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People will decide fate of political parties

Says BNP leader Gayeshwar

UNB, Dhaka

Amidst calls to ban Awami League and Jatiya Parto, BNP senior leader Gayeshwar Chandra Roy yesterday said it is ultimately up to people to determine whom to accept or reject, through a transparent national election.

Speaking at a discussion, he expressed that restoring democracy will serve as a form of retribution for those who have undermined it.

"We have been asked to clarify BNP's stance on banning Awami League and Jatiyo Party. Why should BNP feel the need to clarify its position on this issue?" Gayeshwar questioned.

He added that both the people of Bangladesh and BNP want the interim

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With a grim look, a porter waits at Karwan Bazar kitchen market footpath with his empty tukri (basket). Amzad Hossain is usually hired by shoppers at the market to carry their purchased goods. Yesterday, he could not earn a single penny from 7:00am to 12:00pm. He said he used to make up to Tk 500 daily, but now he struggles to make Tk 200, as the surge in commodity prices deters shoppers from purchasing in bulk.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Exercise caution when attending public events'

Govt issues 9 directives to civil servants to 'avoid embarrassing situations'

BAHARAM KHAN

The ministry of public administration has issued a nine-point directive urging government employees to exercise caution when attending public events. The instructions, sent by Senior Secretary Dr Mokhles Ur Rahman to all secretaries, aim to prevent potentially embarrassing situations for government officials in the current political climate.

The directive requires secretaries, department heads, and senior field administration officials to verify specific details before attending events. This

SOME DIRECTIVES

Verify event organisers	Take intelligence input
Check invitation source	Use prepared statements
Avoid controversial figures	Be careful about rumours

includes confirming the source of invitations and identifying those involved in organising the event. Officials are advised to consult with intelligence agencies if necessary for a clearer understanding of an event's background.

Sources in the ministry noted that with elected representatives absent at the highest levels, government employees, especially in field administration, are now handling enhanced responsibilities. Reports of embarrassing incidents at recent events have surfaced, prompting these new guidelines.

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Access to energy a human right

Farhad Mazhar tells seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should adopt a pro-people, environment-friendly policy to address the energy crisis, poet and thinker Farhad Mazhar said yesterday.

He also said access to energy is a fundamental human and civil right and advocated for electricity and energy to be included as constitutional rights.

Mazhar was speaking as the chief guest and keynote speaker at a seminar titled "Electricity Transition: In Which Path," organised by the Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board at its Dhaka office.

Criticising the former Awami League government, he alleged that it prioritised the interests of multinational companies. "It [AL] spoke of socialism, but in practice, they implemented a neoliberal economic policy," Mazhar said.

He said the development of any new energy policy should involve local experts.

Decentralising the energy system, Mazhar argued, is

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Awami League prioritised the interests of multinational companies. AL spoke of socialism, but in practice, it implemented a neoliberal economic policy.

DMP launches app to identify accident hotspots

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has launched a new data-driven initiative aimed at improving road safety by pinpointing accident hotspots and analysing underlying causes.

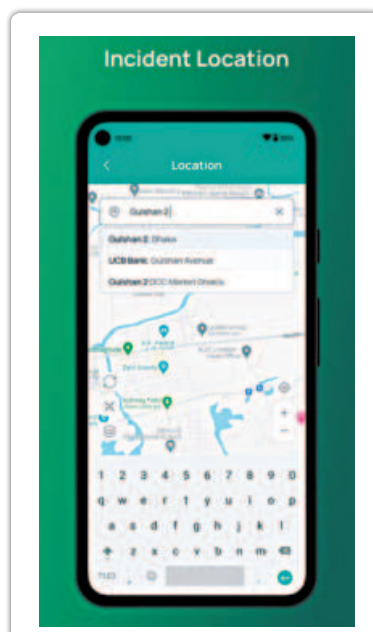
The Database and Analysis of Road Crash (DARC) application, developed in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency, is a key element of the Dhaka Road Traffic Safety Project (DRSP).

The app intends to consolidate road accident data, addressing long-standing gaps in reporting and helping identify accident-prone areas for targeted safety measures.

"The DARC application allows for real-time, detailed reporting, giving us a much clearer picture of accident patterns," said Mahmudul Hasan, a member of JICA's expert team under the DRSP.

This capability enables the design of more effective solutions to reduce accidents.

The app's streamlined data fields



mean traffic officers can now input accident data on-site, minimising delays and reducing inaccuracies that have often plagued manual reporting.

Historically, accident reports in Dhaka were recorded manually by the police's crime division, although traffic officers are usually first at the scene.

The process traditionally focused only on fatal accidents, often missing non-fatal incidents and those where fatalities occur later in hospitals. These limitations have led to data inconsistencies between government departments and NGOs, hindering progress in road safety.

Modelled after the World Bank's open-source DRIVER application, DARC consolidates essential accident information - location, date, time, weather, accident type, and potential contributing factors - into a simplified format accessible via smartphone.

This shift, from 67 data fields to just eight core fields, significantly reduces the administrative burden on officers while minimising human errors.

Additionally, each data entry undergoes verification

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Six more die of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



At least six died of dengue while 1,297 patients were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

Of the deaths, three were reported in Dhaka city, two in Chattogram division and one in Dhaka division.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with the new deaths and cases, the death toll rose to 320 while total number of cases rose to 65,768, of which 38,434 are from outside Dhaka.

Currently, 4,143 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country. A total of 61,305 patients have been released till yesterday.

Experts attribute the high mortality rate this year to factors including late hospitalisation, quick onset of shock syndrome, inaccurate test results, and recurrent dengue infections.

ICT CASE HC stays probe against Shahidul Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed the investigation proceedings of a case filed against internationally acclaimed photographer Shahidul Alam under controversial Section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act, 2006 in which he was imprisoned for 107 days.

The HC bench of Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton and Justice Md Riaz Uddin Khan issued the order and rule. Shahidul's lawyer Sara Hossain said the case was filed against the petitioner (Shahidul) in August 2018 under the ICT Act and the DSA was formulated in October of the same year.

As per the provisions of the new law, the cases under Section 57 of the earlier (ICT) law, which have not been completed or initiated or received by the Cyber Tribunal or are not under trial, will not proceed.

MED TECH, PHARMACY Students demand separate directorate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of medical technology and pharmacy students staged a sit-in in front of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) in the capital yesterday, calling for a six-point demand that includes establishing a dedicated government directorate for their disciplines.

The protest began around 9:00am at Mohakhali's TB Gates, with students initially blocking the Gulshan Link Road.

Under the banner of the "Anti-Discrimination Medical Technology and Pharmacy Student Action Council," they chanted slogans and held placards with messages such as "Pharmacists are essential for drug formulation" and "Recruit medical technologists."

After briefly moving to the DGHS main gate, the students resumed the road blockade by 11:30am, disrupting traffic flow from Gulshan to Amtali.

Their demands include establishing a separate department for medical technologists and pharmacists, granting diploma holders 10th grade status and resuming the halted 2013 recruitment process, creating 9th-grade positions for graduate medical technologists and pharmacists, upgrading Dhaka's Institute of Health Technology (IHT) to university status, forming a Medical Technology Council and a Diploma Medical Education Board, and launching BSc and MSc programs across all IHTs, including BPharm, with scholarships and training allowances.

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Farmer Dulal Roy nurturing betel plants in his farm in Bhomra village of Khulna's Dighaliya upazila. Betel growers tend to take constant care of the plants, as they grow faster with proper care. He said betel leaves in this area have a reputation throughout the country due to their sweet and delectable taste. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN