

Fruits in

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documents were delivered on time to banks and there was smooth clearance from the port," he said.

Claiming that imported fruit meets about 60 percent of total fruit consumption of the country, he further said truckers have increases the transportation fares, as the transport sector has also seen loss of business.

Contacted, DHL customer service in Dhaka told The Daily Star that they could not reach the documents on time due to closure of flights globally.

"In this context, we are not making any commitment to our customers too," he said, requesting anonymity.

Talking to The Daily Star, Director (Traffic) of Chittagong Port Authority Enamul Karim admitted the jam-packed situation in the port. Containers could not be released as importers failed to produce documents on time, he added.

IMPORTS FROM INDIA HALTED

On the other hand, a good amount of grapes, pomegranate and mandarin were supposed to reach consumers from India, but that is also uncertain due to border shutdown.

Md Rezaul Karim, assistant commissioner of Customs of Bhomra land port, told The Daily Star that they received a letter from the Indian C&F agents on March 25 that states that all kinds of goods import and export will remain suspended until further notice.

"We import five types of fruits through Beanpole port: lemon, pomegranate, grape, kinnow and orange. However, import has remained suspended after lockdown began in India," Mofizur Rahman Sazon, president of Beanpole C&F Agent Association, told The Daily Star.

CARE Bangladesh provides PPE to health workers in Gazipur

CITY DESK

CARE Bangladesh provided healthcare workers in Gazipur, including doctors, 100 sets of personal protective equipment (PPE), said a press release.

The activity was under the organisation's Health Access and Linkage Opportunities for Workers Plus (HALOW+) project.

A ceremony was organised on Monday where Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) Mayor Md Zahangir Alam was chief guest. Apart from PPE, disposable hand gloves, masks, hand sanitiser, liquid soap and hand rubs were provided for various communities in Gazipur.

Senior officials from GCC and representatives from health departments were present in the ceremony.

With financial support from GlaxoSmithKline and Marks & Spencer, HALOW+ is bolstering its pilot project. In coordination with readymade garment (RMG) factory management, HALOW+ undertook several awareness-raising activities among factory workers on Covid-19.

A total of 558 RMG workers were oriented, while 61 community members attended session on Covid-19 and hand-washing system in Dhaka, Gazipur and Mymensingh.

Each for

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UNO Zakir.

After hearing her out, he immediately made up his mind to assist the family. He picked them up in his car and not only dropped them home, but also left them with some daily essentials to help see out the darkening days.

The family was a mix of relief and ecstasy. "The arrival of the UNO brought a kind of relief I have never experienced in my life," Rozina said, gratefully.

But as they say, helping is not a one-way traffic, for the joy that Rozina felt was matched by what Zakir Hossain felt too.

"This is a rare experience. I am immensely happy that I could fulfill my assigned duty to help people in such trying times," the kind man said.

Ctg transport workers

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has significantly gone down. Buses running on different routes have stopped, and human haulier and Laguna workers are in a miserable condition, they said.

Transport workers said they are struggling to provide food for their families, while house rent, their children's school fees and other expenses for April are worsening the situation. Apart from all that, Ramadan is approaching and Eid related expenses will introduce a new set of challenges.

They have questioned the role of transport organisations during the crisis, saying that every month before the outbreak, the organisations took money from them for welfare funds. But during the crisis, none of them provided support.

Contacted, Md Musa, president of Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation (Chattogram region), said, "Yes, we used to take money for providing support in case any worker dies or is critically injured in an accident."

"We have set guideline on how we can spend the money. We are trying our best to support the workers so they can get through this difficult time," he said.

The workers, who currently have no income source, earned money on a daily-basis, but now, their condition is worse than that of apparel workers, he added.

"We are providing aid from different sources but it's not enough," said the transport leader. "We are hopeless, as there is no direct government assistance for our sector to survive the global crisis," he added.

Gambling

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away from everything, said police.

DC Mashiur said Raquib told police that his family and relatives did not trust him when he told them about the pressure he was facing.

Due to the continuous pressure to repay the loan and mistrust of family members, Raquib decided to kill them and then die by suicide, said police.

As per the plan, on February 12, he killed his wife after hitting her with a hammer and strangled his children to death, Raquib told police.

Covid-19 trial tests begin at SBMCH

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Training activities and trial test for coronavirus detection was inaugurated yesterday at Barishal's Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

State minister of water resources and local lawmaker Zahid Faruque inaugurated the training programme. Dr Zahangir Hossain, assistant professor and chairperson of microbiology and virology department at SBMCH, said at least eight people including five who came from Dhaka have received training to operate the lab. The training will end today, and testing widely will begin on Saturday.

At least 94 tests can be done at a time, he added. "We have tested sample of one suspected Covid-19 patient. Result will be available after we hear back from IEDCR."

Meanwhile a 125-bed covid-19 isolation unit was established on March 16 at SBMCH. Nine people were admitted at this unit at the time of filing this report.

TigerIT creates local ventilator prototype

CITY DESK

TigerIT Bangladesh Ltd has succeeded in making a prototype for a low-cost ventilator, constructed entirely using locally-sourced materials, said a press release.

The prototype is a mechanical non-invasive ventilator, like those used throughout healthcare institutions.

Since the ventilator can be wholly manufactured locally, the production cost will be affordable: making one such ventilator will cost Tk 15,000-20,000.

The design will be sent to authorities concerned for approval. If approved, TigerIT will donate 500 ventilators and will produce more, as needed. The organisation will also share the design, free of cost, with those interested in manufacturing the machines.

A doctor on duty

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More than 200 Covid-19 patients and suspected cases have received treatment at the hospital so far, according to hospital sources.

The doctor has two children: a six-year-old autistic son and a four-year-old daughter.

"It was a difficult task... I can't stay away from patients, nor can I ignore my children -- particularly one with special needs," she said.

Doctors and nurses at the hospital said they started facing different problems after the hospital started taking in Covid-19 patients.

Many were asked by their neighbours either to avoid going out or to refrain from returning to the respective buildings where they live, from the hospital, they said.

The neighbour of the doctor this correspondent interviewed showed similar attitude to her.

Despite being a heart patient, every day she walked seven flights of stairs to go to the rooftop to take a shower

immediately after returning home. She would only then walk back to her flat on the third floor.

"I do not want to use the lift as I don't want to be the cause of the virus' spread in my building. I tried to keep my family and my neighbours safe," she said.

Although initially she went back to her house in Uttara, she now stays with her colleague at a hotel near the hospital.

"We are encouraged by the superintendent of the hospital Dr Shehab Uddin. He is very upbeat and dedicated," she said.

Doctors at the hospital thanked the government as they were provided with sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) and masks.

Dr Shehab Uddin, the superintendent of the hospital, said almost all doctors and nurses are dedicatedly discharging their duties and serving patients at the hospital.

Only one or two doctors are panicked and they do not come to the hospital, he said.

Another worry for Bangladesh

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so. India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh had observed that it would be better if the repatriation was done after the coronavirus pandemic was over," he said.

Kuwait, however, warned that the countries that don't take back their undocumented workers now, might not get priority when Kuwait starts fresh recruitment later, the official said preferring anonymity.

Later, it was finalised, by Kuwait and Bangladesh, that 125 Bangladeshis, in deportation centres and waiting to return, and 190 others in prison for committing various crimes, would be deported between April 16 and 20, the official said.

"Of the undocumented migrants, those who want to return voluntarily can come home," the official said.

According to the official, some 25,000 of the around two lakh Bangladeshis in Kuwait could be undocumented.

"I don't think many of them would want to return to Bangladesh now. Those who have been in Kuwait for many years may return," the official added.

Bahrain is asking Bangladesh to take back 300 Bangladeshis whose sentences have been commuted and 100 others who are waiting for deportation.

Sheikh Mohammed Tauhidul Islam, labour counsellor at Bangladesh embassy in Manama, said they were under pressure to send the 400 Bangladeshis home.

Qatar is also making a similar move, officials said.

Meanwhile, the Maldives, which is home to around one lakh Bangladeshis, wants Bangladesh to take back its undocumented workers.

According to officials concerned, about 50,000 Bangladeshis there are undocumented.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said The Maldives Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid recently called him to say that his country's economy was seriously affected. There were hardly

any tourists in the country so heavily dependent on tourism.

"Therefore, both documented and undocumented migrants are jobless. They can help the documented migrants, but not the undocumented ones," Momen told reporters on April 5.

"We may have to bring back some undocumented migrants," he added.

Officials concerned said Saudi Arabia and the UAE were also raising the issues of undocumented migrants, but have not said anything concrete yet.

These two countries are home to about 25 lakh Bangladeshis. A few lakh of them are thought to be undocumented.

"Not many countries have requested us to bring back undocumented migrants. But you know the number of our people working abroad is huge," Momen said.

"We are under pressure... to some extent. In fact, all countries are under pressure. We are in a difficult time," the foreign minister said.

However, Momen said Bangladesh has good relationship with all these labour-receiving countries and that the government was interacting with them and explain how all countries were facing problems due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We already wrote to different countries thanking them for assisting our people. We said we are also facing health and financial problems due to Covid-19 and requested them to help our people on humanitarian grounds. We, together, will surely overcome this," he said.

Like many other countries in the world, Bangladesh too has put forward a stimulus package to deal with the financial fallout of Covid-19.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday announced a stimulus package of Tk 72,750 crore to overcome the possible economic shock from the ongoing shutdown.

Sumitha Shaanthinni Kishna, chairperson of Migrants Forum Asia,

a regional alliance of migrant rights bodies, said any return of migrants must be voluntary.

"Migrants have the right to stay on and work. The countries hosting migrants must ensure that the migrants -- regardless of their legal status -- have free access to screening of Covid-19 and treatment if infected," she told The Daily Star over phone from Malaysia.

Migrants also should be given incentives the way the host countries are providing that to their own citizens, said Sumitha, adding, "Migrants heavily contribute to the host countries' economies. Now these countries should give back to the migrants."

2 teens sent

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The victim was sent to Rowmari Upazila Health Complex for medical tests.

Nupur Bishwas, a residential medical officer of the health complex, said the girl had hemorrhage and was referred to Kurigram Sadar Hospital for better treatment.

Using time

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singing or dancing, but due to the busy schedule, people cannot get time to nurture their talents.

"Many of us love to stitch and make handicrafts but could not do so due to their busy schedule. In the last 15 days I have made a number of handicrafts using my old clothes," Rabeya Khandoker, an employee of a private university, told the daily star.

She said, "I am also making various foods though I never tried my hand at cooking. So I am using my time in a productive way."

Dr Tanjin Jahan, a private practitioner, said, "This is a good time for a person to explore his or her calibres. People can sharpen their skills using this time."

She said this will give a mental boost which is badly needed in the days of home quarantine.

Benazir new IGP

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obtained a PhD in business administration from the faculty of business studies at the same university.

Immediately before joining as the DG Rab, Benazir served as the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police for four years.

Besides, he has served as superintendent of police in various districts, deputy police commissioner of the detective branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, assistant inspector general of police at the Police Headquarters, deputy inspector general (finance) and deputy inspector general (admin & op) at the Police Headquarters.

He also had the opportunity to serve as chief instructor at Bangladesh Police Academy in Rajshahi's Sardah and as Commandant of Police Training Center in Tangail.

Benazir has expertise in various areas of policing, including terrorism and terror financing, search intelligence, and organisational reform.

He has received various professional training at home and abroad.

During his service life, Benazir was awarded Bangladesh Police Medal, the highest national police award, in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2019.

He was awarded IGP's Exemplary Good Service Badge, UN Medal for the Service for Peace in Bosnia (1996), Kosovo (2003), and the USA (2009).

The newly-appointed Rab DG Mamun joined Bangladesh Police as an assistant superintendent of police in 1989.

He was promoted to the rank of an additional IGP on May last year and appointed as the CID chief on August 28 the same year.



Syria behind 2017

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have only taken place on the basis of orders from the higher authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic military command," IIT coordinator Santiago Onate-Laborde said in the OPCW

statement.

"Even if authority can be delegated, responsibility cannot. In the end, the IIT was unable to identify any other plausible explanation," he said.

Bernie Sanders suspends

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consolidated their support behind Biden's campaign.

The departure of Sanders, the last remaining rival to Biden, sets up a battle between the 77-year-old former vice president and Trump, 73, who is seeking a second four-year term in office.

Sanders' decision to step aside came with the country in the grip of a coronavirus outbreak that upended the

nominating elections schedule, with some primaries postponed and others up in the air. Sanders had been his party's front-runner just a month ago.

Sanders, who also mounted an unexpectedly strong challenge in 2016 to eventual Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, had been under pressure to halt his campaign after Biden won resounding victories in primary contests on March 17 in Florida, Arizona and Illinois.

Every means

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freedom struggle in Bangladesh and says it can't claim our thanks now. Bangabandhu wonders how China, a socialist country which claims to support all liberation struggles, does not recognise Bangladesh, which is committed to establishing socialism and its people won freedom in an unparalleled struggle against imperialism.

EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION NECESSARY: BHASHANI
Addressing a big public meeting at Paltan Maidan, Maulana Bhashani today urges that an effective opposition is necessary for the realisation of a just society by a government. Recalling the repression meted out to the Awami League by the then ruling Muslim League, Bhashani hopes that the present government will allow the growth of healthy opposition in the interest of establishing democracy in the country. He also calls for a free press in the interest of creating consciousness among all classes of people. Only a conscious people can realise their rights, he observes.

7 MORE MCAS EXPELLED

Seven more Members of Constituent Assembly belonging to the Awami League are expelled today by party chief Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for "having worked against the discipline, interest and direction of the party". On April 6, another 16 Awami League MCAs were expelled from the party for the same charges.

EDUCATION COMMISSION SOON

Bangabandhu today declares that an education commission will be soon set up to prepare the future education policy of the country. Stating that his government is determined to bring about a revolutionary change in the education system, Bangabandhu says that clerks will no longer be produced by the education system. He stresses on the practical education which will benefit the people.

SOURCES: April 10, 1972 issues of Ittefaq, The Bangladesh Observer, Azad, Morning News, Dainik Bangla and Purbodesh.

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Application Procedure

To apply please send a covering letter and a copy of your CV to: t-hrd@bracu.ac.bd

Application deadline: 23 April 2020

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