



It was the commuters who had to bear the brunt of increased frisking by law enforcers following Wednesday's clash between BNP activists and police in Nayapalton, ahead of the party's December 10 rally. Service holders and HSC examinees were the worst sufferers of the amplified security measures. Nayapalton was closed the entire day, barricaded by policemen. The barricades were removed after 8:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, PRABIR DAS

Of checkpoints and sufferings

Police increase frisking ahead of BNP rally at the cost of public inconvenience

STAR REPORT

Police intensified frisking of people entering the capital from their checkpoints at different gateways of Dhaka ahead of BNP's scheduled rally on Saturday.

Law enforcers said they checked visitors' identity, luggage, and vehicles -- especially passengers of buses and motorcycle riders at the checkpoints at Gabtoli, Tongi, Narayangaj and Saidabad -- as part of stepping up their security measures.

This newspaper found that law enforcers were asking the passengers questions about where they were headed, their purpose and others.

Police at Gabtoli said they are frisking people as part of their routine activities.

On-duty police at Narayanganj and Gazipur Metropolitan Police Commissioner Molla Nazrul Islam said they were checking people to prevent any kind of untoward incident.

Police stopped almost all types of Dhaka-bound vehicles, including hundreds of motorbikes, buses, and private cars, at the Gabtoli bus terminal.

Mirpur-bound Mohammad Aziz, a tiles trader, said police checked him twice at Aminbazar and Gabtoli.

Shariful Islam, a resident of Tangail's Mirzapur, said he was travelling on a bus to go to a job interview in Motijheel. He was asked to get down from the bus at Gabtoli and was interrogated for five minutes.

"Police also searched my phone to verify if I was going for an interview," he said.

Darussalam Police Inspector (Operations) Asaduzzaman said it's a part of regular activity. However, considering the overall situation in the country, they need to impose stricter security, he added.

In Dhaka's Abdullahpur area, police stopped vehicles mostly motorcycles.

Jatrabari-bound Zahid Hasan said police stopped his motorbike and started searching without any explanation.

"They took eight minutes of my time but did not find anything. I might be late for work," he said.

Police checked Dhaka-bound passengers at three points -- Chowrasta, Kutubkhali and Signboard -- in Jatrabari area, similar to other gateways of the capital.

Police also checked Dhaka-bound vehicles at the Mouchak intersection, the east side of Narayanganj's Kachpur bridge and different places in the Gazipur district and city corporation.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Dengue claims three more lives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least three dengue patients died and 246 were hospitalized in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), the total number of deaths rose to 263 and the total number of cases rose to 59,695.

Among the death cases, 162 are in Dhaka, 25 in Cox's Bazar, 35 in Chattogram, 11 in Barishal, eight in Khulna, six in Mymensingh, five in Rajshahi, two in Narail and one each in Narsingdi, Kustia, Pabna, Bagerhat, Khagrachhari, Bogura, Madaripur and Feni.

A total of 58,220 patients have already been released from hospitals while 1,212 are still undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile, experts have urged the authorities concerned to conduct extensive drives to identify clusters of Aedes mosquitoes immediately.

A monsoon survey of the DGHS, conducted between August 11 and 23, found the presence of Aedes mosquitoes in 13.4 percent of houses under Dhaka North City Corporation and 11.75 percent of homes under Dhaka South City Corporation.

PRAYER TIMING
DECEMBER 9

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Fajr | Juma | Asr | Maghrib | Esha |
| AZAN 5:15 | 12:30 | 3:45 | 5:19 | 7:00 |
| JAMAAT 5:50 | 1:15 | 4:00 | 5:22 | 7:30 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'We will protect the rights of girls'

Vow diplomats, legislators, development partners at event marking Human Rights Day



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Girls who dropped out due to child marriage during the pandemic must be brought back to school, said lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury yesterday.

Data show that despite significant progress in recent years, the prevalence of child marriage in Bangladesh is the fourth highest in the world. Covid-19 exacerbated the problem to a great extent, said Saber, also chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

He also expressed his interest in combating sexual harassment at educational institutions by implementing the guidelines issued by the High Court in 2009 -- which include ensuring anti-harassment committees at the establishments.

He made the remarks at the celebration programme of International Human Rights Day, organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) at the Liberation War Museum Hall in the capital's Agargaon.

This year, MJF is celebrating the day (December 10) with the slogan "We will stand up, we will resist, we will conquer the world".

"The way girls and women are moving forward, we men must help them in their inspiring journeys and provide them the necessary support to flourish," said Saber.

MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said, "Upholding the human rights of women and girls requires their participation in the social and political spheres."

"MJF believes that society as a whole should defend and protect the rights of girls so that they can stand up tall and say 'we will conquer'. We need to support girls

to unleash their potential so that they become productive members of society," she added.

Krishna Rani Sarkar, a member of the winning team of SAFF Women's Championship, also joined the event and shared her inspiring journey in football.

"My journey was not easy, as I did not get support from my family in the beginning. Fearing society's judgement, my mother even destroyed my football once," she said.

"Once I gained some recognition, my journey got smoother and even my family started supporting me. Now, I'm supporting myself and my family financially, and inspiring girls to play football," she added.

Eminent author and physicist Muhammed Zafar Iqbal also attended the event. He highlighted how the women in his family --

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

ANDAMAN SEA

200 Rohingyas stranded after boat breaks down

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Around 200 Rohingyas have been stranded on a boat off the coast of Thailand in the Andaman Sea, after its engines broke down -- a situation that is posing significant risks of fatalities.

In a statement, UN Refugee Agency yesterday urged the regional countries to immediately rescue and safely disembark them.

Reports suggest the non-sea boat was adrift since December 1, and those on board have been without food and water for days and are suffering extreme dehydration, the UN agency said.

Unverified information suggests a number of Rohingya refugees have already lost their lives, including women and children.

UNHCR said in line with international obligations under the law of the sea and longstanding maritime traditions, the duty to rescue persons in distress at sea should be upheld, irrespective of nationality or legal status.

On December 3, UNHCR issued an alert over the dramatic increase in the number of people trying to cross the Andaman Sea from Bangladesh and Myanmar amid escalation of violence in the Southeast Asian nation.

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"My journey was not easy, as I did not get support from my family in the beginning. Fearing society's judgement, my mother even destroyed my football once."

KRISHNA RANI SARKAR, member of the winning team, SAFF Women's Championship

Nurul H Khan
(1935 - 2020)

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