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Four more die with measles-like symptoms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four more patients died of suspected measles across the country in the last 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday, bringing Bangladesh's combined tally of confirmed and suspected measles-related deaths to 712.

The DGHS has classified the latest deaths as suspected measles fatalities.

With the latest update, the number of suspected measles deaths has risen to 619, while the number of confirmed measles deaths remained unchanged at 93.

A total of 941 new suspected measles cases were reported during the 24-hour period, bringing the cumulative number of suspected cases nationwide to 99,207.

Meanwhile, 116 new confirmed measles cases were recorded, bringing the total number of laboratory-confirmed infections to 11,710, according to DGHS data.



A group of motorcyclists rides on a footpath in the High Court area yesterday to bypass traffic congestion, endangering pedestrians and increasing the risk of accidents.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ATTACK ON Star Suspect put on two-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Anowar Hossain of Lakshmipur's Raipur on a two-day remand in a case filed over the arson attack and vandalism on The Daily Star's office in Dhaka.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Ariful Islam passed the order after investigating officer Jahirul Islam, a sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, sought a five-day remand for Anowar, 38, said a sub-inspector of DMP's Prosecution Division.

Earlier in the day, Anowar was shown arrested in the case, following an application submitted by the investigator.

Filed on December 22 last year, the case accused 350 to 400 unidentified individuals under the Penal Code, the Anti-Terrorism Act, the Special Powers Act, and the Cyber Security Ordinance. The case estimated the damage at Tk 40 crore.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

LOCAL GOVT ELECTIONS EC sets sights on October

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday said it was gearing up preparations to conduct local government elections, targeting October as the possible timeline, starting with the union parishad polls.

Following a meeting on the EC's local poll preparation, the constitutional body said the number of polling centres may increase slightly this time, and the drafts of the code of conduct would likely be finalised within a 15-day timeframe once it gets feedback from political parties and stakeholders.

The commission said no decision regarding the polls will be taken without discussing it with political parties.

According to the EC, ballot boxes, presiding officers, and polling officers are already in place for the elections. Discussions have also been held on whether the budget for the polls can be reduced.

The EC also said it discussed the participation of teachers from private educational institutions in local elections but could not reach a decision.

The commission held a four-hour-long meeting yesterday from 11:00am to 3:30pm regarding the overall preparation. The meeting also reviewed laws and regulations related to local government polls.

Asked about the discussions, Election

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Over 80,000 retired non-govt teachers await benefits

Says edn minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 80,000 applications from retired teachers and employees of non-government educational institutions seeking retirement benefits are pending, Education Minister A N M Ehsanul Hoque Milon told parliament yesterday.

Responding to a question from MP Nurul Islam, the minister said the Non-Government Teachers and Employees Welfare Trust and the Teachers and Employees Retirement Benefits Board have received a total of 80,320 applications.

Of these, 64,775 were



SEE PAGE 13 COL 4

FROM THE JS GALLERY

18 crore people mastermind of July uprising Says Jamaat ameer at JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition Leader and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman has rejected the idea that any single individual was the "mastermind" behind the July uprising.

"We do not believe there was any single mastermind behind this movement," Shafiqur said during an unscheduled discussion at the House.

Earlier, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M Rashiduzzaman Millat praised Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's leadership in addressing the budget deficit and quoted Shafiqur's earlier remarks, saying the opposition leader had described Tarique as the "main hero" of the mass uprising.

Shafiqur then rose to clarify his position.

"Thank you to Mr Rashiduzzaman Millat for quoting my statement.



SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Demonetise Tk 500, 1,000 notes to boost bank deposits

Proposes BNP MP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP lawmaker AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon yesterday proposed temporarily demonetising the Tk 500 and Tk 1,000 banknotes to bring people's cash savings back into the banking system.

He made the proposal while participating in the general discussion on the proposed budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year in parliament.

Highlighting the erosion of public trust in the banking sector, Khokon said many people now avoid depositing money in banks and instead keep cash at home.



SEE PAGE 13 COL 4

Opposition stages walk out over 2 bills

Protests lack of prior notice, unequal speaking time at JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following the discussion on the proposed 2026-27 budget, parliament yesterday introduced two bills under the supplementary agenda -- the Bangladesh Medical University (Amendment) Bill and the Public Examinations (Offences) (Amendment) Bill.

The opposition objected, saying the bills had been tabled without prior notice. Deputy Speaker Kayser Kamal said he had excused the timing. The bills were then referred to the relevant parliamentary committee for review, which was asked to submit its report within three days.

After the bills were introduced, Jamaat-e-Islami MP Shahjahan Chowdhury sought to raise a point of order. The deputy speaker said it was not possible at that moment, as LGRD Minister Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir was scheduled to deliver a statement under Rule 300 of the House's rules of procedure.

Amid opposition protests, the deputy speaker invited Fakhru to speak.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 2

Forests vanish, hunger grows for 200 langurs

OMAR ALISHOHAG, Jhenaidah

For nearly 25 years, more than 200 black-faced langurs have lived along the Maheshpur border in Jhenaidah. Divided into at least six groups, they roam villages including Bhabanagar, Swaruppur, Chapatala, Talsar, Shyamkur, and Kusumpur.

However, destruction of forests and expansion of farmland and net-fenced orchards have left them with dwindling food sources, forcing them into daily conflict with farmers and pet dogs.

These monkeys roam the area under the leadership of several dominant males. One of them, named "Bir Bahadur", is the leader of a 35-member group in Kusumpur and has a fresh wound on his face.

He remains alert, scanning his surroundings in an aggressive posture, as if he has just returned from a

fierce battle. Every day he fights to protect his group and secure food and territory. For nearly nine years, he has maintained leadership by defeating rival males from other groups. But with age and worsening food shortages, the struggle has become increasingly difficult.

Other langur leaders like Ranjay, Prahari, Aranyabir and Shaktiman occupy their territories in the same fashion. Territorial disputes are frequent. At times, the monkeys also come under attack from pet dogs in nearby villages.

Local veterinarian Mahiuddin said the adult monkeys in the area are noticeably smaller and lighter than expected. Unlike wild animals living freely in forests and feeding naturally, these monkeys appear malnourished, underdeveloped, thin and weak.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 6



Flames shoot up from an underground gas pipeline after it burst on Zakir Hossain Road in the Foy's Lake area of Chattogram city yesterday afternoon, triggering panic among pedestrians and vehicle passengers. Fire service personnel brought the blaze under control after about an hour and a half of effort.

PHOTO: STAR