

‘Corruption, anarchy the new norm’

12 opposition MPs blast govt for sorry state of EC, education, law and order, health sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP, Jatiya Party and Gono Forum MPs at Jatiya Sangsad yesterday blasted the government for the sorry state of the Election Commission (EC), education system, law and order situation and widespread corruption in health sector.

A total of 12 lawmakers slammed Education Minister Dipu Moni, Law Minister Anisul Huq, who is in charge of the EC in parliamentary affairs, Health Minister Zahid Maleque and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan while participating in the discussion on passage of the proposed budget for 2022-23.

Jatiya Party, BNP, Gono Forum and independent MPs submitted 664 cut motions on 59 demands centring the proposed budget.

They were allowed to participate in the discussion on Election Commission Secretariat, Public Security Division, Health Services Division and Secondary and Higher Education Division.

The MPs are Jatiya Party’s Kazi Firoz Rashid, Rustam Ali Farazi, Mujibul Huq Chunnun, Fakhrul Imam, Shamim Haider Patwari, Rawshan Ara Mannan and Ponir Uddin Ahmed; BNP’s Harunur Rashid, Mosharraf Hossain and Rumeen Farhana; Gono Forum’s Mokabbir Khan and independent MP Rezaul Karim Bablu.

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So far so good

Passengers with e-passports benefitting from e-gates, as process now efficient

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Around 11:00am yesterday, Sufia Begum, a resident of the capital’s Dhanmondi area, went to Dhaka airport to fly to Bangkok for tourism purposes.

Collecting the boarding pass, she went for immigration around 11:30am to board the plane.

As an e-passport carrier, the immigration officials asked her to go through the e-gate. She first placed the passport for scanning at the e-gate, which took around four to five seconds.

Then Sufia entered through the gate, and an automated camera scanned her face, which took another 10 to 12 seconds.



Finally, she was asked to go to the immigration officer’s desk, where officials just put a departure seal and check visa and boarding pass.

This process had taken less than a minute.

“I never thought that my immigration process would be done in less than two minutes, that too without standing in any queue. Earlier, we always had to spend at least ten to fifteen minutes for immigration,” Sufia told this newspaper.

During a visit at the departure and arrival desk at HSA, this correspondent found no queue for e-passport holders.

For comparison, Zubair Ahmed reached HSA around 11:00am from Paris, and it took him less than a minute to complete the immigration process. His co-passengers who did not have e-passports had to stand in a long queue and spend a long time to complete the same process.

A total of 12 e-gates have been set up at arrival and

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‘Enough with mere formalities’

Speakers urge govt to take effective actions against corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers called for a well-governed democratic Bangladesh by controlling corruption effectively during the virtual annual meeting of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday.

The meeting was presided over by TIB life member Mohammad Shahjahan Siddiqui and moderated by TIB executive director Iftekharuzzaman. Forty-seven campaigners – involved with the anti-corruption social movement – participated in the meeting.

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A bus goes over the divider while trying to get ahead of the one behind it. Accidents are often the result of drivers doing such reckless manoeuvres. This picture was taken from the capital’s Azimpur yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



A mother holds her child tight while the rickshaw moves against the windy rain on Manik Mia Avenue yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Latifur Rahman’s 2nd death anniv today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the second death anniversary of Latifur Rahman, founder chairman and CEO of Transcom Group, a well-known and highly respected business house in Bangladesh.

Soft-spoken and humble, the visionary and ethical businessman passed away in his sleep on this day at his paternal home in Cumilla after suffering from lung-related illness for a long time.

His passing coincided with the death anniversary of his grandson Faraz

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Dengue cases shot up in June

The month hasn’t seen so many cases since 2019; experts call for immediate measures

HELEMUL ALAM

A total of 737 people was infected with dengue in June. In the past five years, June has not witnessed so many cases except in 2019, one of the worst years in regards to dengue infections.

This year, the number of cases was 163 in May, 23 in April, 20 in March and February, while it was 126 in January, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Experts urged authorities to take immediate measures to control infections by identifying hotspots.

They also underscored the need for building awareness among people, as Aedes mosquitoes, carriers of the dengue virus, breed in clean water.

According to DGHS, dengue cases in June were 267 in 2017, 295 in 2018, 1,884 in 2019, 20 in 2020, and 272 in 2021.

Normally, in the dengue season’s first two or three months, cases start multiplying by three to four times. But after that, it increases by 10 times or more, and this trend continues for the next few months, said GM Saifur Rahman, an entomologist at Bangladesh National University.

From May to June this year, cases have increased by over four times, and it will start rising by 10 times, which will continue till September or October if proper measures are not taken, said Saifur.

DGHS data show that in 2019, the year when cases crossed one lakh, there were 1,884 infections in June, and that number rose to 16,253 in July and 52,636 in August.

Entomologists have repeatedly urged authorities to determine locations prone to dengue infection and let everyone know, so that people can be aware, arrange for personal protection, and take area-based measures. But local authorities often deny that cases are originating from their areas, he said.

There is a blame game going on between authorities concerned, which indicates their lack

of sincerity, Saifur said.

Prof Kabirul Bashar, entomologist of Jahangirnagar University, said addressing the source of infections is crucial to control Aedes mosquitoes, and for this, raising awareness among people is essential. Ward councillors can play a vital role, as they can conduct drives with locals in every house. So, every councillor will have to be proactive, as central administration will not be able to do this alone, he said.

Dr Md Ekramul Haque, deputy programme manager of malaria and AID control programme at DGHS, said to control Aedes mosquitoes, an integrated initiative, especially involving locals, is crucial.

“From May to June this year, cases have increased by over four times, and it will start rising by 10 times, which will continue till September or October if proper measures are not taken.”

GM SAIFUR RAHMAN
Entomologist at Bangladesh National University

“We have already directed to open ‘dengue corners’ at all district and upazila hospitals and special wards at medical college hospitals,” he said.

He said they have a sufficient number of kits to identify dengue patients. “We have already trained both doctors and nurses to treat dengue.”

Dhaka South City Corporation Chief Health Officer Dr Fazle Shamsul Kabir on Wednesday said apart from their regular anti-mosquito drive and awareness campaign, they are conducting drives inside the 300-yard radius of patients.

Apart from their regular drive, Dhaka North City Corporation yesterday inaugurated a two-day operation to find Aedes-mosquito breeding grounds on rooftops or in balconies using drones.

What steps taken for their birth certificates?

HC asks govt on street children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to submit in three months a report on the steps taken to issue birth certificates to all street children.

Secretaries at the ministries of women and children and home affairs, and office of the registrar general of birth and death registration have been made respondents to the rule, which is returnable in four weeks.

The bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Khizir Hayat delivered the order following a petition filed by Sports for Hope and Independence.

101st birthday of DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) will celebrate its 101st founding anniversary today. Established in 1921, the country’s oldest university started its academic activities the same year on July 1 with about 600 acres land, 3 faculties, 12 departments, 60 teachers, 877 students and 3 dormitories.

The university today consists of 13 faculties, 84 departments, 12 institutes, 58 research bureaus and centres, around 43,000 students, 2,200 teachers and 19 residential halls and now 275.083 acres of land.

To celebrate “Dhaka University Day”, the authorities have chalked out various programmes. National and university flags will be hoisted and students, teachers and university staff will bring out colourful processions.

70 died in political clashes this year

Says HRSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 70 people died in the political clashes across the country in the first half of the year 2022 while 3,770 were injured, according to the data of Human Rights Support Society.

Majority of the political clashes happened following internal conflicts of the ruling party between January and June, said an HRSS press release yesterday.

The release said 52 people were shot in the 419 political clashes while 1,271 from different parties were arrested. In the first half of the year, 728 women including 424 children were raped. Among them, 139 incidents were gang-raped and 24 were killed after rape, it added.

DHAKA AIRPORT

Passenger leaves behind Saudi riyal worth Tk 6cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs Intelligence and Customs House officials seized 22,99,500 Saudi riyal – equivalent to Tk 6 crore – at Dhaka airport on Wednesday night.

The officials found foreign currency inside a luggage while screening it at the airport.

As they could not locate the owner of the luggage, they opened it in presence of other agencies and found the currencies hidden inside 34 shirt boxes, said Ahmedur Reza Chowdhury, deputy director of Customs Intelligence.

With the help of tag attached to the luggage, the officials identified that it belonged to a passenger named Mamun Khan.

The passenger checked in to board a flight of Emirates, to go to Dubai, but fled from the airport during the seizure, he said.

ACC looking into procurement anomalies at BR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission is looking into violations of contract in the procurement of 10 locomotives for Bangladesh Railway.

A two-member team of ACC, consisting of Assistant Director Jasmin Aktar and Deputy Assistant Director Kamiab Aftahi-un-Nabi, yesterday conducted a drive at Rail Bhavan on the basis of allegations of corruption and irregularities in the procurement.

Examining documents, they found that there are differences in three capital components of engines, said an ACC source.