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Four more die with measles-like symptoms

Death toll now 867

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four more people died from measles and measles-like symptoms in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, taking the country's combined confirmed and suspected measles-related death toll to 867 this year.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), two of the latest deaths were confirmed as measles-related, while the other two were suspected cases.

The latest figures bring the confirmed death toll to 98 and suspected deaths to 769.

Meanwhile, 677 new suspected measles cases were reported during the period, raising the nationwide tally to 1,35,332. Another 99 laboratory-confirmed cases took the total confirmed infections to 17,040.



All members of the 2nd Bangladesh Liberation War Course, along with some members of the first course, pose for a photo at the celebration of the 54th Commissioning and Fellowship Day of the Bangladesh Liberation War Courses at Kurmitola Golf Club in Dhaka Cantonment on Friday. Acting President Hafiz Uddin Ahmad was present as the chief guest at the event, organised by the Bangladesh Liberation War Courses Foundation. Chiefs of the three armed forces were also present.

PHOTO: COURTESY

'We must document the true history of Liberation War'

Says acting president

BSS, *Dhaka*

Acting President Hafiz Uddin Ahmad on Friday stressed the need to properly document and present the true history of Bangladesh's Liberation War, saying many significant chapters of the war remain unknown to the people.

"Many of those who assumed state power after independence did not want to present the true history of the Liberation War before the people. As a result, countless incidents, sacrifices and acts of heroism during the war remained unknown to the general public. That history must be accurately documented and presented before the people," he said.

The acting president made the remarks while delivering the chief guest's speech at the celebration of the 54th Commissioning and Fellowship Day of the Bangladesh Liberation War Courses at Kurmitola Golf Club in Dhaka Cantonment, organised by the Bangladesh Liberation War Courses Foundation.

Hafiz Uddin highlighted the significance of the two Liberation War courses and recalled how the gallant freedom fighters, after weeks of training, were ready to fight the well-equipped and highly trained Pakistan Army, describing it as an extraordinary achievement.

"Their contribution at that crucial time when we were facing the brutal Pakistani army needs to be properly evaluated and shared with the nation, especially the younger generation," he said.

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15,712 killed in motorbike crashes in 6yrs

Says Road Safety Foundation



16,065 motorcycle crashes recorded since 2020 | Motorcycles make up 71% of registered vehicles
30 times more dangerous than 4-wheelers | Quality helmets can cut death risk by 48%

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 15,712 people were killed and 14,143 others injured in 16,065 motorcycle crashes across the country between January 2020 and July this year, according to the Road Safety Foundation (RSF).

People aged between 13 and 35 accounted for 58 percent of those involved in the crashes, the RSF said in a report yesterday.

Heavy vehicles hit motorcycles in 6,314 crashes, accounting for 39.30 percent of the total. Riders lost control in 5,497 crashes, or 34.21 percent, while 3,548 crashes, or 22.08

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Nine killed in road crashes in 4 districts

STAR REPORT

At least nine people were killed and 18 others injured in road accidents in Natore, Sirajganj, Kishoreganj and Thakurgaon districts yesterday.

In Natore, three cattle traders were killed and five others injured when a bus hit a shallow-engine-run vehicle carrying cattle on Bonpara-Hatikumrul highway around 9:00am in Noyabazar area of Gurudaspur.

The deceased are Md Abdur Rahman, 69; Md Akkas Ali, 63; and his brother Jahangir Hossain, 51, -- all from Natore, said Md Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Bonpara Highway Police Station. "The bus driver fled the scene after the incident," the OC said.

In Sirajganj, two people died on the spot and 10 others were injured when a truck collided with a bus

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

EC plans phased local polls from early Oct

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission plans to begin local government elections in the first week of October, starting with the haor and northeastern districts -- Sunamganj, Netrokona, Kishoreganj and parts of Habiganj.

The schedule is expected to be announced at the end of August.

According to the EC's draft roadmap for union parishads, municipalities, upazilas and city corporations, the polls will be held in phases. Letters were sent to field-level offices to finalise polling centres by July 31.

The commission has divided the country into four clusters to determine the timing of local polls -- haor and northeastern areas, hill and coastal regions, riverine and char areas, and plains and urban centres -- considering geography, weather, public examinations and religious festivals.

The EC will publish the draft voter list today and the final list on August 31.

Haor, northeastern districts to vote first
Schedule expected by end of August
Country divided into 4 polling clusters
Draft voter list to be published today
Final voter list due on August 31

The draft polling centre list will be published tomorrow, with the final list on August 27.

Those who turned 18 by July 31 and have applied for voter registration will be eligible to vote.

The roadmap sets August 15 as the deadline for amending laws and rules, with tasks outlined before and after the schedule announcement.

Two law-and-order meetings will be held with the armed forces and law enforcement agencies -- one 15 days before the schedule and another after the withdrawal of candidatures.

Results will be collected and distributed by post, with gazettes published within three to four days of voting and final gazettes naming elected candidates within six to seven days.

The EC is now eyeing October 1 as a tentative starting date.

EC member Abdur Rahmanel Masud told The Daily Star, "When I say October, assume the elections will start in the first week."

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Small changes key to major reforms

Hossain Zillur tells webinar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Small institutional and procedural reforms are essential alongside major state and constitutional reforms if Bangladesh is to achieve meaningful change, said Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) Executive Chairman Hossain Zillur Rahman yesterday.

Reform discussions often focused on "reform with a capital R", while everyday institutional and administrative changes received less attention, he said.

"Without progress on countless small reforms, the big reforms risk remaining on paper," he said at a PPRC webinar titled "The Multifaceted Potential of Youth in Post-Uprising Bangladesh".

Moderating the event, Hossain Zillur said the aspiration for change following the July uprising

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Pvt fuel imports may open 'new avenues for plunder'

Says Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday criticised the government's move to allow private companies to import and market refined fuel, calling it a potential "new avenue for plunder".

At a press conference at the party's central office in Dhaka's Moghbazar, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar said the proposed policy would replace the state monopoly with a private one dominated by a handful of powerful business groups.

He claimed the Energy and Mineral Resources Division was drafting a policy allowing private companies to import, store, transport, distribute and market refined fuel.

He added that officials were asked to prepare the draft within four days.

"This is not reform; it is a handover. It is a licence for corruption and plunder," he said.

Porwar argued that private fuel imports would not necessarily increase competition because the business requires deep-sea port facilities, storage terminals, pipelines and substantial

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Finalists of Season 5 of "Our Planet, Our Responsibility", jointly organised by The Daily Star and ActionAid Bangladesh, take part in a mentoring session at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. Nine finalist teams, selected under the Green Business, Water Rights and Energy Transition categories, will present their ideas before the judges on August 15 to compete for the championship title.

PHOTO: STAR

'Indian aggression exhibits removed from July museum'

Alleges Nahid Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Opposition Chief Whip and National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener Nahid Islam yesterday alleged that exhibits depicting "Indian aggression" had been removed from the July Mass Uprising Memorial Museum.

He made the allegation on the premises of the museum, formerly Gono Bhaban, the official residence of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

Earlier in the day, Nahid, along with a delegation of more than 50 NCP leaders, visited the museum.

Nahid, a key coordinator of Students Against Discrimination, which spearheaded the July uprising, said the museum had a segment on border killings.

"There was a list of our brothers and sisters killed by the Indian BSF at the borders, along with a sculpture of Felani. Those have been removed. Some

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