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None without home in 12 districts, 123 upazilas: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday declared another 12 districts and 123 upazilas free of homeless and landless people as 22,101 more families were provided with homes under the Ashrayan-2 project.

She made the announcement and opened the distribution of the houses to the homeless and landless families through a videoconference from the Gono Bhaban.

With the 12 districts and 123 upazilas, a total of 21 districts and 334 upazilas throughout the country have so far become homeless and landless family-free.

The premier was connected virtually with the beneficiaries and people of three places while distributing the houses.

The places are Barasat Sonar Bangla Palli Ashrayan Project site in Terokhada upazila under Khulna, Chakla Ashrayan-2 project site in Bera upazila under Pabna, and Amanullahpur Ashrayan project site in Begumganj upazila under Noakhali.

The 12 districts are Manikganj, Rajbari, Mymensingh, Sherpur, Dinajpur, Naogaon, Natore, Pabna, Kushtia, Pirojpur and Jhalakathi. Earlier, nine more districts earned similar distinction.



Metro rail services remained suspended for about two hours yesterday, starting at 9:31am. This was the second time the services were halted due to a technical problems on the tracks, with the problem this time being a glitch in the overhead electric lines. The services resumed around 11:45am. The photo was taken from the Agargaon metro station.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Fight for survival amid ICU crisis

Dengue death toll crosses 350

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Rafia, a 14-year-old girl battling dengue, finds herself caught in a distressing predicament within the healthcare system of Dhaka.

Admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital five days ago, her condition rapidly deteriorated, demanding urgent Intensive Care Unit intervention. However, due to an ICU crisis gripping Dhaka's hospitals, the sixth grader had to be shuttled between three medical facilities in search of a vacant ICU bed, but with no luck.

She has been seeking treatment at a regular ward at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, despite needing ICU support.

"Doctors said she needs immediate ICU support. We took her to a private hospital in Dhanmondi from DMCH on Tuesday as the latter didn't have any vacant ICU beds. But the private hospital refused to admit her as her health situation was critical and suggested

we took her to a facility with better ICU support," Rafia's father Riaz Uddin, a welding worker, told this correspondent yesterday.

They then took her to Suhrawardy hospital where a duty doctor admitted her after taking an undertaking from her mother Laboni. The undertaking read: "I have been informed about the condition of the patient and possible consequences. She needs treatment in the ICU. Even after hearing everything, I have agreed to continue her treatment in a general ward at the hospital."

Moinuddin, Rafia's uncle, said, "We agreed to such a condition since we have already spent a significant amount on her care and

moving her to another private hospital with superior ICU facilities would cost us even more...something poor people like us cannot afford."

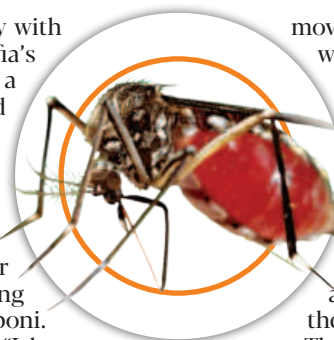
"My nephew can still be saved if we find her an ICU bed in a government facility," he added.

Rafia's father also added that doctors at the hospital told them there are 16 patients waiting for ICU admission and they are number 13 in the serial list.

This is not the situation of just one patient, rather it represents many who require ICU care but are unable to access it because of the widespread dengue infection.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, at least 12 dengue patients (seven in Dhaka) died in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning. With these, total dengue deaths this year rose to 352.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Polls schedule in November

Says EC Anisur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will announce the schedule for the next parliamentary elections in November, Election Commissioner Anisur Rahman said yesterday.

"We usually announce the election schedule 40-45 days ahead of the election day. The schedule will be announced on any day of November," the election commissioner told reporters at his EC office.

The EC is yet to hold any meeting regarding the election schedule, he said.

On July 27, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibur Awal said the schedule for the 12th parliamentary elections could be unveiled in the last week of October.

Awal on July 30 said the schedule for the next national election would not be declared before October this year.

Yesterday, Anisur said this time, the candidates will get options to submit their nomination papers both online and in person.

"We cannot go for submission of nomination papers online fully as it will require amendment of law. There is also the issue of how political parties will react to this."

"But we will encourage online submission as it will decrease the incidents of showdowns

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'Indigenous not ethnic minority'

Speakers demand constitutional recognition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous people should immediately be recognised in the constitution, said speakers at an event yesterday, marking International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

They made the demand at the programme organised at Central Shaheed Minar in the capital. This time, the day was celebrated with the UN theme – Indigenous youths as agents of change for self-determination.

Jakir Hossain, joint coordinator of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord Implementation Movement, said the state's lack of recognition leads to indigenous communities being deprived of their civic rights.

"Recognise them constitutionally. Before it, first sign the United Nations Declaration on the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Buet students boycott classes and stage a sit-in on the campus yesterday, protesting the return of a student expelled earlier by the authority in connection with the Abrar Fahad murder case.

We will not attend classes with him

Buet students boycott classes as peer expelled after Abrar murder returns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology boycotted their classes and staged a sit-in at the campus yesterday, protesting the return of a student expelled earlier by the authorities in connection with the Abrar Fahad murder case.

Ashiqul Islam Bitu was expelled along with 25 students, following the murder of Abrar Fahad in 2019, but he was not named in the police charge sheet.

He recently filed a writ petition with the High Court and secured a "stay order" from the court against his expulsion.

Yesterday around 10:00am, the protesting students staged a sit-in in front of the vice

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

PRAYER
TIMING
AUGUST 10

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT 5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Law there, loopholes too

Speakers tell discussion on preventing domestic violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Setting up victim support centres at upazila and union levels and improved contact with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs are key issues to implementing the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act, 2010, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

The discussion on "Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act, 2010: Practical Constraints and Implementation" was jointly organised by Brac Institute of Governance and Development, and Citizens' Initiative against Domestic Violence at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Maheen Sultan, senior fellow of practice, and Pragyna Mahpara,

senior research associate from BIGD, presented the research-based findings at the discussion.

The research findings mentioned how loopholes within law, stigmatised social norms and a lack of initiatives contribute to the rising cases of domestic violence.

Lack of monitoring and accountability are also responsible for this situation. Even women's affairs officers themselves are unclear of their roles as protection officers, said the speakers, referring to the research findings.

The findings further highlighted that the act limits the role of police to only providing information and advice and referring the victims to different services. The report also said most police officials seemed

uninterested in helping the victims as they could not take any punitive actions.

The study also found that magistrates and courts consider cases of domestic violence as trivial and personal matters that should not be their headaches. Such incidents are also seen as issues pertaining to women and not as national problems, according to the study.

Lutfun Nesa Khan, member of the parliamentary standing committee to the ministry, said there are numerous obstacles to implementing the act, especially at the grassroots. Meetings are being held to implement the act more effectively, but there is no

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

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