



Literary giant Milan Kundera no more

REUTERS, Prague

Milan Kundera, author of the novel “The Unbearable Lightness of Being” who lived nearly five decades in Paris after emigrating in disillusionment from his Communist-ruled homeland, has died at the age of 94.

The Moravian Library (MZK) in the Czech city of Brno, which houses Kundera’s personal collection, said he died in his Paris apartment on Tuesday after a long illness.

Kundera won global accolades for the way he depicted themes and characters that floated between the mundane reality of everyday life and the lofty world

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People being treated at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital’s dengue ward, which was recently opened up to tackle the surge of patients. Along with giving each bed its own mosquito net, the hospital authorities are trying their best to provide adequate facilities in the face of the ever-increasing number of dengue patients.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DENGUE INFECTIONS Over 1,200 hospitalised in a day

Test fee halved to Tk 50 at public hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A record 1,246 people were hospitalised across the country yesterday – the highest in a single day so far this year.

Meanwhile, five more patients died during the same period.

With these, the total number of dengue patients recorded since January 1 rose to 16,143, of which 5,124 are from outside Dhaka, while the number of deaths rose to 88, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Experts have urged the authorities concerned to take necessary and urgent measures to control the Aedes mosquito breeding.

According to a pre-monsoon survey by the DGHS, conducted on 3,150 houses in 98 wards of the two city corporations between June 18 and 27, at least 20.4 percent of the houses under Dhaka North City Corporation have

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presence of Aedes mosquito larvae, while it is 15.14 percent in Dhaka South City Corporation.

Aedes larvae were found in 549 of all the houses surveyed. Of them, over 43 percent are multi-storied apartment buildings and 21.41 percent are independent houses.

Meanwhile, the dengue tests fee has been slashed to Tk 50 from Tk 100 in all public hospitals. This will remain effective for the next one month, the DGHS said in a statement yesterday.

Sheikh Daud Adnan, director of hospitals and clinics at the DGHS, told The Daily Star, “As per the health minister’s instructions, we have reduced the fee so that dengue tests can be accessible to all.”

However, the fee at private hospitals and diagnostic centres will remain unchanged at Tk 300, he said.

DGHS has further urged all to ensure their surrounding environments are kept clean.

In a separate circular, the directorate has instructed all public hospitals to activate separate dengue corners and directed hospital authorities to ensure treatment as per the updated treatment guideline available on www.dghs.gov.bd.

It also asked them to ensure adequate human resources in the dengue units; adequate supply of NSI kit used for dengue testing; and mosquito nets for all patients.

Meanwhile, the DSCC yesterday fined 12 building owners Tk 1.25 lakh for Aedes mosquito larvae in their structures.

The fines were imposed after eight DSCC mobile courts conducted anti-mosquito drives at different city area, including Pirbagh, Shahbagh, Uttar Mugda, Dakkhin Mugda, Jhigatola, Babubazar, Dakkhin Jatrabari, Purba Nandipara, Purba Sheikhdi and Kutubkhali.

Special combing operations against Aedes mosquitoes are also being conducted in educational institutions in DSCC areas, under which, after cleaning the premises and applying bleaching power, the authorities will use larvicide and adulticide, said DSCC public relations officer Md Abu Nasher.

FBCCI POLLS Exim Bank chairman, 27 others disqualified

Nomination denied for defaulting on loan or tax

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nazrul Islam Mazumder, chairman of the Bangladesh Association of Banks and Exim Bank, was disqualified as a nominated director at the biennial election of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) because of tax default.

The development comes after the FBCCI election board for 2023-25 scrutinised the tax, bank and police clearance certificates of aspiring candidates on Monday.

“As per the report of NBR, he is tax defaulter. As such his nomination was not accepted,” read the notice by the election board on the qualified and disqualified director candidates on the FBCCI

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G7 unveils long-term support for Ukraine

Zelensky hails the new pledge a ‘significant security victory’ for Kyiv

REUTERS, Vilnius

The United States and global allies unveiled new security assurances for Ukraine at a Nato summit yesterday, designed to bolster the country’s defences against Russia over the long haul while Kyiv strives for membership of the alliance.

The prospect of long-term protection from members of the world’s most powerful military bloc comes a day after President Volodymyr Zelensky decried as “absurd” a refusal to offer an invite or timetable for Ukraine’s entry into Nato.

Ukraine has been pushing for rapid membership while fighting a Russian invasion unleashed in February 2022 that has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions.

Instead, a declaration by the G7 grouping of the world’s most industrialised countries launched a framework for bilateral negotiations to provide military and financial support, intelligence sharing and a promise of immediate steps if Russia should attack again.

“Our support will last long into the

future. It’s a powerful statement of our commitment to Ukraine,” President Joe Biden said alongside Zelensky and leaders of the G7. “We’re going to be there as long as that takes.”

Swallowing his disappointment over the lack of a membership timetable, Zelensky called the outcome a “meaningful success” and followed a flurry of announcements of military aid for Kyiv.

“Today there are security guarantees for Ukraine on the way to Nato,” he said. “The Ukraine delegation is bringing home a significant security victory for Ukraine.”

At a bilateral meeting, Biden promised Zelensky the United States was doing everything it could to meet Ukraine’s needs and acknowledged Zelensky’s “frustration” about the scale and speed at which he was receiving support. “I look forward to the day when we’re having the meeting celebrating your official, official membership in Nato.”

“The bad news for you is, we’re not going anywhere. You’re stuck with us,” Biden joked, prompting laughter from Zelensky.

Russia calls the G7 move “potentially very dangerous” for West.

France to pay bonus for shoe, clothes repairs to cut waste

AFP, Paris

From October, France will pay a bonus to encourage people to have their clothes and shoes repaired rather than throwing them away, the government said.

The move aims to cut down on the 700,000 tonnes of clothes thrown away by French people each year, two-thirds of which ends up in landfills.

“From October, consumers will be able to be supported in the repair of their clothes and shoes,” secretary of state for ecology Berangere Couillard said Tuesday during a visit to the Paris premises of La Caserne, a hub for responsible fashion. She invited “all sewing workshops and shoemakers to join the system”, to be labelled by eco-organisation Refashion.

Under the scheme, customers will be able to claim seven euros (\$7.7) for mending a heel and 10-25 euros for clothing repairs from a 154 million euro fund set up to cover 2023-2028.

In France, 3.3 billion pieces of clothing, shoes and household linen were put on the market in 2022, according to Refashion, which has been instructed by the government to support a more sustainable industry.

“The goal is to support those who do the repairs,” Couillard said, referring to sewing workshops but also those brands which offer repair services.



Uzra Zeya, front middle, US under secretary for civilian security, democracy, and human rights, visited Balukhali Rohingya camp in Cox’s Bazar’s Ukhiya upazila yesterday. Zeya is now in Bangladesh on a four-day visit.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Passports not needed to apply for Indian visa

IVAC comes up with new rules for Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC), Bangladesh has introduced new rules for the Bangladeshi citizens whereby they would not need to leave their passports with the IVAC for the entire period when visa application is under process.

The applicants, who wish to get back their passports for other purposes while their visa application is under process by the high commission, will now have the option of getting back their passports at the time of submitting their visa application to the IVAC.

The applicants, however, will have to submit the passport seven days before the date of delivery that is written in the visa token, according to an IVAC notice on Monday.