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Robi prepares to go public

The mobile operator to raise Tk 523cr from capital market

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Robi is set to get listed on the twin bourses this year as the country's second largest operator looks to raise Tk 523.79 crore, in another stroke of good news for Bangladesh's ailing capital market that has been crying out for fundamentally strong, well-performing companies. Some 10 percent, or about 52.38 crore, shares will be offloaded, according to announcement made by Robi's parent company Axiata on Bursa Malaysia website yesterday. The face value of the shares will be Tk 10 and there will be no premium.

Of the shares, 38.78 crore will be offered to the public retail and institutional investors in Bangladesh, while the remaining 13.61 crore will be for employees and directors of Robi under the employee share purchase plan.

The funds raised will be used for network expansion in anticipation of revenue-generating opportunities in the areas of Internet-of-Things (IoT), home and enterprise, said Axiata, which holds 68.69 percent stakes in Robi.

Indian Bharti Airtel holds 25 percent stakes after it sold off its Bangladesh subsidiary to Robi and Japanese NTT Docomo the remaining 6.31 percent.

All three parties' holdings will be diluted according to the current ratio after the initial public offering, which will be managed by IDLC Investments. Robi will become the second mobile operator to get listed after Grameenphone, which started trading from November 16, 2009. Coincidentally, the two operators are locked



The 25th span of the under-construction Padma Bridge is being installed between its 29th and 30th pillars on the Jazira end of the bridge yesterday. With this, 3.75-km of the 6.15-km bridge has become visible.

PHOTO: STAR

Tigers seek revival

Lone Test against Zimbabwe starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will look to revive their fortunes in Test cricket when they take on Zimbabwe in the one-off Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

It will be the Tigers' best chance since to win their first Test since the start of 2019, having lost all of their last six Tests.

Zimbabwe, ranked lower than Bangladesh, will be underdogs, especially with the Tigers having home advantage. However, they did manage to win a match in their last tour in 2018, coming out on top in the first Test in Sylhet.

Bangladesh will be boosted by the return of experienced wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim, who opted out of the recent tour of Pakistan.

The Mominul Haque-led Bangladesh will embark on an unfamiliar strategy at home as coach Russell Domingo said they will go into the match with two seamers, having gone into recent home Tests with one or no seamer.

Coronavirus cases rise after days of decline

Virus hotspots emerge in prisons, hospitals in China

AFP, Beijing

Two more people died from the new coronavirus in Iran, infections nearly doubled in South Korea and clusters surfaced in Chinese prisons yesterday, rekindling concerns about an epidemic that has killed more than 2,200 people in China.

The World Health Organization warned nations could face a serious problem if they fail to "hit hard now" against the virus, which has infected more than 75,000 in China and over 1,100 abroad.

China has pointed to official figures showing new cases slowing this week as evidence that its drastic containment measures are working, but fresh infections emerged at two Beijing hospitals, and more than 500 others were reported in prisons across the country.

Chinese authorities have placed tens of millions of people under quarantine in hard-hit central Hubei province, restricted movements in other cities far from the epicentre, and closed schools nationwide.

Many nations have banned travellers

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RELATED STORY ON PAGE 2

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

'The imperialists are still around us'



Bangabandhu addressing a mammoth crowd at Doulatkhan, Bhola.

FEBRUARY 22, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S BTV INTERVIEW

In an interview with BTV on the reminiscence of 1952, Bangabandhu says, "Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, had no sympathy for Bengalees. He wanted to make Bangladesh a colony of West Pakistan and its business community. Jinnah didn't come to see the people of Bangladesh when they had died of starvation in 1943. Immediately after the creation of Pakistan, the exploiters and their agents hurriedly came to Dhaka to take control of the administration. They started instigating communal disturbances and tried to establish Urdu as the only state language of Pakistan. Their modus operandi was very clear -- they wanted to eliminate

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3 killed in 'gunfights' with law enforcers

STAR REPORT

Three people, including two suspected robbers, were killed in two "gunfights" with law enforcers in Cumilla and Narayanganj early yesterday.

The victims of Cumilla incident are Md Emon, 40, and Md Jahangir, 28, while police could not identify the person killed in the "gunfight" with Rab in Narayanganj.

In Cumilla, based on a tip-off that a gang was preparing for a robbery, a team of police and detectives jointly conducted a drive in Old Loharpool Bridge area around 1:30am, reports our local correspondent quoting Porimol Das, sub-inspector of Detective Branch (DB) of Cumilla police.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the criminals opened fire on them,

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Rome to unveil 'founder's tomb'



AFP, Rome

An ancient tomb thought to belong to Rome's founder Romulus was all set to be presented to the world yesterday, bringing to a head months of investigation by history sleuths.

The 6th century BC stone sarcophagus, with an accompanying circular altar, was discovered under the Forum in the heart of Italy's capital decades ago, but experts could not agree on whether or not it belonged to the fabled figure.

According to legend, Romulus founded the city after killing his twin brother Remus.

The brothers had been raised by a she-wolf -- the symbol of Rome shows them sucking at her teats -- but later fell out over where to build the new metropolis.

Historians have long been divided not only over whether the pair actually existed, but if so

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AFGHAN WAR US, Taliban to sign deal February 29

REUTERS, Kabul

The United States and the Taliban will sign an agreement on February 29 at the end of a week long period of violence reduction in Afghanistan, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the Taliban said yesterday.

Afghan, international and Taliban forces will observe the reduced violence period beginning at midnight (1930 GMT), an Afghan official and Taliban leaders said earlier.

"Following lengthy

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PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 22

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:20 12:45 4:30 6:03 7:30
JAMAAT 5:55 1:15 4:45 6:07 8:00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Nurse stabbed at pvt hospital over previous enmity

Youth arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police arrested a youth after he stabbed a nurse inside a hospital in Bauphal upazila of Patuakhali yesterday.

Posing as an accident victim, arrestee Liton Khan, 24, along with two others, entered the hospital of Slove Bangladesh around 6:00am. The hospital staffer took him to the emergency ward where he stabbed nurse Sujata Dutta, 22, said Yusuf Khan, a witness of the incident.

As Liton tried to flee the scene, hospital staffer chased him down and later handed him over to police.

Later in the day, the victim's brother Shankar Dutta filed an attempt to murder case with Bauphal Police Station accusing Liton and an unnamed person.

Saiful Islam, sub-inspector of the police station, said they were quizzing Liton. Previous

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Waste from shops is piled up on Beribadh Road beside Hazrat Shah Ali kitchen market in the capital's Mirpur. Although a signboard put up here by Dhaka North City Corporation asks people to dump waste in trash bins, there is no such bins in the area. The photo was taken on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

DRUG-RESISTANT DISEASES AI discovers antibiotic to treat them

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have used artificial intelligence (AI) to uncover new types of antibiotics in the face of growing concerns about resistance to the drugs.

A group of researchers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) say their machine-learning algorithm was able to identify a powerful new antibiotic compound, capable of killing some of the world's most problematic disease-causing bacteria.

They claim the technology is able to work more quickly and efficiently than existing systems, because it checks more than a hundred million chemical compounds in a matter of days to pick out potential antibiotics that kill bacteria.

The AI was trained specifically to track down possible antibiotic molecules known for being effective against E.coli growth.

"We're facing a growing crisis around antibiotic resistance, and this situation is being generated by both an increasing number of pathogens becoming resistant to existing antibiotics, and an anaemic pipeline in the biotech and pharmaceutical industries for new antibiotics," said MIT's Professor James Collins, who is also co-founder of an antibiotic drug discovery firm EnBiotic.

"We wanted to develop a platform that would allow us to harness the power of artificial intelligence to usher in a new age of antibiotic drug discovery.

"Our approach revealed this amazing molecule which

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