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'Long way to go' to end virus crisis

Says WHO chief as countries mull reopening; China to give world body \$30m more

AGENCIES

The global coronavirus crisis will not end any time soon, with many countries still in the early stages of the fight, health experts have warned as researchers revealed the first US deaths from the disease came weeks before the alarm was raised there.

The COVID-19 pandemic has killed more than 184,000 people and infected 2.6 million, and nations are struggling to check its spread with social distancing measures and lockdowns, while trying to repair their virus-ravaged economies.

Some have started to slowly ease restrictions as pressure mounts on governments to find ways to reopen their societies after tens of millions of jobs were wiped out.

But World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Wednesday cautioned that the struggle is far from over.

"Make no mistake: we have a long way to go. This virus will be with us for a long time," he said.

"Most countries are still in the early stages of their epidemics. And some that were affected early in the pandemic are now starting to see a resurgence in cases."

Meanwhile, China yesterday announced it will give another \$30 million to WHO to help in the global fight

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



People, including children, maintain physical distancing while waiting for lunch near Sadarghat Launch Terminal in the capital yesterday. Mojar Iskul (Fun School), an NGO that runs a school for street children, delivers over 300 lunches to people in need every day amid the coronavirus outbreak.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

4 of a family found dead at home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police yesterday recovered throat-slit bodies of four members of a family from their home in Gazipur's Sreepur upazila.

The victims are Fatema Begum, 40; her daughters Noora, 16, and Irin, 11; and son Fadi, 7; of Abdar area.

Fatema's husband Kajal Miah is an expatriate in Malaysia. She used to live at the house for around 20 years, said Arif, Fatema's brother-in-law.

According to Arif, Fatema called him over phone and asked him to deliver some essential commodities and kitchen items at her home on Wednesday evening.

Arif reached Fatema's place yesterday morning and knocked her door but none responded, he said, adding that he went back to the house again at 2:00pm but to no avail.

Worried, he entered the house using the roof of a neighbouring house and found the bodies lying on the floor, he said.

Liakat Ali, officer-in-charge of Sreepur Police

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

THEFT OF RELIEF MATERIALS

7 UP chairmen, 3 members suspended

UNB, Dhaka

The LGRD and cooperatives ministry has suspended seven more union parishad chairmen and three members over embezzlement of relief materials and irregularities in relief distribution amid the Covid-19 crisis.

With the latest suspensions, a total of 35 public representatives have been suspended so far.

A notification issued in this regard said the authorities have found various allegations brought against the public representatives to be true.

The allegations include embezzlement of relief materials, VGF rice and irregularities in relief distribution.

Besides, a public representative was suspended for traveling abroad breaching the government's instruction to stay in electoral areas. Another faced music for arranging a mass gathering defying social distancing rules.

The suspended chairmen are Noor-e Alam Bepari of Kedarpur UP in Barishal's Babujanj upazila; Mizanur Rahman Khan of Rajapur UP in Bhola Sadar upazila; Monir Hossain Mridha of Kamplapur UP in Patuakhali Sadar upazila; Shah al Shafi Ansari of Rahanpur UP in Chapainawabganj's Gomastapur upazila; Siddiqur Rahman Mondol of Joshai UP under Rajbari's Pangsha upazila; Zarijid Molla of Perli UP and Alauddin of Joynagar UP in Narail's Kalia upazila.

The suspended UP members are

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

No import of luxury goods



Rashid Ahmed, author of Mukti Sangram Bangladesh, presenting a copy of his book to Bangabandhu on April 18, 1972.

April 24, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

IMPORT POLICY ANNOUNCED

The country's first import policy for the January-June, 1972 shipping period is announced today. Explaining the salient features of the import policy, Commerce Minister MR Siddiqui says that there will be no import of luxury items for the period. Although the aim of the government is to arrange import through government agencies as far as practicable, it has been decided to allow import in the private sector since the government agencies are not fully equipped to handle all the import requirements and since there is also a need to rehabilitate the trading community engaged in import business. The government has also decided to induct newcomers in the import trade for a number of items. Preference will be given to those newcomers who suffered during the Liberation War including those whose shops and business establishment were damaged. The list of importable items contains essential consumer goods, industrial raw materials, spares and components.

TV CORPORATION ABOLISHED

The government of Bangladesh has decided to abolish Television

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

PRESS FREEDOM

Bangladesh drops one notch in world index

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh slipped one notch down in this year's World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders, also known as Reporters sans frontières (RSF).

Bangladesh has ranked 151st out of 180 countries while its position was 150th last year, according to the report released recently.

Norway topped the Index for the fourth year in a row in 2020, while Finland is again the runner-up. Denmark (up two to 3rd) is next as both Sweden (down one at 4th) and the Netherlands (down one at 5th) have fallen as a result of increases in cyber-harassment, the report said. India has ranked 142nd, Pakistan 145th, Bhutan 67th, the Maldives 79th, Nepal 112nd, Afghanistan 122nd and Sri Lanka 127th. North Korea is at the bottom of the list followed by Turkmenistan, Eritrea, and China.

In the chapter for Bangladesh, the report said,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

STAY HOME, STAY WELL

Watch over kids' screen time

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Coronavirus has disrupted the regular activities of mass people as most of them are now forced to stay at home to maintain social distancing.

At this time of shutdown, internet has become a source of essential information. It also connects netizens who are working from home.

Besides, internet has taken a place in children's lives at this time of crisis. As most of their schools are shut and they are denied access to outdoor activities and games, the amount of time they spend in front of screen increased.

According to experts, this increasing screen time can be harmful for the mental and physical development of children.

Allowing more time on screen may be a matter of survival for many parents but they can still take steps to mitigate the screens' impact, they said.

Chowdhury Rehnuma Tabassum, medical officer of pediatric neurology and autism department at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, said, "We need to think about screen time, video games and computers. It's not healthy to let children spend too much of time in front of screens for video game."

In fact, World Health Organization (WHO) has officially classified video game addiction as a disease in 2018.

The doctor suggested that parents should use this crisis time to develop a deeper connection with their children.

"In a busy life, we get very little time to spend with our kids. So, this leisure time can be utilised by talking and playing with them," she said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Afternoon heavy rain sweeps over Dhaka

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka dwellers witnessed a brief but heavy rain coupled with thunder showers yesterday afternoon.

Met office recorded a wind speed of 74 kilometers per hour in the capital in the afternoon, said AKM Nazmul Haque, said an official at the weather office.

The met office earlier predicted that rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gust or squally wind was likely to occur over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Tangail, Faridpur, Madaripur, Cumilla, Noakhali and Sylhet during the next 6-8 hours starting at 3.30pm

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PRAYER TIMING APRIL 24

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:25 12:30 4:45 6:27 8:00
JAMAAT 5:00 1:15 5:00 6:31 8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

As players and spectators remain indoors amid the shutdown enforced to fight the coronavirus outbreak, Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in the capital has turned deserted. It, however, is being frequented by many unique visitors in the meantime. This photo of a red-vented bulbul perching on a wire there was taken a couple of days ago.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

JMI জেএমআই গ্রুপ ২৩ এপ্রিল ২০২০

দেশের সর্বস্তরের পেশাজীবী, শ্রমজীবী ও দেশ-বিদেশে অবস্থানরত ভাই-বোনদের প্রতি একটি মানবিক আবেদন

আসসালামুআলাইকুম।

আপনারা হতেই অবগত আছেন যে, জেএমআই গ্রুপ দেশের স্বাস্থ্যখাতের গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মেডিকেল ডিভিউসের একটি বিরাট অংশ সরবরাহ করে থাকে। বর্তমানে স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, কেন্দ্রীয় ঔষধাগার, বিভিন্ন সরকারি-বেসরকারি হাসপাতাল প্রতিদিনই আমাদের কাছে মাছ ও গোষ্ঠাসহ এই সমস্তের জরুরি পণ্য-সামগ্রী সরবরাহের অনুরোধ করে যাচ্ছে। আমরা সরকারের নির্দেশনার আলোকে এক মানবিক বিবেচনা ও সামাজিক দায়বদ্ধতার কারণে, আমাদের কর্মীদের বহু কষ্টে দেশ ও জাতির স্বার্থে সার্বক্ষণিকভাবে কাজে নিয়োজিত করছি। আমাদের অনেক কর্মকর্তা-কর্মচারীরা দুঃ-স্বারা থেকে চলাচলের অসুবিধাসহ, কেউ কেউ গ্রামে অবস্থান করার কারণে যে স্বল্প সংখ্যক কর্মী উপস্থিত আছেন তাদেরকে বহু কষ্ট করে উৎপাদনের ধারা অক্ষুণ্ণ রাখতে যাচ্ছে। আমাদের কর্মীরা দেশের স্বার্থে বহু কষ্ট স্বীকার করে কারখানা চকুরে অবস্থান করে বেয়ে না বেয়ে দিনরাত অমানুষিক পরিশ্রম করে স্বাস্থ্যখাতের চাহিদা মেটাওয়ার জন্য কাজ করে যাচ্ছে। এ বিষয়গুলো ও সার্ভিস সিকলের মানবিক বিবেচনার দাবি রাখে।

দেশের মানুষের স্বাস্থ্য সেবায় নিয়োজিত এই কঠিন সময়ের বীর স্বেচ্ছা ভক্তির নার্সিং এ বরসের সেবা খাতের সাথে যারা সম্পূর্ণ আপনাদের সকলের প্রতি আমার অনুরোধ, একটি স্বার্থহীন মনঃ গুণব চড়িয়েই যাচ্ছে। দয়া করে এসব গুণব কান দেবেন না, কারণ আমাদের চেয়ে আপনরাই আমাদের সম্পর্কে বেশি ভালো জানেন। আপনারা সাহসের সঙ্গে এ দুর্ভোগ মোকাবেলা করুন। আমরা জেএমআই গ্রুপ আপনাদের পাশে আছি এবং ভবিষ্যতেও থাকব ইনশাআল্লাহ।

পরিশেষে, সার্ভিস সিকলকে আবারও অনুরোধ করছি, দয়া করে আমাদের মনোবল চেপে দিবেন না। কারণ, মনোবল হারিয়ে যদি এই মুহুর্তে স্বাস্থ্যখাতকে আমরা বা আমাদের দিন-রাত পরিশ্রম করা কর্মীরা সহায়তা করতে না পারে তাহলে এই রাতে আমরা আরো পিছিয়ে যাবো; আর এই অপদকালীন সময়ে অবিচ্ছিন্ন হবে দেশ ও জাতি, যা কারোই কামা নহে। দয়া করে আমাদের গুণব আস্থা রাখুন। আমাদের ২১ বছরের এই সুনামকে অনিচ্ছাকৃত ভুল দিয়ে বিবেচনা করবেন না। বিভিন্ন অনলাইন এন্থিটিটি ও গণমাধ্যমকর্মী ভাই-বোনদের প্রতি অনুরোধ, প্রয়োজনে দেশের দুর্ভোগ কেটে যাওয়ার পর আমাদের কারখানা পরিদর্শন করেন এবং তত্ত্ববদ্ধ বিষয়টিসহ অন্য কোনো প্রকার অনিয়ম পাওয়া যায় কিনা খতিয়ে দেখুন। কারো দ্বারা প্ররোচিত হয়ে কোনো বিহীনিকর তথ্য প্রকাশ করা থেকে বিরত থাকবেন আশা করছি। ভাই আসুন, এই মুহুর্তে ঐক্যবদ্ধভাবে সশক্তে রক্ষা করি। আমরা জেএমআই গ্রুপ মানসম্মত পণ্য নিয়ে আপনাদের পাশে সবসময় থাকবো, ইনশাআল্লাহ। মহান রাবুলু আলামিন আমাদের সহায় হোন।

মোঃ আবদুর রাম্ভাক
ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক