

## DENGUE FEVER One dead, 89 hospitalised in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least one dengue patient died and 89 were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

According to DGHS, the total number of deaths rose to 274, while the total number of dengue patients stood at 61,844.

Among the death cases, 169 are in Dhaka, 26 in Cox's Bazar, 36 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 61,049 patients have already been released from hospitals while some 521 are still undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile, experts continue to urge the authorities to conduct extensive drives identifying clusters of Aedes mosquitoes immediately.



People waiting in long lines in front of an OMS truck on Mirpur's Mazar road. As essentials remain mostly unaffordable for people in the low-income bracket, open market sales are the only option for many to keep their kitchens running.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Court accepts charges against Sabrina over NID scam

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted charges against Sabrina Sharmin Hossain, chairman of JKG Health Care, in a case filed against her for possessing two NID cards with fake information.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Shahidul Islam passed the order. The magistrate also sent the case to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court for the next course of action. On December 1, Mohammad Ripon Uddin, a sub-inspector of DB and also the case's investigation officer, submitted the charge sheet to Dhaka's Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The IO said the charges brought against Sabrina of possessing two National ID cards with fake information were primarily proven and she should be brought under trial. On July 19, Sabrina was jailed for 11 years in a case filed over issuing fake Covid certificates.

**PRAYER TIMING**  
DECEMBER 23

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:25	12:30	3:45	5:24	7:00
JAMAAT 6:00	1:15	4:00	5:27	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

# Stories of wage theft and injustice

Returnee migrant workers say they were deprived of wage benefits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About a dozen returnee migrant workers from countries in the Middle East yesterday said they were deprived of wages and benefits. Experts said this was "systemic wage theft" and that "injustice" is evident in those countries' worker-recruitment management.

During a public hearing, the returnees, some of whom were employed for over a decade, said employers did not pay them due wages for months or paid less than what was promised.

Moreover, they said they were not recruited for the jobs that were promised to them or they had to work for ungodly hours, violating the agreement they had with the employers.

Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), with support from Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) and Daily Bonik Barta, organised the public hearing in the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

Participants said the Bangladesh government needs to relay the workers' claim at regional and global forums and create a position for bargaining to recover the dues.

An MFA report published in

**Irregular payment led me to work elsewhere illegally...As a result, I was nabbed by police and subsequently deported home after serving 37 days in jail.**

**ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE**  
Returnee migrant worker

February this year -- documenting cases of wage theft against migrants in five countries, including Bangladesh -- calculated that the total amount of wages "stolen" from a little over 2,000 workers amounted to \$19.2 million.

Abu Bakar Siddique, a returnee migrant worker from Saudi Arabia, said he was hired in March 2020, at a monthly wage of 800 riyals. However, the employer did not give him any work or payment for the first three months amid the pandemic.

Later, he started a job at a construction site as a cleaner. However, the payment was irregular. Besides, the employer did not issue an iqama (work permit) for him.

"Irregular payment led me to work elsewhere illegally...As a result, I was nabbed by police and

subsequently deported home after serving 37 days in jail," he added.

Ranu Begum, another Saudi returnee, said she worked there for about four years as a domestic worker but the employer did not pay her wage for at least 15 months. The employer paid her 600 riyals a month, contrary to the promised amount of 1,000 riyals.

"[The employer] would hurl abusive words if I asked for the due

**(The employer) would hurl abusive words if I asked for the due payment.**

**RANU BEGUM**  
Returnee migrant worker

payment," she said, adding, she came home amid the pandemic on vacation and never went back.

Hazrat Ali, who worked in Lebanon for 11 years since 2009, said each year, his employer deducted money from his wage for the renewal of various papers, although the employer was supposed to bear this expense.

Md Mizan, who worked in the United Arab Emirates for more than a decade, said he left behind

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## NAYAPALTAN CLASH 436 BNP men seek bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A total of 436 leaders and activists of BNP's front organisations yesterday sought bail from Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court in a case filed over the December 7 clash between police and the party men in Dhaka's Nayapaltan area.

Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas, personal assistant of party chairperson Khaleda Zia, was among the accused who sought bail in the case filed with Paltan Model Police Station.

They submitted the bail petitions after Dhaka's Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court rejected their bails on three consecutive dates, said Zaynal Abedin Mesbah, one of their lawyers.

Judge Md Asaduzzaman of Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court fixed January 30, 2023 for hearing the petitions.

The same court on Wednesday rejected the bail petitions of BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir and its standing committee member Mirza Abbas.

The case was filed on December 8.

A total of 450 leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations were arrested on December 7.

## Stand ready to deal with natural disasters: PM

UNB, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked Bangladesh Navy to stay prepared for dealing with natural disasters as well as protecting the country's sovereignty.

"Being emboldened with the qualities of integrity, leadership and self-sacrifice, you'll always have to remain prepared to protect the country's independence and sovereignty as well as face any disaster, standing shoulder to shoulder with the members of the Army and Air Force. Bangladesh is a disaster-prone country," she said.

The PM was addressing the President Parade of the passing cadets of Midshipmen 2020 Alfa Batch and Direct Entry Officer 2022 Bravo Batch of Bangladesh Naval Academy (BNA) in Chattogram's Patenga.

She said Bangladesh Navy always stands beside the people during natural disasters and conducts rescue operations competently.

"I want our officers to do the work with utmost sincerity," she said.

Referring to the graduating officers, the PM said, "You are the future helmsmen of our Navy in protecting the country's sovereignty and security."

She asked them to discharge the responsibilities towards the country, being imbued with patriotism, and equipped with the senses of discipline and integrity.

## 12-party alliance won't yield any result: info minister

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday said BNP would not be able to move ahead by forming a 12-party alliance, splitting the 20-party coalition.

"BNP had formed the 20-party alliance for carrying out movement and they saw that the coalition didn't move forward. Now, there will be no progress if they form a 12-party alliance while many parties of group are inexperienced."

"Even, the strength of the clique is less than our (Awami League's) ward or thana level. In fact, it is nothing else, but a platform of isolated politicians," he told reporters while replying to a query at the seminar room of Press Information Department (PID) at Secretariat.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Follow traffic guidelines during national council AL asks party activists

BSS, Dhaka

The ruling Awami League has urged its leaders and workers to follow traffic guidelines of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) to keep vehicular movement smooth in the city on the occasion of the party's 22nd national council to be held tomorrow.

AL general secretary Obaidul Quader has requested all to follow the DMP guidelines, said an AL press release yesterday.

Centering the AL's 22nd national council, to be held at the historic Suhrawardy Uddyan, the DMP has taken special measures to keep vehicular movement normal in the city.



People line up in front of this pitha seller near the capital's Shilpakala Academy to get a taste of the sweet and savoury offerings winter brings with it. Among the many types of pitha, two are the most popular at roadside stalls -- bhapa and chittoi. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Land Wanted Bashundhara

To Sell or Joint Venture  
only 20 katha or more

Please Contact

0175 569 3711

land@aloydevelopments.com

