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## ELECTORAL SYSTEM ISSUES

## Hold dialogue for a solution

Say speakers at a roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable discussion yesterday said the country's political parties need to hold dialogue to find a solution for an inclusive and participatory next parliamentary election.

As the election is nearing, concerns are mounting regarding violence centring the polls since the two top political parties are poles apart on electoral system issues, they told the roundtable organised virtually by Shushashoner Jonnoy Nagorik (Shujan) on "Compromise or Violence: On What Path are We?"

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said dialogue among political parties should be held not only to resolve issues regarding the upcoming election but also to find a long-term and sustainable solution.

In the past 52 years, it was not possible to ensure an effective and sustainable system for holding free and acceptable elections, he said.

There is a crisis in the country centring on the upcoming election and an immediate solution is not in sight, said eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik.

"We believe the solution should be found through dialogue," he said, adding, that although there is not enough time, some issues could be resolved in the next few months.

Daily Manabzamin Editor Matiur Rahman Chowdhury said politicians themselves have to take the first step to bring the required reform to the country's politics.

He said there is little room to be optimistic amid the

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Photos of French President Emmanuel Macron, President Mohammed Shahabuddin, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina are adorning the Karwan Bazar intersection yesterday. Macron, the first French president to visit Bangladesh in 33 years, was accorded a red carpet reception on his arrival in Dhaka yesterday. He is in Bangladesh on a two-day trip.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## JCD deplors cop's assault on BCL leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal have condemned the attack on two Chhatra League leaders by Additional Deputy Commissioner Harun-or-Rashid of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

In a statement, signed by the pro-BNP student organisation's Office Secretary Mahmudul Hasan, it condemned the assault saying BCL failure to protest the mistreatment of its central leaders by a police officer tarnishes the legacy of student politics.

"Now that police have assaulted a Chhatra League leader, we have yet to see any protest by the organisation. This means Chhatra League has turned into an organisation that has lost its ideology and ethics," reads the statement.

Meanwhile, Harun-or-Rashid, the ADC of

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## Zaida Khatun set to take charge as GCC mayor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Newly elected mayor of Gazipur City Corporation Zaida Khatun is set to take charge of her office today.

Sunday (yesterday) was the last working day of acting mayor Asadur Rahman Kiran.

Talking to our correspondent, the acting mayor Asadur said confirmed that Zaida Khatun would take charge as the new mayor today.

"We are ready help her if she needs it," he added.

Zaida defeated ruling Awami League candidate Azmat Ullah Khan by a margin of 16,197 votes in the city corporation polls held on May 25 this year.

She will be the country's second female mayor of a city corporation after Salina Hayat Ivy of Narayanganj.

Zaida is the mother of

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## DENGUE OUTBREAK

## Cases rising for 3 consecutive years

14 more die, 2,993 others hospitalised

HELEMUL ALAM

Breaking the trend of infections, dengue cases have been on the rise for the last three consecutive years.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, the country recorded a total of 28,429 cases and 105 deaths in 2021, which rose to 62,382 cases and 281 deaths in 2022, and 1,45,335 cases and 716 deaths this year till yesterday.

Except for 2015-2016 and 2018-2019, the country has seen a yearly trend in infection in which infection numbers reduced after recording a surge in cases the previous year.

A total of 3,126 dengue cases and six deaths were recorded in 2015. The next year, 6,060 cases and 14 deaths were recorded. In 2018, 10,148 infections of the mosquito-borne disease and 26 deaths were recorded, which rose to 1,01,354 cases and 179 deaths in 2019.

Experts blamed the failure to

take necessary steps to control Aedes breeding, the presence of all four variants of the virus, climate change and the spreading of the virus outside cities for the rising cases.



Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman, assistant professor of medical and applied entomology at the National University in Gazipur, said, "Mosquito control activities were not done properly, which is one of the main causes of the continued rise of dengue cases for the last three years."

Authorities failed to take necessary steps during lean periods [from November to April], which are very important to

control Aedes mosquitoes. Also, all four dengue serotypes have been found in the country, which has contributed to the rise in fatalities, he mentioned.

Stressing the fact that dengue infections are on the rise outside the capital, Saifur said, "The absence of surveillance and initiating necessary steps outside Dhaka, especially in district towns, led to the rising infections this year."

He advised the authorities to ensure effective surveillance to identify dengue hotspots, as it will enable local government departments, community organisations, and educational institutions to conduct targeted interventions.

According to DGHS, at least 14 dengue patients died while 2,993 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the new figures, the total number of dengue deaths rose to 730, while the total number of cases jumped to 1,48,328, making it the most deadly year so far.

## NATIONAL POLLS BNP eyeing nomination trade: Quader

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said that the BNP is 'secretly' preparing for the upcoming elections to safeguard its nomination business.

He made the remarks while speaking at a gathering of AL's associate body Jubo League at Engineers' Institution in Dhaka yesterday.

"Awami League is not a party of terrorism or communalism but stands firmly on the side of truth and people, ready to demonstrate its unwavering position at any time," he said.

"The strength of Awami League lies in people. It is going to join the upcoming elections with the power of people," said Quader, also the Road Transport and Bridges Minister.

The people of Bangladesh have already decided whom they will vote for and seventy percent of the country's people support Sheikh Hasina, he added.

## Selfie won't help govt to retain power: Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 'selfie' with US President Joe Biden will not help her government hang onto power.

"You [ruling party] are so bankrupt and helpless that you have become excited after seeing a selfie with Biden. You're now publicising that," he said.

Speaking at a discussion meeting, the BNP leader said the people of Bangladesh will win when they can elect their representatives through voting. "Take steps for conducting that polls properly. Otherwise, no selfie can protect you. It's now very clear."

He said the country's people will not cast their votes for Awami League if a free and fair election is held. "The people will never forgive you and you won't be able to stay in power."

Saifur Rahman Smriti Parishad arranged the programme at Dhaka Reporters' Unity, marking the 14th death anniversary of late BNP leader and former finance minister M Saifur Rahman.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's selfie with Biden at the G 20 summit in New Delhi went viral on social media.

Mirza Fakhrul also alleged that the dengue outbreak has turned epidemic in the country because of rampant corruption in the health sector.

"The government has awfully failed to prevent dengue due to its incompetence and corruption," he said.

## Rejoinder, our reply

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, on September 3, sent a rejoinder to our report titled "Biman recruitment: Candidates boycott exams at a centre" published on September 2. We are running the full rejoinder along with our reply.

In the rejoinder, Biman said, for the post of Ground Service Assistant, a preliminary test was scheduled to held at 3:00pm on September 1 at ten centres in Dhaka with participation of total 33,059 candidates.

But due to Friday prayers on that day and traffic jam due to rain since morning, and in order to ensure the timely delivery of question papers at the examination centers, it was decided to delay the examination by one hour in ten centers simultaneously following

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Even five months after the formation of the wage board, demand for Tk 25,000 minimum wage for RMG workers has not been met. With only one month left for the wage board to implement a ruling, protesters assembled in front of Jatiya Press Club to make their demands heard. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## REGIONAL CLIMATE SUMMIT It ends with 18-point declaration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Regional Climate Summit concluded yesterday with the release of an 18-point declaration for a better future for South Asian regions.

Stressing the need for urgent action, participants acknowledged the impact of climate change induced vulnerabilities on the last day of the three-day event held at a city hotel.

"We pledge to enhance regional collaboration for the preservation of biodiversity in shared ecological frontiers, particularly in the Himalayas and the Sundarbans. Recognising these regions' ecological significance and vulnerability to climate change, we will work together to develop and implement policies that promote conservation and restoration of natural habitats," read the declaration presented by Mohammad Mamun Mia, executive director of The Earth Society.

"We emphasise the need to prioritise the resilience and adaptation efforts of severely climate-affected countries and realise 'One Sun One World One Grid' through interconnected grids, enabling all of us to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement," it added.

"We commit to creating a pathway towards a more sustainable, climate-resilient, and prosperous future for all," concluded the declaration.

## They stole 200 bikes in 8 years

DB arrests 2 brothers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives have arrested two siblings involved in a vehicle theft ring, who allegedly stole more than 200 motorcycles in the last eight years.

The Detective Branch of police also recovered 11 stolen motorcycles and a CNG-run auto-rickshaw during drives to arrest them from Narayanganj and Gazipur on Saturday, Additional Commissioner of Police (DB) Mohammad Harun Or Rashid told a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday.

The arrestees are Ripon Matabbar, alias Rafiqul Islam, alias Ripon Howladar, and his brother Badal Matabbar.

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