



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Shah Cement helps jobless workers

CITY DESK

Shah Cement has taken an initiative to provide food items and handwash to construction workers and their families considering that many such workers have become jobless during the coronavirus situation, says a press release.

The cement brand has selected 80 points across the country to distribute the items.

Since March 30, a total of 10,000 construction workers have gotten the benefit. Shah Cement officials and its distributors of respective districts were present during the distribution programmes.

The cement brand is continuing to support construction workers at the selected points throughout the country, the release adds.

Dial 333

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after which they will decide where test kits and other equipment are needed, said Chowdhury.

The 333 has received more than four lakh calls about coronavirus, while the DGHS' 16263 received 1.70 lakh calls on the same issue. In collaboration with mobile operators, the government has also sent out bulk texts to people, he added.

Ban cigarette

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coronavirus infection," said the organisation.

The press release was sent by Progra in association with Bangladesh Cancer Society, BCCP, ACD, YPSA, Aid Foundation, Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance, BNTTP, BITA, Grambangla Unnayan Committee, NATAB, Prattashya, TCRC, National Heart Foundation, Dhaka ABSANIA Mission, UFAT, TABINAJ, Voice, WBB Trust, and Anti-Tobacco Media Alliance (ATMA).

Sajida, Renata team up to fight Covid-19

CITY DESK

Sajida Foundation and Renata Ltd, formerly Pfizer Ltd, have teamed up to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic, said a press release.

They will work in collaboration with Directorate General of Health Services.

Sajida has already reached 5,16,534 people through its different initiatives.

The foundation turned its Narayanganj hospital into an isolation unit and prepared an ICU to treat Covid-19 patients, one of the first hospitals from the private sector to do so.

With support from Renata, it has already distributed about 9,000 sets of personal protective equipment.

Till date, Sajida has distributed food and hygiene packages to more than 10,000 people belonging to poor urban households and slums, the press release further said.

Sajida is aggressively engaged in educating communities about Covid-19.

It has also installed more than 400 locally designed hand-washing stations, and another 800 stations will be established in the weeks to come.

Sajida and Renata will marshal all their resources to fight this pandemic, aiming to reach a million people in the upcoming months.

3 killed in road crashes

STAR REPORT

Even amidst the coronavirus-induced lockdown, three people were killed in separate road accidents over the last two days, report our correspondents.

In Dinajpur, biker Harunur Rashid (45) was killed after his motorbike collided with another one in Nawabganj upazila yesterday morning, upazila police said.

Police said Harunur was going to Bhaduria Bazar in the upazila.

On the other hand, at least two people were killed and four others injured in road accidents in Dashmina and Galachipa upazilas of Patuakhali on Monday.

In Dashmina, rickshaw-van puller Rafiqul Islam (30) died after losing control and hitting a tree at Lakshampur while on his way to Dashmina town with two passengers.

The collision occurred around 7am and injured all three. Locals rushed them to Dashmina Upazila Health Complex where doctors referred Rafiqul to Barishal Sher-E-Bangla Medical College Hospital. He died around 11:45pm.

In Galachipa, Nesar Uddin Hawlader (45) died in a tragic mishap at Badnati ferry ghat area yesterday.

The accident occurred while Nesar was loading watermelons on a truck parked at the ghat. At one point, truck driver Raju started driving in back gear, not noticing Nesar, and crushing him under the wheels.

Md Monirul Islam, OC of Galachipa Police Station, said they arrested driver Raju.

Tabligh Jamaat asks followers to return home

BSS, Dhaka

Tabligh Jamaat Bangladesh yesterday urged its followers, who are now in different congregations (preaching tours/spending days at mosques), to return home from their respective tours.

In a statement signed by Ahlea Shura Prof Yusuf Shikder, the Tabligh Jamaat said, "Considering the notice of the religious affairs ministry issued on Monday, those who are now in 'tin chillar' (continuous 120 days in tour); 'ek chillar' (40 days) or in any jamaat are requested to return to their respective residences."

"If necessary, seek cooperation from the administrations in this regard," the statement said.

Followers are asked to offer prayers at home and seek the welfare of the Muslim ummah and entire mankind during the ongoing crisis.

Ctg General

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will benefit patients to a great extent. "In a private hospital, patients have to pay Tk 15,000 to Tk 25,000 everyday for ICU support," he said. "Not all patients can afford it."

Dr Hasan Shahriar Kabir, Chattogram divisional director of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), told The Daily Star it is now just matter of time to open an ICU in CGH. "Initially, it was decided that five ventilators will be given to CGH, but we requested the ministry to double the number, considering the importance of the hospital for treating Covid-19 patients," he said.

Jail official held with 522 yaba pills

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

An assistant chief of Cumilla Central Jail security was arrested over possession of yaba pills on Monday afternoon.

The arrestee is Tarikul Islam (45) of Chattogram's Sitakunda upazila.

Cumilla Central Jail Superintendent Shahjahan Ahmed claimed, "On information, we searched Tarikul and seized 106 pills from his pocket. Following that, another 416 pills were seized from under his bed. We found a total of 522 pills." Shahjahan said Tarikul was handed over to police after a case was filed in this connection.

Md Billal Hossain, inspector of investigation at Kotwali Police Station, confirmed the matter. He said a case was filed on Monday evening against the jail official for illegally possessing the yaba tablets.

Help Bangladesh

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Dr Shamim Jahan, deputy country director for Save the Children in Bangladesh, said at present it is difficult for Bangladesh to meet the expected surge in demand for ventilators to help respond to the coronavirus outbreak.

"We are in this together; no single country can confront Covid-19 alone. It is therefore essential that world leaders -- in particular the G20 countries -- commit to a coordinated global plan underpinned by debt relief," she said.

UNDP ROLLS OUT \$1.5M FOOD SUPPORT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Bangladesh government, is rolling out US\$1.5 million emergency food support for 50,000 extremely urban poor families, to help alleviate the hardships and potential impacts of coronavirus.

This initiative was taken under UNDP's Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP) -- a joint project being implemented by the Local Government Division of Bangladesh, DFID and UNDP with an aim to reduce urban poverty, said a statement yesterday.

Judith Herbertson, DFID Bangladesh country representative, said the livelihoods of a large number of urban poor have been severely disrupted due to the shutdown and the loss of income. The project is responding to the situation in a number of ways including providing hand-washing facilities and cash grants.

Additionally, the DFID has provided UK£3 million to UNDP to reach at least 2.16 million people in urban slums across 20 city corporations and municipalities, with awareness-raising information and hand-washing facilities.

"What we are trying to do under this initiative, is to make things easier for the people to follow the public order -- which is to stay home and prevent the virus from spreading and therefore this partnership will deliver food at the doorsteps of the poor households," said Sudipto Mukerjee, resident representative of UNDP Bangladesh.

Over 5,000 prisoners

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Mridha's lawyer Advocate Khandker Mahub Hossain told this correspondent that there are more than 5,000 prisoners in the jails across the country who have been convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in different cases.

But, they do not know how long they will have to serve in jails, although life sentence refers to 30 years' prison term as per law, he said.

Even, the jail authorities are confused over this issue, as the SC has not yet delivered its verdict on the review petition, the lawyer said, adding that a convict, who is sentenced to life imprisonment by a court, is supposed to serve in jail for 22 years after the remission from 30 years' as per the law.

They will have to wait to know the duration of their sentence until the SC deliver its verdict on the review petition regarding the meaning and tenure of a

convict's life imprisonment, the jurist said.

Contacted, Inspector General of Prisons Brig Gen AKM Mustafa Kamal Pasha told The Daily Star that a prisoner, who is sentenced to life imprisonment, usually has to serve in jail for 20 years after the relevant remissions from 30 years' term.

Replying to a question, he said he is not aware of the SC decision about the tenure of life imprisonment.

During the proceedings of the review petition of Mridha, the SC bench headed by Chief Justice Mahmud Hossain heard expert opinions from four amicus curiae (friends of court) -- Advocate AF Hasan Ariff, Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud, Advocate Abdur Rezak Khan and Advocate AM Aminuddin -- on the issue.

Advocate Khandker Mahub Hossain and Advocate Shishir Manir appeared for the petitioner while Attorney General Mahubey Alam argued for the state.

Forge nat'l consensus

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issued yesterday said.

The political alliance said the number of cases were gradually growing in Bangladesh, creating panic among people.

It said the lack of coordination in reopening and shutting down RMG factories eroded people's confidence.

The five point-proposals of the alliance included forging a national consensus with the participation of all political parties, professional

and social organisations, experts and all organs of the nation.

It urged formation of an all-party task force and adopt national and regional action plans giving health services the highest priority.

Other demands of the alliance included taking special initiatives to protect the displaced Rohingyas from the outbreak; and introducing food rationing at fair prices for the unemployed, female RMG workers, labourers, marginal farmers, physically-challenged, and

disadvantaged children.

Gonoforum President and top leader of the Jatiya Oikyafront Dr Kamal Hossain, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, BNP standing committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President ASM Abdur Rob, Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna, and Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury signed the statement among others.

Acute food crisis hits village

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Some 30 other families in the area are facing similar food crisis as the families are under self-isolation, with no support from the government, said Ing Chong Mro, karbari (head of the area) of Kapru Para.

During the outbreak of a contagious disease, many communities in the hills build makeshift gates with bamboos called Khasur at the entrances of their villages as part of their traditions, Ing said, adding no one is allowed to cross

this gate until the dust settles.

The food crisis is quite similar in many areas of Lama, Thanchi, Alikadom, Ruma and Rowangchhari as the authorities claimed they could not reach out to the people living in these areas due to the remoteness.

"We have not received any relief till now while villagers do not go outside as we have locked our Para with Khasur", said Long Toi Mro, karbari of Champa Jiri Mro Para.

Thowai Ching, headman of Thanchi's Sekdu mouza (a mouza is comprised of several hilly areas), said hundreds of families in his mouza was suffering from acute food shortage.

The most affected areas of the mouza are Thong Nung Khumi Para, Soti Chandra Tripura Para, Jonirang Para, and Hasturang Para, said the headman.

Indigenous people in remote Tindu, Remakri, Boro Madok and Choto

Madok of Thanchi upazila also alleged that no one, including the government officials, visited the areas after the shutdown was imposed.

People living in these areas do not fall under the purview of government's development programmes while non-government organisations find it difficult to reach there due to the lack of transportation facilities, locals claimed.

Contacted, Shamim Hossain, additional deputy commissioner (general) of Bandarban, said, "We, along with Bandarban Hill District Council, have already distributed 347 tonnes of rice for around 30,000 families in the district following the shutdown was announced."

"It is really difficult for us to reach the people living in the remote areas, but we are planning to help them", said the ADC.

Taliban break off

FROM PAGE 12

Last week, Afghan officials said they would release 100 Taliban prisoners who were sick or over the age of 50.

In exchange, the Taliban were expected to free 20 members of the Afghan security forces. Ultimately both sides would aim to release the 6,000 prisoners they are holding.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo welcomed the arrival in Kabul of

the Taliban team as good news.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, Pompeo last month travelled to Kabul and the Qatari capital of Doha in a bid to nudge the prisoner process forward.

Afghan government officials have said the Taliban were demanding the release of senior commanders involved in some of the most violent attacks in recent years.

3 held

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food-friendly programme to Shahin every month.

Later, the team conducted a raid at Boalia club and

recovered five more sacks of rice.

UNO Nasrin said they were preparing to file a case against the perpetrators.

Bangabandhu to continue

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should be given the option not to retain president-ship if he can manage to organise the party without heading it himself. But the councillors insist on his accepting the decision of the council, the supreme body of the Awami League party.

The Council meeting also adopts the new red and green four-starred flag as the flag of the party. The red colour signifies the blood of the shaheeds and the green represents the greenery of Bangladesh. The four stars inscribed on the flag represent the four principles of nationalism, democracy, secularism and socialism.

INDIRA SENDS MESSAGE TO BHUTTO
The Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi has sent a message to President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan, expressing India's readiness to start direct talks with Pakistan with the aim of ensuring a long-term and stable peace in the subcontinent. The message proposes to hold talks without any preliminary conditions. Meanwhile, a government spokesman of Pakistan stresses that Pakistan's attitude is favourable to the proposal of holding a summit meeting to settle disputes between the two countries.

3 SEPARATE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

Bangladesh government today announces that the combined command of the Bangladesh Forces has been abolished and replaced by three separate service headquarters, each under a chief of staff. The decision is part of an announcement appointing chiefs of staff for the three services following the resignation of General MA Osmani yesterday.

PM NEEDS 2 LAKH AL VOLUNTEERS IN 2 MONTHS

Bangabandhu in his winding up speech at the plenary session of the Party Council says that within the next two months he requires two lakh volunteers. The Awami League chief tells the party members that only by wearing a four-star cap one would not become an Awami League.

JOINT RIVER COMMISSION TO BE SET UP
India and Bangladesh have decided to establish a permanent joint river commission. The commission, consisting of experts of both countries, will carry out a comprehensive survey of the common river systems and formulate and implement flooding control projects.

SOURCES: April 9, 1972 issues of Ittefaq, The Bangladesh Observer, Azad, Morning News, Dainik Bangla and Purbodesh.

Private univs seek review

FROM PAGE 12

On Monday, the UGC in a statement said, "Several universities have taken the decision to assign students' grades without holding semester finals or evaluations, and to enrol new students without admission tests. This is unethical."

It also said that some universities were trying to take online tests and some of them also started enrolling students for the summer semester during this crisis in the country.

Independent University Bangladesh (IUB) is one of the universities that decided to assign grades among students for the outgoing spring semester without holding semester finals and to enrol students without any admission tests and instead based only on their SSC and HSC results.

Brig Gen (Retd) Anwarul Islam, registrar at IUB, said that this matter has created much confusion among the managements of private universities.

"We expected some sort directive from the private university division [of the UGC], but it came from the media and the PR department of the UGC", he said.

He said that a semester closes with awarding grades among students. It is difficult to prepare for the next semester without completing the previous one.

He said that IUB authorities have asked all course instructors to assign grades based on the available semester assessments -- the midterm, quizzes, presentations and assignments.

Students who would like to improve the assigned results are requested to contact their respective course faculty members for additional assignments; the nature of the assignment is at the discretion of the faculty member, said Anwarul.

"No students would be seriously affected. We have kept a mechanism to address the genuine concerns of the students. We were just two weeks from closing the semester," he added.

"Regarding grading, we have informed our students that we will notify them only after getting a proper guideline from the UGC. We will also wait for the instructions from the UGC regarding admission test,"

he added.

Anwarul said that most of universities do not take admission tests at all, adding, "We usually take admission tests. As we are not able to take exams, we come up with our own criteria that does not violate the criteria set up by the authorities."

The minimum requirement set by the UGC for admission to a private university is GPA 2.5, in both the SSC or HSC, or a total of 6 grade points.

United International University (UIU) has taken the step to enrol students based on SSC and HSC results.

UIU Vice Chancellor Prof Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman said they usually take admission tests. But due to special circumstances this time, they decided not to.

"If you say that it is unethical to take students based on SSC and HSC results, then I will ask what the need of SSC and HSC exams is," he said.

He, however, said that honouring the UGC, they will not go ahead with the decision now.

"I believe the association [APUB] would talk to them [UGC] and raise the issue to review the directives," he added.

"We can sit with them after our office opens," UGC Chairman Prof Kazi Shahidullah said.

He said that many private university authorities have communicated with the commission and assured that they will abide by the UGC decisions.

"They can complete classes online, but they have to take exams only after normalcy returns. Students should not think about exams in this dangerous situation. Also, not all students have internet connections." "You cannot take online exams, as there are issues regarding cheating, unfair means and transparency of the exams."

There is no scope for giving grades without semester finals.... If the situation worsens, we will think about assigning grades based on midterms and assignments," he said.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Hereby JSC ASE notifies about holding of single-stage open proposal request for the right to enter into contract for performance of construction and installation works for lot: 1. No. 0701 "Unit 1, 2. "Unit transformer facilities and auxiliary structures. Comprehensive CEW." The documentation has been placed at the official website of State Corporation "Rosatom" <http://zakupki.rosatom.ru>, procurement number No.200324/0536/310

Want Rental Warehouses

Area:
a. Dhaka: Tongi, Uttara, 300ft road, Tejgaon
b. Chittagong City Limit.
Required Space: up to 60,000sqm.
Services:
a. Proper arrangement of movements for all kinds of vehicles (truck, covered van, trailer).
b. Bonded and Non-bonded warehouses.
c. Proper security and ventilation.
Tenure: Contractual up to 1 year.
Only real owners are requested to communicate.
Contact number: 01671744876, 01313493030

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Second Rural Transport Improvement Project
Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
Dhaka-1207
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.0000.726.07.032.2020.2783 Date: 06/04/2020

Corrigendum of e-GP: Tender Notice (2nd)

Due to some unavoidable circumstances, following amendment has been made to the Tender ID No. 437197.

Sl. No.	ID No.	Name of supply	Field name	Old value	New value
1.	Tender ID 437197	Supply of Computer, Laptop, Printer, Multimedia Projector, UPS and other accessories (Package No. AF-G1)	Tender document last selling date & time	12 April 2020 17:00	27 April 2020 17:00
			Last date and time for tender security submission	13 April 2020 12:00	28 April 2020 12:00
			Tender closing date & time	13 April 2020 13:00	28 April 2020 13:00

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Sd/-
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GD-728