



The pharmacy department of Dhaka University have started making hand sanitiser in a bid to help the university's students, especially those residing in dorms. They have already produced about 200 bottles and 500 more will be made at their lab.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

A helping hand to ease worries

DU pharmacy department making hand sanitiser for students

SAYED MOHMUD ULLAH

The pharmacy department of Dhaka University (DU) has come forward to minimise fears centring novel coronavirus, which has gripped the university's students.

When students, especially those living in "gono rooms" of DU's 18 dormitories, have been expressing their concerns over the disease, students and teachers of the department have come together to start making hand sanitiser following an ongoing shortage of the product at stores due to coronavirus panic.

Bottles of sanitiser will soon be provided to the university's students for free. About 200 bottles have been made in the last two days, DU sources told The Daily Star. They are planning to make 500 more bottles at their lab.

"Our department decided to produce hand sanitiser with its own funding. Teachers and students have been working under the leadership of Associate Prof Abdul Muhit," Prof Suresh Chandra Bachar, chairperson of the department, told The Daily Star.

"We have financial constraints; if more

hand sanitiser is needed, we will agree to make more, and financial support will be taken from the university if necessary," he added.

Prof Muhit said he, along with department students, is now working by following the advice of Prof ABM Faruk, former director of DU's Biomedical Research Center, and Dr SM Abdur Rahman, dean of pharmacy faculty.

"In the first phase, we want to distribute the bottles to pharmacy teachers and students, and a few students from other departments too, as we have certain limitations," he added.

The move comes in the wake of a worldwide streak of panic buying over coronavirus fears. People are buying hand sanitiser, masks, toilet paper and liquid soap in bulk.

Apart from welcoming the initiative, several students demanded that authorities should suspend all academic activities and keep the university shut to prevent spread of Covid-19.

"No doubt, hand sanitiser could prevent a massive outbreak, but there are many

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'Still under control'

Quader says govt will shut down edu institutions if necessary

BSS, Dhaka

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said no situation has emerged till now to shut down educational institutions in the country due to the possible spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

"There are lots of talks centring shutting down schools and colleges because of coronavirus. The authorities concerned are vigilant and they are monitoring the situation. The government will take all necessary steps, including shutting down the schools or colleges if any situation arises in this regard," he said.

Quader, also general secretary of Awami League, made the remarks during a press conference at AL central office on Bangabandhu Avenue before handing out leaflets on coronavirus on behalf of the party to create awareness among people.

He said the government is working relentlessly to combat the disease and has already taken all-out preparations in this regard and the situation is still under control, he added. Three Bangladeshi nationals, who got infected with coronavirus, are now doing well, he added.

"We are taking preparations for celebrating the Mujib Year along with checking coronavirus in the country as per the direction of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina," he added.

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Students of 2 DU depts to boycott class

Buet students appeal for suspending academic activities

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of two departments of Dhaka University yesterday decided not to take part in academic activities for an indefinite period amid coronavirus fears. In addition, four students went on a hunger strike around 9pm in front of the university's Raju memorial sculpture demanding immediate suspension of all academic schedules.

The boycott decision came from students of the departments of zoology and economics yesterday, after they held two polls in their respective Facebook groups on whether they should continue

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CORONAVIRUS-AFFECTED COUNTRIES Returnees will be quarantined: minister

BSS, Dhaka

Announcing that people coming to Bangladesh from coronavirus-affected countries will be kept in compulsory quarantine, Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said anyone violating this directive would have to face punishment.

"All returnees from the affected countries must be kept in compulsory quarantine. After screening them during the quarantine, they [returnees] will go home under the government management. Anyone violating the directive will be jailed or fined," he said.

Maleque informed Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Director General Professor Dr Abul Kalam Azad and officials concerned of this directive over phone and asked them to take necessary measures in this regard, said a DGHS press release.

Maleque also ordered keeping all 142 Bangladeshis who returned from Italy in compulsory quarantine at Ashkona Hajj Camp.

All the 142 Bangladeshis landed at Hazrat Shahjalal

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DHAKA TODAY

THEATRE

Haat Bariye Dao

Venue: Studio Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Time: 7pm

FASHION AND LIFESTYLE EXHIBITION

Spring Affair

Organiser: Festivity Events

Venue: White Hall, Uttara

Time: 11am-10pm

SESSION

CKD in Children: Opportunity and Challenges of Renal Replacement Therapy in Bangladesh

Venue: Square Hospitals Ltd

Time: 12:30pm

WORKSHOP

A Journey with Irish Whistle

Venue: Jatra Biroti

Time: 3pm



Fire engulfs warehouse in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days after a massive fire in Rupnagar slum, another blaze engulfed a garment scrap warehouse at the capital's Mirpur yesterday.

The fire broke out around 1:23pm and spread to the adjacent building of Khan Apparel Ltd at Mirpur-10. After frantic efforts, 15 firefighting units doused the blaze around 5pm, according to fire service.

Two persons, Md Hossain and Israfil, were injured in the incident.

Lt Col Zillur Rahman,

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PHOTO: COLLECTED

It took around four hours for firefighters to douse the blaze that engulfed a warehouse in Mirpur. The fire spread to adjacent buildings, significantly increasing the damage done. The incident occurred just days after a fire ravaged through the area's Rupnagar slum, destroying everything in its path and making many homeless.

Strengthen food safety monitoring: speakers

Urge govt to take measures at national level

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should set up a "Safe Food Foundation" in order to monitor irregularities in food management and implement the Food Safety Act, 2013 properly, said speakers yesterday.

Citing lack of cooperation among different ministries and institutions involved in food management, they said if such a foundation is established, it would monitor issues related to food safety and help raise awareness among people to ensure adulteration-free food for all.

The above call was made at a seminar on "Safe food for all: a commitment towards developed Bangladesh", organised by International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB) in the auditorium of Krishibid Institution Bangladesh (KIB).

Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder said some unscrupulous people involved in food manufacturing are adulterating food to make extra profit. They must stop such unethical practices.

He said Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution should play its due role to ensure safety. "We have already recommended teachers of educational institutions and imams to address the issue."

He said the government is planning to establish mobile laboratories in every district for proper monitoring as well as

mobile courts to ensure punishment for those involved in mismanagement.

Maj Gen Md Salahuddin Miaji (ret'd) said the government should provide incentives to farmers who cultivate crops using organic fertiliser instead of chemicals.

"Unabated use of chemicals affects vegetables in its initial stage; law regarding this must be implemented properly," said Miaji, also former vice chancellor of Bangladesh University of Professionals.

Former agriculture secretary Anwar Faruque said the government should increase investment for infrastructural development of food markets. He also urged the private sector to come forward.

KIB Secretary General Md Khairul Alam Prince said the country has already become self-reliant in food. "This is high time we produce safe food," he added.

Dr Ataur Rahman Miton, general secretary of Bangladesh Safe Agro Food Efforts (BSAFE) Foundation and country director of Hunger-Free Bangladesh, presented a keynote paper at the seminar.

He recommended that the government take initiatives to ensure food safety in every stage and stressed on setting up minilabs and service centres at union level.

With IBFB President Humayun Rashid in chair, Consumer Association of Bangladesh Chairman Golam Rahman also spoke at the seminar.

DIGITAL SECURITY ACT

YouTuber sued for 'defamation'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man has been sued under Digital Security Act on charges of uploading videos with false information on his Youtube channel and sharing those on social media.

One Ashikur Rahman from Old Dhaka filed the case with Chawkbazar Police Station on March 12 against Mahbub Alam Lablu, who once worked for a private TV channel and now runs a Youtube channel "Shuddho Sotto".

The case statement says Mahbub, in those videos, criticised top leaders, important persons and lawmakers, and demeaned state agencies. His aim was to create conflicts among communities, and destroy harmony.

Mahbub could not be reached for comments.

The complainant mentioned some videos that Mahbub produced are on expelled Jubo Mohila League leader Shamima Nur Papia and coronavirus.

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