



"They [government] repeatedly amended the constitution as part of their plot to eliminate politics from Bangladesh. Their main target is to keep only one party in the country."

BNP SECRETARY GENERAL MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR



"The government can give incentive to the tanners in another way instead of harming the interest of the poor and the orphans."

JATIYA PARTY CHAIRMAN GM QUADER



"It is better for him [Mashrafe] if he gets two months' time to think about it [retirement] and make a decision ... we are fine with it ..."

BCB PRESIDENT NAZMUL HASSAN ON HIS MEETING WITH MASHRAFE



## Students, officegoers most vulnerable

Educational institutions, offices taking measures against Aedes mosquito breeding

### DENGUE OUTBREAK



NEW CASES IN LAST 24 HRS	1,460	TOTAL DENGUE CASES	51,476
OUTSIDE DHAKA	839	DEATH (40 OFFICIAL)	96
UNDERGOING TREATMENT	7,856		

SOURCE: DGHS

HELEMUL ALAM and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Students and officegoers are most vulnerable to dengue infection, according to a new government survey.

In the latest survey on 420 patients, the IEDCR found 41 percent of them are students, 39 percent officegoers, 13 percent housewives while the rest form different occupations.

Findings also show that most patients are aged between 5 and 35, with the number of male patients much higher compared to female patients, said Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora, director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

With educational institutions and offices opening after Eid, experts recommended regular anti-mosquito drives at these places to prevent a further spread of the disease.

This year's outbreak is already the worst in the country, with at least 51,500 cases detected and at least 96 killed so far. The number of reported infections is five times that in last year. The actual number of patients is likely to be higher as many cases go unreported.

In efforts to tackle the situation, the DGHS yesterday launched a mobile App called Stop Dengue, which will help people detect mosquito breeding places. This App, available on Google Play Store, will also help do a mapping of mosquito breeding places around the country.

Meanwhile, three more people, including a student, died of dengue in Dhaka and Faridpur yesterday, according to hospital sources.

Students and job holders are at the highest risk as they remain outside home

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DAYLIGHT SHOWS DEVASTATION ... Mangled corrugated iron sheets, barely standing pillars and ashes are all that remains after a fire ravaged a slum in Chalantika area of Mirpur-7 Friday night.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

RUSH BACK TO DHAKA  
Hassles on return journey too

STAR REPORT

Bus and launch terminals and railway stations in the capital witnessed floods of incoming passengers yesterday as most offices and business open today after an extended Eid holiday.

Many had to wait for hours at the stations and terminals to get transport home while some complained about being charged exorbitantly by rickshaw pullers, autorickshaw drivers, bus, and launch operators.

Overcrowded launches were seen plying the rivers yesterday.

Although no long tailbacks were seen on the highways and near ferry terminals, traffic was slow.

Before Eid, the last

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## Rawhide trade runs into snag

Merchants won't sell to tanners unless a part of arrears paid



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although tanners were supposed to start buying rawhide yesterday at the government-fixed rates, merchants refused to sell it demanding payment of "considerable" portion of previous dues.

It comes after seasonal traders, farmers and madrasas across the country threw away thousands of pieces of rawhide of sacrificial animals, failing to sell those for a lack of demand.

The traders and rawhide merchants put the prices of the

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Blaze spread fast for faulty gas pipes

Fire officials say

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Illegal gas connections via plastic pipes spread the fire faster, razing almost the entire slum at Mirpur's Chalantika on Friday night, fire service officials said.

The authorities, however, were yet to find the cause behind the fire.

"We found illegal gas connections in the slum when we were conducting search operation [yesterday]. The gas was supplied through plastic pipes. The plastic pipes melted in the heat, releasing the gas and helping the fire spread faster to adjacent shanties," Rezaul Karim, assistant director of the Fire Service and Civil Defence in Dhaka, told The Daily Star.

Many locals said the same when the correspondents visited the fire ravaged area yesterday.

Abdullah Al Amin, a local pharmacy owner, said the entire slum had the illegal gas connection running through plastic pipes instead of metal ones.

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## Ravaged by fire, buried in despair

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

The scene at Chalantika slum resembles that of a ravaged wasteland in a dystopian world.

Surrounded by tall buildings in a strange juxtaposition of the sheltered and ones that are not, thousands of people pick through the ravaged remains of what was once their entire lives, salvaging charred valuables and fragments of once-happy memories.

Friday night's fire in Mirpur's Chalantika slum did not just raze houses; it engulfed the dreams of a people, often marginalised.

Soheli Begum, in her 50s, came to the slum in Dhaka around 27 years ago with her husband and four children. They were picking up their lives after their home in Bholi was eroded by the river.

Hard-work changed their luck and despite the loss of her husband a decade and a half ago, Soheli felt that she was ready to beat all odds.

But one single fire took away everything they had, including their prized possessions such as the grocery shop Soheli used to run, two fridges, a television, a showcase, almirahs and whatever cash they barely managed to save.

"I have grown old. All our savings are gone. Now how will my family survive?" Soheli said.

Of the around 3,000 families affected according to locals, the plight of a future up in

the air is shared by almost every one of them.

Three siblings -- Dulu, 55, Rafique, 40 and Liton, 35 -- who arrived at the slum from Barguna 30 years back, had just overcome their state of ultra-poverty.

Dulu used to work as a carpenter with his father Salam Musalli. Later, the three siblings joined the same profession and built three shanties of their own.

Days before Eid-ul-Azha, the three brothers put new corrugated tins worth around Tk 20,000 on their houses. The shiny new additions were something that reminded them of how far they had come.

But within days, the last vestige of their successful struggle was turned to ashes.

"I loaned money from people. Now how will I pay them back? Where will we even stay?" Dulu, who had a sleepless night, said.

He was still staring at the burnt remains of what had once been.

Slum dweller Md Mamun, 30, a garbage van puller, had lived there from his childhood. He said he had around Tk 60,000 worth of furniture in his two rented rooms, where he lived with his wife and two-and-a-half-year old son.

He sold the charred remains of his belongings

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Domingo named Bangladesh coach

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officially announced the appointment of former South Africa coach Russell Domingo as head coach of the Bangladesh national team during a press conference in Mirpur yesterday.

The first assignment for the 44-year-old South African, who has agreed on a two-year term with the BCB, will be to guide the Tigers during their one-off Test against Afghanistan, which will be followed by a triangular T20I series involving hosts Bangladesh, Afghanistan and SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Indian security personnel stand guard as a Kashmiri woman walks past them in Srinagar yesterday. Seventeen out of around 100 telephone exchanges were yesterday restored in the restive Kashmir Valley after an almost two-week communications blackout.

## India eases some curbs in Kashmir

Some land phone links restored; Pakistan, India trade heavy fire

AGENCIES

Indian authorities eased restrictions on movement and restored landline telephone links in some parts of Kashmir on Saturday, the biggest relaxation in a crippling lockdown since New Delhi announced it was removing the region's special status on Aug 5.

The ease of restrictions comes despite India and Pakistan exchanged "heavy" cross-border fire yesterday, a day after a rare meeting of the UN Security Council on the Kashmir issue.

The two foes regularly fire potshots over the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed Himalayan territory, which is divided between the two countries and poisoned their relations since independence in 1947.

"The exchange of fire is going on," a senior Indian government official told AFP, calling it "heavy".

One Indian soldier was reportedly killed. Pakistan made no immediate comment on the violence.

Late Friday, Pakistan and China succeeded in getting the UN Security Council to discuss Kashmir -- behind closed doors -- for the first time since the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan on Saturday hailed the gathering, saying that addressing the "suffering of the Kashmiri people & ensuring resolution of the dispute is the responsibility of this world body".

New Delhi insists the status of the territory is a purely internal matter.

"We don't need international busybodies to try to tell us how to run our lives. We are a billion-plus people," India's UN envoy Syed Akbaruddin said after the meeting.

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