according to plan." Urging people to learn from their mistakes and move forward in life, Sunerah further wrote, "But you have learned, and sometimes that is what matters most. Now go out and make tomorrow a better day." Netizens have been quite impressed with positive and motivational message of the actress. Fans are pouring in with praise in the comment box of the post. Appreciating Sunerah's thoughtfulness, one commented, "A wonderful inspiration from a dear person." Another fan praised her look and wrote, "She looks very beautiful."

Jaya reunites with 'Ardhangini' cast for sequel

Entertainment Desk

Jaya Ahsan began shooting for 'Ajo Ardhangini' in June last year. A year later, director Kaushik Ganguly announced that the film is now just a month away from its release. 'Ajo Ardhangini' will hit theatres across West Bengal on July 10. The original film, 'Ardhangini', was released in 2023. The lead roles were played by Kaushik Sen, Churni Ganguly, and Jaya Ahsan. The story revolved around the illness of Suman (Kaushik Sen), which brought together his former wife Shubhra (Churni Ganguly) and his current wife Meghna (Jaya Ahsan), leading to emotional tensions and conflicts. The film was highly praised by both audiences and critics. Following its success, a sequel has now been made. Director Kaushik Ganguly said that the new story begins about two years after the events of the first film. Suman, Shubhra, and Meghna find themselves face to face once again at a wedding. Alongside Jaya Ahsan, Kaushik Sen and Churni Ganguly reprise their roles, while Indrashish Roy joins the cast in this new installment. Kaushik Ganguly said, "Many untold aspects of these three characters will come to light this time. Meghna's daughter, Tikli, has grown a little older, but she still does not know that Suman is not her biological father. That truth will become even clearer in this film. The central conflict revolves around the child, and it is through this crisis that the paths of the two 'ardhanginis' cross once again."



Preity Zinta in court for allegedly spreading objectionable pictures

Entertainment Desk

Bollywood actress Preity Zinta has approached the Mumbai High Court seeking legal protection against the spread of her distorted pictures and videos on the internet using artificial intelligence (AI) technology. The actress took this drastic step after several 'deepfake' pictures of her were leaked on various online platforms including Meta and Google. In the court, Preity Zinta alleged that these fake photos and videos created using AI technology are seriously damaging her social image. She mentioned that such unethical use is violating her right to personal privacy and copyright law. She also claimed that her moral rights under the Copyright Act, 1957 are protected. A single bench of Justice Abhay Ahuja took cognizance of Preity Zinta's complaint and allowed her to file a case specifically to ensure her personal rights and protection. This is not a new legal move by Bollywood against misuse of technology. Earlier, star actors like Amitabh Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan had approached the court seeking a ban on the use of their images, names and voices without their permission. Currently, Preity Zinta is busy promoting her upcoming film 'Batwara 1947' but has taken an active stand against AI-induced fraud to protect her personal safety and dignity.