

## Dengue claims two more lives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least two more dengue patients died while 353 were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

With the new death cases, all are in Dhaka, the total number of dengue deaths rose to 39.

Among the death cases, 17 are in Cox's Bazar, four in Barishal, one in Chattogram and 17 in Dhaka, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

The total number of dengue cases this year rose to 9,448.

A total of 1,213 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment. A total of 8,196 patients have been released from hospitals so far.

A DGHS monsoon survey, conducted between August 11 and 23, found the presence of Aedes mosquitoes in 13.4 percent of houses under DNCC and 11.75 percent of homes under DSSC.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina signs a condolence book at the British High Commission in Baridhara in presence of High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson yesterday. The condolence book was opened following the death of Queen Elizabeth II on September 8. The PM also paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II by placing a wreath in front of her portrait there.

PHOTO: PIO

## Train them first, then buy equipment

PM tells Ecneec meeting on health workers; 6 projects okayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the authorities to arrange training for health workers of public hospitals before purchasing modern equipment from abroad.

Hinting that many equipment after purchasing remain unused at the hospitals due to lack of technical know-how, the premier gave such direction at the meeting of Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec).

Planning Minister MA Mannan informed it at a press briefing following the meeting.

The Ecneec yesterday approved proposals on six projects. It approved a proposal of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission regarding purchase of a number of modern equipment for five Institutes of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences at Mitford, Dhaka, Kumilla, Faridpur, Barishal and Bogura and infrastructural development of these institutes at a cost of Tk 214.79 crore.

A total of 103 equipment and machineries will be procured from abroad, 628 locally produced equipment will be purchased and some 769 furniture will be bought under the project aimed at enhancing capacity of these institutes.

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## Outline of 'simultaneous' movement soon: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the outline of a "simultaneous" movement to oust the government will be presented soon. "We are working with the various political parties to form a greater unity and in light of that we have decided to finalise the strategy..." he said.

Addressing a press conference at the party chairperson's Gulshan office, Fakhrul urged all the political parties to join the movement.

About Jatiya Party, he said, "We are yet to start any formal discussion with Jatiya Party. Our door is open for all. We said it clearly that any political party, person or organisation who wants democracy will be with us in the movement."

Asked whether the party discussed with its key ally Jamaat, he said, "We are now talking about simultaneous movement. This is very clear. All political parties will wage movement from their own positions." About the nature of the outline, he said the main focus will be on forcing the government to resign for holding a free and fair election.

# Tough day for Dhaka commuters

Capital sees hours of gridlock for rain, VVIP movement

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Residents of the capital, especially office-goers and students suffered immensely yesterday as early morning rain coupled with VVIP movement caused massive gridlocks in different parts of Dhaka.

Not only for the office goers, but the first half of the day was also a nightmare for guardians dropping and picking up their children from school.

Traffic police officials said vehicular movement through Tongi's Cherag Ali to Gazipur remained almost halted due to the rain. The traffic situation consequently worsened over up to the capital's Bijoy Sarani, Saat Rasta intersection. The roads connecting to the main thoroughfares also witnessed severe congestion.

Sharing his terrible experience, a banker told this correspondent that he started from his Mirpur residence for Gazipur's Board Bazar at 7:00am as usual, but after spending three hours, he could only reach Uttara.

"I remained stuck in traffic at the same place for 45 minutes and then decided to return home.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, PALASH KHAN

I managed to reach home around 2:00pm after facing gridlock at Khilkhet," he said.

Miroza Parvin, the mother of a third grader at Shaheed Bir Uttam Lt. Anwar Girls' College, said she started around 11:00am to drop her daughter to school.

But she could not even reach Kochukhet by 12:45pm. There was severe gridlock as the road through the cantonment area remained closed.

The mother-daughter duo skipped school for the day and returned home around 1:30pm.

Commuters said Tongi, Uttara, Airport, Mohakhali, Bijoy Sarani,

Bangla Motor, Shahbagh and Kochukhet areas saw the worst gridlock.

Many of them were seen walking to their destination, while others were seen waiting for vehicles at various spots.

Talking to this correspondent, auto-rickshaw driver Shah Alam said, "The traffic situation today will surely affect my income as I could not make the expected number of trips."

Besides, around noon, a group of hawkers held a demonstration in Gulistan against the Dhaka South City Corporation's eviction drive, causing gridlock on nearby roads, said Paltan Police Station OC Salahuddin Mia.

Meanwhile, around the same time, Gazipur Metropolitan Police

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## LOWER COURTS Case disposal rate increases to 32.4pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following a monitoring system initiated by the chief justice, the rate of case disposal at lower courts has increased to 32.4 percent in the first six months of current year compared to the same period last year.

The disposal rate was 91.9 percent in comparison to filing of cases with the subordinate courts in all eight divisions since January 1 to June 30.

Last year, the rate was 59.5 percent since January 1 to June 30, according to a statement issued by the Supreme Court administration on Monday.

The statement said a total of 7,47,476 cases (civil and criminal) were filed and 6,86,952 were disposed of since January 1 to June 30; and 6,55,981 cases were filed and 3,90,311 were disposed of since January 1 to June 30 last year.

The improvement came following the round-the-clock supervision, monitoring and leaderships of the committees constituted by Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique, said the statement.

The statement, however, has not mentioned the total number of pending cases.

Contacted, Supreme Court Spokesman Md Saifur Rahman said there is no official information about the figure.

According to a newspaper report, the number of pending cases with lower courts is 36.5 lakh and with the High Court and Appellate Divisions of the SC is 5.35 lakh.

## Need more women in the House

Say speakers on gender parity in parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Women's representation in the parliament is now at only 21 percent, including the reserved seats. But we have to work on increasing it to 50 percent," said Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday.

She also said a rethinking needs to be done on how more women can be elected in general seats, removing the obstacles.

She made the comments during her chief guest's speech at an event, titled "Role of Female Parliamentarians in National Development: Meeting to exchange views with female lawmakers".

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) organised it at Parliament LD Hall.

"Reserved seats should be in effect until 33 percent representation and a 50:50 participation

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## 1,000 hawkers evicted in Gulistan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday evicted around 1,000 hawkers from footpaths in Gulistan as it conducted a drive for the second time this week.

Earlier on Sunday, DSCC evicted over 1,000 hawkers but many of them returned to the pavements.

MA Kashem, president of Bangladesh Hawkers League and Bangladesh Hawkers Federation, said they demanded rehabilitation of hawkers before any eviction.

He said according to an Ecneec decision in 2016, city corporations were given the responsibility for hawkers' rehabilitation.

DSCC prepared a list of 2,502 hawkers when Sayeed Khokon was DSCC mayor but they did not

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A girl walks over a wooden plank used for covering a manhole on the busy Naya Bazar road in Old Dhaka yesterday. As part of an ongoing city development work of Wasa, the road has been dug up and left like this for a while now without ensuring any safety measures. As a result, commuters have to face great difficulties to use the road.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

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