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DENGUE OUTBREAK 5 more die, 1,197 get hospitalised

UNB, Dhaka

Five more persons died of dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease to 1,554 this year.

During this period, 1,197 more patients were hospitalised with the viral fever, according to DGHS.

A total of 4,653 dengue patients, including 904 in the capital, are now receiving treatment at hospitals across the country.

So far, DGHS has recorded 3,02,452 dengue cases and 2,96,245 recoveries this year.

September has so far been the deadliest month for the dengue outbreak this year, with 396 fatalities and 79,598 cases, according to DGHS.

Ensure security of minorities during polls

Oikya Parishad tells EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad yesterday demanded that the safety of minorities is ensured before and after the national polls.

Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of the parishad, presented a statement in this regard at a press conference held in Jatiya Press Club.

"We want religious and ethnic minority voters to feel secure when going to polling centres and for candidates not to face any obstacles in their candidacy," read the statement.

A majority of the minority communities in the country are anticipating a fair and impartial election. A democratic government is essential because the ongoing struggle for human rights will not succeed without it. Meanwhile, concerns regarding abuse against minority groups continue to linger among the communities, said Dasgupta.

"The Election Commission and the election time government have to take appropriate measures to protect the minorities," he added.

He suggested creating a level playing field by

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A six-member Cross-Party Parliamentary Group of Scotland called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Scotland keen to take workers from Bangladesh

BSS, Dhaka

Scotland yesterday expressed desire to take construction workers from Bangladesh as a six-member Cross-Party Parliamentary Group of the country called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban.

First ever Bangladeshi origin MP of Scotland Parliament Foyso Choudhury led the delegation at the meeting with the premier, said PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim at a media briefing.

The other members of the delegation were Miles Briggs, Evelyn Tweed, Juned Hussain Choudhury, Farhan Masud Khan and Md Lutfur Rahman.

The Scottish parliamentarians, however,

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Armed Forces Day today

BSS, Dhaka

The Armed Forces Day will be celebrated through various programmes today amid festivity and enthusiasm, marking the establishment of the army, navy, and air force during the 1971 Liberation War.

The programme will begin with special prayers after Fajr at all mosques in all the cantonments and naval and air force bases throughout the country, seeking divine blessings for the well-being and prosperity of the nation and the progress of the armed forces, said an ISPR press release yesterday.

On the eve of the day, President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages, greeting members of the armed forces.

To mark the day, the president and the prime minister will place wreaths

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BNP's call for polls boycott fading

Says Hasan Mahmud

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League Joint General Secretary Hasan Mahmud yesterday said BNP's call for boycotting election is fading as a joyous and festive mood is prevailing in the country centring the general polls.

The selling of nomination forms of Awami League is going on amid much enthusiasm, he said while exchanging views with reporters.

Hasan said, "I had to walk one and a half kilometre to reach the party office to collect nomination form while our party general secretary had to come back two times as he could not reach the office due to a huge crowd of supporters."

He also said BNP-Jamaat terrorists burnt down 18 transports in the last 48 hours. There is no effect of hartal in the city life. Even BNP supporters are doing their everyday job defying blockade and hartal.

AL NOMINATIONS

'Everyone wants to get on the boat'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As it seems so far, everyone in the country is seeking Awami League tickets to contest the national polls slated for January 7.

From movie stars to former bureaucrats, from ex-police officials to cricketers, and from university teachers to journalists, people from a wide range of fields bought nomination papers from the AL office in the last three days.

Cricketer Shakib Al Hasan, actress Mahiya Mahi, President Md Shahabuddin's son Mohammad Arshad Adnan, former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University Anwar Hossain, and journalist Naeem Nizam, among others, have already collected the nomination forms.

Former Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidul Haque and former NBR chairman Ghulam Hussain also collected AL nomination forms.

The list of such people who "have not been involved with active politics" gets longer as former Chairman of Public Service Commission (PSC) Mohammad Sadiq, actors Masum Parvez Rubel and Siddiqur Rahman Siddique collected AL nomination forms yesterday.

Apart from them, there were people with political backgrounds as well among the nomination seekers, including

former BCL president Bahadur Bepari, ex BCL central leaders Abu Abbas, and AKM Ziaul Haq.

AL sources said many more film stars, individuals, and businessmen, who don't hold any positions in the ruling party, have expressed their desire to contest the polls with the party's electoral symbol -- "boat".

There is more enthusiasm for purchasing nomination papers since many nomination aspirants think victory is almost certain if they "can get on the boat", said party insiders.

AL sources said many more film stars, individuals, and businessmen, who don't hold any positions in the ruling party, have expressed their desire to contest the polls with the party's electoral symbol -- "boat".

Also, AL may not nominate many incumbent lawmakers, which is why the number of nomination seekers is relatively higher this time.

Sources said AL is also encouraging people to buy forms as it wants to flaunt its popularity.

Besides, since there is a chance that the opposition BNP may not participate in the polls,

the participation of a larger number of candidates will give the election a festive colour.

AL also looks to reduce the number of independent or rebel candidates in their party.

Shamsul Kabir, in charge of selling nomination forms for Sylhet division, told this newspaper that Anwar Hossain, who served as JU VC from 2021-2014, collected nomination forms for Netrokona-5 constituency while Mohammad Sadiq, 13th chairman of PSC, bought it for Sunamganj-4.

Anwar Hossain's younger brother, Waresat Hussain Belal, is the incumbent member of parliament for Netrokona-5.

"No matter which celebrities or renowned persons collected nomination forms, if there is a devoted and loyal leader in that certain constituency, the latter will be prioritised while giving nominations," AL praesidium member Abdur Rahman told The Daily Star.

The third day of the nomination sale saw a lesser number of nomination papers being sold than the first two days, as a total of 733 AL nomination forms were sold on the day, while 1,074 individuals collected nomination forms on the first day and 1,212 obtained it on day two.

The party generated over Tk 3.66 crore in revenue from the nomination form sales on day three.

YUNUS CASE

Defence starts arguments

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The defence yesterday started their arguments in a labour law violation case filed against Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and three top officials of Grameen Telecom.

Sheikh Merina Sultana, chairman of the Third Labour Court of Dhaka, set November 26 for next hearing in the case as the defence lawyers could not complete their arguments, said Khaja Tanvir Ahmed, a lawyer for Dr Yunus.

Yunus, also chairman of Grameen Telecom, and its top officials -- Ashraf Hassan, Nurjahan Begum and Mohammad Shahjahan -- appeared before the court yesterday.

On June 6, it framed charges against them. It also recorded statements of four prosecution witnesses.

On September 9, 2021, the Inspection for Factories and Establishments Department filed the case.



HARTAL DAY 2

Dhaka nearly back to normal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka witnessed increased vehicular movement yesterday, on the last day of the 48-hour hartal called by the BNP and its allies in protest of the schedule for 12th parliamentary elections.

Some major points in the capital, including Shahbagh, Science Lab, Bijoy Sarani, and Mohakhali, also witnessed sporadic traffic congestion.

The number of vehicles plying the streets grew gradually as the day progressed.

However, private vehicles such as cars, CNG-run auto-rickshaws, and motorcycles were less prevalent compared to any working day.

"I started from Jigatola at 1:20pm and reached Kakrail at 2:00pm. I use this route every day, but today [yesterday] I was stuck at a signal for a long time compared to other hartal days," said Aminul Islam, a passenger of a CNG-run auto-rickshaw.

He faced a seven-minute delay at the City College signal and more than 10 minutes' delay at Shahbagh intersection.

Gulistan area saw noticeably heavy traffic yesterday due to the congregation of the Awami

Gulistan area saw noticeably heavy traffic yesterday due to the congregation of the Awami League leaders and activists on Bangabandhu Avenue.

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Arsonists getting orders on digital platforms: CTC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscereants engaging in arson attacks and violence during the ongoing blockade and hartal are being instructed through encrypted messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Viber.

Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police revealed this after interrogating the arsonists who were arrested red-handed, and analysing other information.

"The arsonists were instructed to set fire to as many vehicles as possible and kill people," CTC chief Md Asaduzzaman, also a DMP additional commissioner, told reporters at his office in the capital's Minto Road yesterday.

The arsonists adopt different ways to set fire -- riding on the bus as a passenger in the back seat or setting fire on an abandoned or parked bus, he said.

"Earlier, the arsonists used to receive only Tk 10,000 for carrying out the subversive activities, but now the amount has doubled. In some cases, they are being offered greater financial benefits based on risk," he also said.

Meanwhile, police have also declared a Tk 20,000 bounty if anyone assists the law enforcers in arresting the arsonists.

Asaduzzaman said the arsonists are communicating through encrypted texting platforms like WhatsApp and Viber and holding online briefings.

"For this reason, it becomes a challenge for us to trace these small groups created in encrypted apps. But we have

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18 DU students suspended for criminal activities

DU CORRESPONDENT

Authorities of Dhaka University yesterday suspended four students from academic activities, as they allegedly assaulted a private university student on November 8 at Suhrawardy Udyan.

DU authorities issued a showcase notice to the four students and asked them to reply within seven working days, otherwise they will be expelled from the university.

On November 8, four students allegedly assaulted and mugged a private university student while he was chatting with a friend at Suhrawardy Udyan. The victim's mother, a doctor of BSMU, filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station.

The four suspended students are Tabarak Miah, department of Peace and Conflict Studies; Zubair Ibne Humayun, department of Criminology; Mursalin Fayaz and Faisal Ahmed

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People in droves throng the Awami League party office on Bangabandhu Avenue to collect nomination forms for contesting the next general elections slated for January 7. Many of the aspirants were accompanied by their supporters.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON