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PM conveys solidarity, support to Oman

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman recently wrote a letter to Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, conveying Bangladesh's solidarity with the leadership, government, and people of Oman in the context of the current regional situation.

Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Humayun Kabir yesterday called on the Foreign Minister of Oman Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood

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As part of an eviction drive, Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Dhaka North City Corporation remove makeshift shops from a main road in Banani yesterday. Inset, authorities remove a structure from the capital's Banglamotor area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

1 bed for 3 children as measles outbreak strains SBMCH

8 die in Barishal division

SUSHANTA GHOSH

Amid a rising measles outbreak in Barishal division, three infected children are sharing a single bed at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH), highlighting a severe shortage of beds and overcrowding.

Hospital authorities said 44 measles patients are currently being treated in just 15 beds.

On one such bed lie twin brothers Rafsan and Hafsan, aged one year and seven months, along with another infected child.

Their mother, Sonia Akter, said she brought them to SBMCH fearing inadequate treatment at the district hospital.

"I am extremely worried. I do not understand how they will receive proper treatment when three infected children are on one bed," she said, adding that she and another guardian are also sharing the same bed. "That makes five people on a single bed."

The situation reflects a wider crisis in the paediatric ward, where isolation arrangements exist but are inadequate due to overcrowding.

During a visit, this correspondent found patients everywhere, with many children lying on the floor amid a shortage of beds. Most were admitted with fever and cold-related complications.

Hospital sources said 491 patients are currently admitted on the second and third floors, including 103

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Eid rush brings 270 daily road crash victims to NITOR

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Around 270 road crash victims visited the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (NITOR) daily on average during the Eid vacation, as the number of road crashes increased during the period.

Most of the patients sustained injuries in accidents involving three-wheelers and motorcycles, putting huge pressure on the specialised hospital while operating with limited manpower during the vacation, officials said.

The statistics highlight the growing pressure on medical facilities, particularly specialised ones, in handling patients during such phases.

Although road crashes occur throughout the year, their number sees a sharp rise during the Eid rush, as thousands of people leave Dhaka and other major cities to spend the holidays with family and loved ones, leading to a surge in the number of vehicles on the highways, including unfit and smaller ones, amid lax monitoring.

At least 351 people were killed and 1,046 injured in 346 road accidents across Bangladesh during the Eid rush from March 14-28 this year, said Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity.

"Road crashes are putting a huge burden on medical facilities. The pressure on us reached its peak during the Eid vacation as patients from across the country came here, finding many hospitals closed or offering limited services," said NITOR Director Prof Abul Kenan yesterday.

He said the 100-bed facility received a total of 1,626 road accident patients at their emergency department between March 18 and 23, averaging 271 patients daily.

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DMP moves to reclaim encroached footpaths

Eviction drives launched across key areas in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To make the city's footpaths more pedestrian-friendly, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday launched eviction drives in several areas, including Farmgate, Kakoli, Gulshan, Jatrabari and Indira Road.

Mobile courts cleared sidewalks by removing illegal shops and belongings of traders and shop owners.

During the operation, law enforcers and mobile courts led by Dhaka North City Corporation magistrates removed numerous makeshift shops occupying footpaths. In some cases, goods were confiscated, while in others, vendors were warned and asked to vacate voluntarily.

The drive, which began in the morning yesterday, will continue, a DMP official said.

Speaking after the operation in Farmgate, Executive Magistrate Md Faisal said authorities had considered vendors' livelihoods and mainly tried to persuade them to relocate.

"We have asked them to vacate the footpaths. However, if they return, strict action will be taken," he said, adding that regular monitoring will be carried out to prevent reoccupation.

Earlier, at a high-level meeting at the Secretariat on March 24 titled "Reducing Traffic Congestion in Dhaka City and Modernizing Traffic Management," Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said that the government would take strict action to prevent reoccupation.

According to the notice, many businesses – including restaurants, showrooms, workshops, and street vendors – continue to occupy footpaths with grills, ovens, chairs, and makeshift platforms, forcing pedestrians onto roads and worsening traffic congestion.

In Kakoli, mobile courts removed banners, digital signboards, and illegal shop extensions from sidewalks.

According to UNB, the drive was conducted simultaneously from 10:00am in multiple areas, including Moghbazar rail crossing to Banglamotor, Phulbaria Bus Stand-Bakshibazar to Chankharpool, and Nightingale Intersection to Arambagh.

Other areas included Dholaipara to Jatrabari, Faruk Sarani, Indira Road, Green Road, Ananda Cinema Hall, Bashundhara, Karwan Bazar, Kazipara, Shewrapara, Taltala, Bhashantek, Mirpur-14, and from BNS Centre to House Building North Tower and Kakoli outgoing.

Minister Tarique Rahman directed authorities to deliver visible improvements within one month.

On March 23, DMP announced a coordinated citywide drive from April 1 and urged traders to remove their belongings in advance. A public notice warned that violators could face fines, imprisonment, and confiscation of goods.

MD FAISAL, Executive Magistrate

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Third Terminal deal on horizon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Negotiations to sign a deal between Bangladesh and Japan over the operation of Dhaka Airport's third terminal entered a decisive phase recently, following Japan's submission of a revised, lower-cost proposal.

Sources at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) said the second high-level meeting between the two sides, scheduled to be held on April 3 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is likely to determine the deal's fate.

If the meeting delivers a consensus, Bangladesh can finally bring one of its most significant aviation

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Master plan key to a planned city: DSCC administrator

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is not possible to build a planned city without a master plan, said Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Administrator Md Abdus Salam yesterday.

The remark came during a views exchange meeting with Urban Development Journalists Forum, Bangladesh (UDJFB), at DSCC Nagar Bhaban.

The meeting was attended by the forum's President Matin Abdullah, Vice President Faisal Khan, General Secretary Hasan Imons and advisers Amitosh Pal and Helemul Alam, along with other members.

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23,865 politically motivated cases lifted

Says law minister

UNB, Dhaka

Some 23,865 politically motivated cases, which were filed to harass people, have so far been withdrawn across the country, said Law Minister Md Asaduzzaman yesterday.

He said this in parliament while replying to a question from ruling party lawmaker MP SM Jahangir Hossain during the day's question answer session in the House.

Asaduzzaman also stated that the process to withdraw the remaining politically motivated cases filed by the fascist Awami League regime is on.

Replying to another question from the lawmaker, Asaduzzaman said that when a person is acquitted by a court and proven innocent, it is his

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FUEL SHORTAGE

Navigation suspended in several dists

STAR REPORT

Riverine communications in several districts have come to a halt due to a fuel shortage, causing immense public suffering.

Hundreds of boat operators in vast shoal areas under Jamalpur's Dewanganj and Islampur upazilas along the Jamuna River have been hit hard by the ongoing crisis.

At Guthail ghat in Islampur, rows of engine-run boats were seen anchored, while only a few remained operational and were overcrowded.

Robiul Mia, a local boatman, said diesel supply remains insufficient while prices have surged to Tk 155-190 per litre in retail shops, making it nearly impossible to continue operations.

"Earlier, more than a hundred boats used to operate daily. Now, not even around 20 are running," he added.

Alim Mia from Chikajani village in Dewanganj upazila said he had been waiting at the ghat for around two hours but could not find a boat for his commute.

In Rangamati, speedboat operations on Kaptai Lake have remained suspended for the past two days due to the fuel shortage.

Besides, the number of passenger launches in the district has dropped significantly.

According to the Rangamati District Launch

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Dhaka University students paint clay bowls for use as decorative items as part of their ongoing preparations for Pahela Baishakh celebrations, including organising cultural programmes. Many are spending long hours creating various artworks. The photo was taken at the Faculty of Fine Arts yesterday.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

JULY CHARTER

Discussion on adjournment motion Apr 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad yesterday announced that a discussion on the adjournment motion regarding the implementation of the July National Charter will be held on April 5.

This marks the second adjournment motion discussion within the first six days of the current parliament, and according to the Speaker, only the fifth such motion in Bangladesh's 53-year parliamentary history.

The motion was brought forward by ruling party lawmaker Zainul Abedin Farooq, who called for a detailed debate on how the July National Charter should be implemented. The Speaker accepted the motion and scheduled the discussion for two hours on April 5.

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