

Ваіsнакн 13, 1427 BS

Your Right to Know









112



2,867,984 **Total cases**

Wobbling as the going gets tough

Critically under-resourced public health system failing to rise to the outbreak challenge

On April 14, a doctor at the surgery department of Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital sent The Daily Star a list of protective gear they were supplied that day.

Quoting the relevant entry, signed by the department's assistant registrar, the doctor said there were eight caps, 28 pieces of gloves, 10 masks and a half bottle of Hexisol

"This is the supply for a 30-hour shift. The department has 7-12 doctors and interns. We will be seeing 200-250 patients," the physician said that day, adding, "The masks were not standard N95 ones either.

Two days later, five doctors, four nurses and three ward helpers of that very department were found to be Covid-19 positive. Two more tested positive the next day.

The doctors suspect they contracted

the virus from one patient from Gazipur, who went to the department with volvulus (twisted bowels) on April 11. The woman needed an emergency surgery and the doctors dutifully performed it. Later, it was

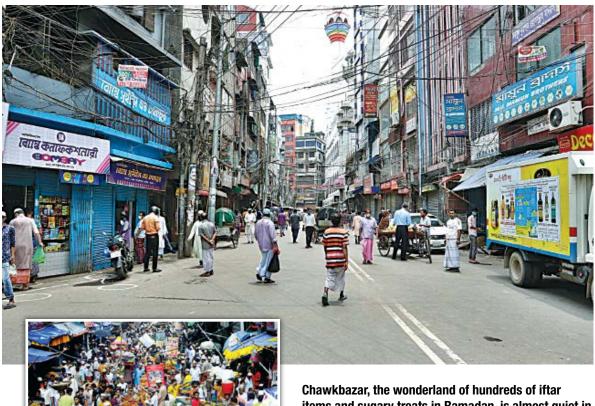
found she had been carrying the coronavirus. That one patient was all it took to infect so many health professionals, because they

did not have proper protection. The doctors are now fundraising to buy their own protective equipment, unwilling to take any more risks.

As the news spread among the community, other physicians started taking to social media with photos of their own flimsy protection gear. Aminul Mamun, an anesthesiologist at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) recently posted to Mohanagar General Hospital to treat coronavirus patients, sent photos of his "gloves".

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AGENCIES



items and sugary treats in Ramadan, is almost quiet in the absence of street vendors and tourists on the first day of Ramadan, due to the coronavirus restrictions. Last year, there was no room left on the street in Old Dhaka, inset.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Buzzing iftar bazaar now missing

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The historic iftar market in capital's Chawkbazar area remained almost empty on the first day of Ramadan amid shutdown for coronavirus.

People throng the centurial market every Ramadan to buy various iftar items that are unique in taste and shape, but not this time.

Around 1,000 makeshift stalls are usually set up to sell iftar items prepared from meat, vegetable, sweet, milk and other ingredients in the

In fact, some of the iftar items in the market can be traced back to the Mughal

However, on April 23 this year, the Ministry of Religious Affairs passed

BGMEA issues reopen timetable

RMG workers from some areas returning

Ignoring the risks of contracting and spreading the coronavirus, hundreds of garment factory workers left their villages yesterday on foot or jammed into whatever vehicle they could get to join work in Dhaka and its outskirts. The race to the cities began after a section of owners announced that

This has happened although the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) directed all of its members not to ask their workers, who are currently at their villages, to return to Dhaka until a concrete decision was taken about reopening of factories.

"To keep the economy running and considering the overall situation, the BGMEA will advise you on opening of factories," it said in a general directive to its members on Friday, reports UNB.

Mentioning that a zone-wise staggered approach will be adopted to open the factories in a limited capacity, the association advised asking only the workers who are living near the factories to join the factories. Besides, it called for not retrenching any worker on humanitarian

Meanwhile, scores of men and women were seen walking on Dhaka-Tangail highway for hours or hitchhiking to their workplaces since SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

WHO again warns about immunity

Says 'no evidence' infected are immunised; global death toll tops 200,000

The World Health Organization yesterday warned recovering from coronavirus may not protect people from reinfection as the death toll from the pandemic crossed

Governments across the world are struggling to limit the economic devastation unleashed by the virus, which has infected nearly 2.8 million people and left half of humanity under some form of

lockdown. The United Nations has joined world leaders in a push to speed up development of a vaccine, but effective treatments for COVID-19, the disease caused by

coronavirus, are still far off. But with signs the disease is peaking SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

COVID-19 HOSPITALS

Gasping for oxygen

Patients in critical condition suffer in the absence of central supply system

While the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) claims that providing oxygen to patients will not be a problem, patients and doctors beg to differ.

We have sufficient oxygen cylinders for coronavirus patients," said Additional Director Dr Nasima Sultana.

"At the upazila level, we have 10,394 cylinders. In divisional cities,

recovery

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Bangladesh appears to be the only country in the world where the Covid-19 death rate is higher than the recovery rate.

Death rate higher

than that of

Of the total 4,998 people infected with novel coronavirus until 2:30pm yesterday, 140 died and 113 recovered, according to statistics of the Directorate General of

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People of low-income group often can't afford to maintain social distancing and other coronavirus rules as they have no choice but to go to work with limited amount to spend on transport.

Home-Grown Test Kit

Gonoshasthaya gives samples for approval

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

In another step towards the extensive production of Covid-19 test kits in Bangladesh, Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK) yesterday handed over samples of the kit devised by its scientists to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and the US Centre for Disease Control for validation checks

Gonoshasthaya Kendra Trust

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30 doctors infected a day over last week Doctors' foundation says 345 physicians

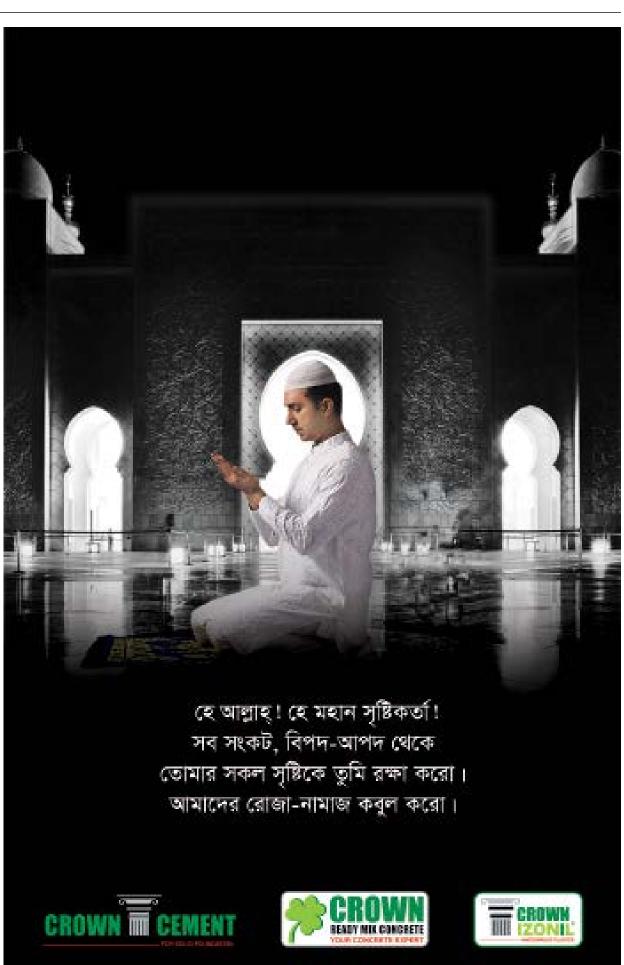
are now Covid-19 positive STAFF CORRESPONDENT On average, more than 30 doctors have tested positive for coronavirus

Foundation (BDF). As many as 345 doctors at government, private and specialised hospitals were infected with Covid-19 until 8:00pm yesterday, Nirupam Das, chief administrator of BDS, told The Daily Star.

daily in the last week, according to the records of Bangladesh Doctors

The number of infected doctors was 100 until April 17, he added. According to BDF, the main reason behind the high rate of infection

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Pentagon head pressured to reinstate captain of virus-hit carrier

AFP, Washington

US Defense Secretary Mark Esper was reviewing on Friday the results of an investigation into a major Covid-19 outbreak on an aircraft carrier, as pressure built to reinstate the warship's fired captain.

Esper has received a verbal update on the investigation into the outbreak on the USS Theodor Roosevelt from the Navy's top officials, and was awaiting a written report before the Roosevelt.

he makes any decision, Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said.

But news reports said Acting Navy Secretary James McPherson and Chief of Naval operations Admiral Michael Gilday had recommended that Brett Crozier, who was removed for publicly sounding the alarm over the outbreak, be reinstated.

And pressure built from members of Congress to restore Crozier back to

BGMEA issues reopen timetable

FROM PAGE 1

daybreak yesterday.

Social distancing, which is crucial in preventing the spread of coronavirus, was not maintained as they got on trucks, pickups and other passing vehicles.

This is the second time in a month that the workers had to scramble to their factories in Savar, Ashulia, Dhaka, Gazipur and Naraynganj for the same reasons.

In Mymensingh's Bhaluka and Gazipur's Sreepur upazilas, groups of men and women arrived yesterday mainly from villages in Sherpur, Jamalpur, Netrakona and Kishoreganj districts

Al Mahmud Adnan, in-charge of Bhoraduba Highway Police Outpost in Bhaluka, said the main rush started really early and fewer people were seen by midday.

"We are trying our best. We are urging them through loud speakers to maintain social distancing as they walk," he said.

Another officer told The Daily Star: "It is our duty to check the movement of vehicles, but it is saddening to see people walking on the road for hours."

Thirty-year-old garment worker Pranto Mia said he left his village in Netrakona's Mohanganj upazila for Bhaluka early in the morning. By 2:30pm, he spent about Tk 200 and was still about 15-km from his factory. He said he walked most of the time and got on passing vehicles when he

"We don't want to lose our job. I wish the management provided us with transport," garment worker Aysha Begum told our correspondent in Mymensingh.

Sub-inspector Mujibur Rahman of Mymensingh Sadar Police Station said he saw workers on the streets until the

There are some 49 garment factories in Bhaluka. Of them, 35 confirmed as of 4.00pm that they would open, said Noor Nabi, assistant superintendent of Industrial Police in Bhaluka.

Meanwhile, workers demonstrated in Kaliakoir and Sreepur upazilas demanding arrears and blockaded Dhaka-Tangail and Dhaka-Mymensingh highways.

Blot" to the representatives of the

two institutions at a programme at

Kendra

exact

from

the

approval,

Gonoshasthaya

The

which

positive

Nagar Hospital in the city.

final

would

the two testing authorities,

will be given by the

Directorate General of Drug

As no one from the

programme, GK would deliver the

sample kits to the drug authority today.

to Armed Forces Institute of Pathology.

Maj Gen Md Mahbubur Rahman said

they did not send any representative

as they found holding a programme

"inappropriate" given the current

the kit would be approved or not as

there are some protocols to follow.

He also said it's early to say whether

Zafrullah Chowdhury, founder

Samples of the kits will also be sent

Contacted, DGDA Director General

Administration (DGDA).

DGDA attended

feedbacks

Nearly 1,000 workers of Haesong Bd Ltd took to the street at Baroipara of Kaliakoir demanding three months

Police managed to disperse them around noon, said Rezaul Karim, inspector of Industrial Police-2 in

Long tailbacks of mostly trucks and lorries were seen on the highway, reports our Gazipur correspondent.

of ATS Workers Sweater demonstrated at Joina Bazar in Shreepur demanding arrears. Authorities of two factories in

Savar's Ashulia sacked over 1,100 workers citing Covid-19 fallout, according to labour leaders.

One of the factories, Sigma Fashions Ltd in Ashulia's Tajpur, sacked about 709 workers and said in a notice that all orders from international buyers were canceled.

Mamun, a sacked worker, said, "We do not accept the decision. We want to get back our job . The prime minister said no worker will be sacked.... We will have to starve."

The other factory, Aswad Composite Mills Ltd, in Kobirpur area sacked around 400 workers in the last couple of days, claimed workers.

Contacted, Alam Khan, assistant superintendent at Dhaka Industrial Police-1, said they were asking factory owners not to sack employees, but the workers kept reporting that they were being sacked, reports our correspondent in Savar.

Many garment and other factory workers were returning to Dhaka as crowds of people were seen on Paturia-Daulatdia river route and Dhaka-Aricha highway.

Many of the people in the crowd told our correspondents that the factories would open from today.

Traffic Police Inspector Rasal Arafath in Manikganj said the crowd of Dhaka-bound garment workers had been seen since Friday night.

Mohammad Hatem, vice president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the garment factories were reopening gradually. However, Hatem suggested that the workers in remote areas should not travel to the city.

He also said they would be able to

into production.

coronavirus.

patients in the country.

Covid-19 in five minutes.

Mohib Ullah Khondokar.

SARS coronavirus in 2003.

At present, Chinese test kits are

Bijon Kumar Sil, who led the team

that developed the kit, said the kit

pass muster in their internal tests,

adding that it would able to diagnose

The team also include Nihad Adnan,

Bijon was among the researchers

Raeed Jamiruddin, Firoz Ahmed and

who had developed a kit to diagnose

being used mostly to detect Covid-19

supply one lakh kits within

a few days after they go

at a time when Bangladesh

is in a dire need of testing

kits to test more people

and isolate the positive

cases - so far the best way

to prevent the spread of

The development comes



A policeman stops a biker on a street in Nayabazar of Old Dhaka yesterday to check if the rider had a valid reason to be out amid the restrictions imposed to slow the spread of coronavirus. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Wobbling as the going gets tough own soaps in the pockets of their lab On April 17, Heal

For a 12-hour shift, Aminul was given one set of flimsy disposable polythene gloves instead of nitrile or latex gloves. These polythene gloves are the types used by baristas in coffee shops.

His PPE too was of the thin material that disposable medical aprons are made of. In case a coronavirus patient sneezes or accidentally spits, the PPE might absorb it, exposing the skin to the deadly virus.

This is one of the 12,52,233 PPE units distributed by the government to doctors and other health workers, according to data disseminated by the Directorate General of Health Services

This correspondent then asked the doctor whether there could be crosscontamination from one patient to another with only one pair of disposable gloves. "There is a hundred percent chance of that," he said with

A quick survey was done by Brac University's James P Grant School of Public Health, on the perceptions of frontline workers regarding the crisis.

They had talked to a total of 60 respondents from 14 districts and 43 health facilities (including those which are dedicated coronavirus hospitals) and found that respondents said the PPE they received was inadequate to protect them. In addition, of the total workforce, 75 percent of the doctors and nurses received PPE. For the support staff, it is 40 percent.

More than a month into the crisis, how is it that the hospitals are still not adequately provided with tools essential to battle the pandemic?

The answer lies in the very dilapidated nature of the country's health sector

"One virus has completely broken down our health system. This is a wakeup call. How do we restructure our health system to respond?" asked Dr Mushtaque Chowdhury, vice chairperson of Brac.

DGHS's own "National Preparedness and Response Plan for Covid-19" created earlier last month put it bluntly.

"About 3 percent of Bangladesh's GDP is spent on health; out of which the government contribution is about 1.1 percent. In term(s) of dollar(s), the total health expenditure in the country is about \$12 per capita per annum, of which the public health expenditure is around \$4," states the document.

Four dollars, or Tk 344 approximately, less than the price of a restaurant meal, is what the government spends yearly on the health of each person in the

As a result, when reporters of this newspaper, including this correspondent, visited seven public hospitals last month during the second week of the pandemic in Bangladesh, they found nurses carrying their

among doctors and other healthcare

workers in Bangladesh are: "poor

quality" of personal protective

equipment (PPE) provided to doctors,

community transmission and patients

having

isolation and quarantine right after any

of their colleagues exhibit Covid-19

symptoms, keeping a scope to infect

the infected doctors are from hospitals

in Dhaka. Of them, 163 were from

government hospitals, 76 from private

hospitals while 20 from other healthcare

at hospitals in Mymensingh division

and 12 more in Chattogram division, it

doctors are from hospitals that are not

designated for Covid-19 treatment.

Patients hiding coronavirus symptoms

while receiving treatment may have

contributed largely to the transmission,

daily as people are hiding symptoms

of Covid-19," a doctor of Shaheed

Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital

over the quality of PPEs, especially masks,

have said that all government and

provided by the authorities concerned.

"We are at risk and the risk is growing

Doctors also have serious concerns

Senior doctors and healthcare experts

Meanwhile, 26 doctors were infected

The foundation says many infected

others, the organisation said.

Sometimes, doctors are not put in

According to the BDF tally, 255 of

coronavirus

concealing

symptoms.

service providers.

the doctors say.

said seeking anonymity.

coats, and doctors buying their own disposable masks. Gloves, PPE and N95 masks were nowhere in sight.

According to the Bangladesh Health Facility Survey 2017, this was the kind of healthcare system the pandemic has attacked: 47 percent of district and upazila facilities, and 85 percent of union-level facilities did not have alcohol-based disinfectants; 43 percent of district and upazila facilities and 72 percent of union level facilities did not have masks; 52 percent of district and upazila facilities and 77 percent of union-level facilities did not have

A quarter of district facilities and a third of union facilities did not even have soap. Only 12.5 percent of district and 4.8 percent of union facilities had eve protection.

It was only on March 19 this year, which is at the end of the second week of the coronavirus crisis in the country, that the DGHS announced through a press statement that it has distributed 6,940 units of PPE.

It has been more than a month since then and healthcare workers allege they are still not getting adequate PPE.

On the other hand, on March 26, the government went right ahead and instructed doctors and nurses to at least give primary healthcare to patients with Covid-19-like symptoms, even if they do not have protection. The order, however, was withdrawn almost immediately in face of criticism.

In fact, this delay was codified into the national Covid-19 response plan itself. The plan categorises the pandemic into four stages -- stages 1 and 2 are preparedness, stage 3 is containment, and stage 4 is mitigation.

In the "preparedness" phase, supplying hospitals with protection was not a part of the government's own plan. This step was to be taken afterwards, during the "containment" phase, when the virus had already spread through.

'Our preparedness happened later. It took us a while to react. Up until mid-March, we were all in a denial state saying that we have nothing to fear about. From the government, there was a minimum effort. In February, there were no measures. It was only in March, that we saw some measures," said Dr Fahmida Khatun, executive director of Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

This level of underpreparedness is also reflected in the provision of healthcare to patients. For the longest time, the healthcare

system has functioned out of the pockets of the general public, stated experts.

"In the last several years, the budgetary allocation for health has not gone above 1 percent. The finance ministry allocated Tk 250 crore to tackle the crisis, but it is still not enough," said

Kurmitola General Hospital and Mugda Medical. These hospitals include Lal Kuthi Hospital, Mohanagar General Hospital, Railway General Hospital and the DMCH's Burn and Plastic Surgery

do not have any ventilators yet.

"I am supposed to build a 5-bed ICU with 5 ventilators, but it has not been built vet. I do not know when it will be built. I have 18 coronavirus patients in my hospital and if they need ICU facilities, I will have to look for empty beds in Kurmitola hospital, or any of the others," said Dr Shamsul Karim, director of Lal Kuthi Hospital.

The director of Railway General Hospital, Dr Firoz Alamgir, had a similar story to tell. "This was never an inpatient facility to begin with. We had to start from scratch to build a 100bed hospital. Right now, there are no intensive care facilities, or ventilators. We can only take care of patients who do not need critical care.

Doctors from Mohanagar General Hospital also stated that they have no ventilators.

lungs of patients suffering from severe pulmonary stress or patients unable to breathe on their own anymore. For patients with the worst effects of the coronavirus infection, a ventilator offers the best chance of survival.

when a majority of the public facilities were not adequately prepared to even provide support for acute respiratory symptoms, when coronavirus outbreak

According to the National Health Facility Survey 2017, 30 percent of district and upazila facilities had no access to oxygen, and that number was 93 percent for union level facilities.

Almost none of the facilities had life-saving medication for patients with breathing difficulties like epinephrine or prednisolone. Less than half of districts, and none of the union-level

managed by patients privately. Now the healthcare system is suddenly trying to provide these services since the pandemic struck.

universal health coverage but have not done much about it," said Dr

"Our focus had been on public health, rather than facilities. As of yet we are not being able to feel the main pressure. When the number of cases is on the rise, then will be the actual trial. How much we can perform, can truly be seen then," he said.

On April 17, Health Minister Zahid Maleque addressed the public and listed a number of new hospitals to provide healthcare to coronavirus patients, in addition to Kuwait Maitree,

Unfortunately, at least three of them

Ventilators pump oxygen into the

But maybe ventilators are a far cry,

facilities had hydrocortisone injections. These always had to be bought and

"We have been talking about Mushtaque Chowdhury.

30 doctors infected a day over last week private hospitals across the country need doctors, of Asgar Ali Hospital in capital's

Buzzing iftar bazaar

Gonoshasthaya gives samples

FROM PAGE 1 trustee of GK, at the programme said, "We expect that the government

over the kits named "Rapid Dot would quickly approve the kit after the

Bijon Kumar Sil

validation.

FROM PAGE 1

situation.

congregation relating to iftar.

While this ban strictly relates to public events like iftar mahfil, the new norms of social distancing mean that this ban extends to home and private space as well.

As a result, this year there is no crowd around "Boro Baper Polay Khay" at Chawkbazar.

'Boro Baper Polay Khay" is a mixture of chickpeas, minced meat, potatoes, brains, flattened rice, egg, chicken, spices and ghee. The item used to be sold between Tk 350 and Tk 450 per kg and was one of the most popular iftar items in the locality.

Other famous items at Chawkbazar ifter market include beef and chicken roasts, mutton and chicken cutlets, keema roll, keema paratha, borhani and different types of kababs including Sito, Jali, Irani and Tikka

Mustakim Ahmed, a resident of Lalbagh, said, "It is our family tradition to break our fast with the iftar items from the market, but this year it is not possible due to coronavirus.

Let alone the Old Dhaka dwellers, people from other districts also came to the market to purchase iftar items, he

Along with Chawkbazar, almost all markets of iftar items in most parts of

a statement banning any form of the capital remained closed due to the government's restriction.

Barokatra, Chhotokatra, Imamganj and old part of the city also remained empty, said locals.

Moudud Hawladar, officer-in-charge of Chawkbazar Police Station, said they were strict to keep the traders away from selling iftar items to ensure social distancing.

The law enforcers talked to the traders in the area a few days back and asked them not to set up makeshift shops on the streets, the OC said, adding they were also announcing the restriction through loudspeakers.

To add to this, police were also restricting concrete shops from selling iftar items as that would not let social distancing be maintained properly.

Golam Mostafa, a trader in Ibrahimpur area who sells iftar items in a tin-shed shop, said, "I took preparation to sale iftar in a smaller scale but police imposed restriction. Now I don't know what I will do."

"I have been selling iftar item for the last 20 years, but this year I am in serious trouble due to the restriction,"

Another such trader at Ibrahimpur said he had made iftar items already and would sell those secretly as he would have to face huge loss otherwise.

to be brought under a central system as nearly 70 percent of healthcare services are provided by private hospitals. 25 infected BRB Hospital

At least 23 health care service providers, including 15 nurses, and two patients at BRB Hospital in capital's Panthapath were tested Covid-19 As a surgeon developed Covid-19

symptoms, his sample was sent to IEDCR for test on April 15. Two days later, IEDCR confirmed that the doctor has been tested positive. The doctor might have infected after he conducted a surgery on a patient

on April 12. The patient who had no symptoms of the virus was tested positive on April 20, said an official of the hospital. The surgery was conducted on the patient on humanitarian ground

official added. As part of contract tracing, around 50 others staffers and patients were tested later. Of them 25 were tested positive. The staffers found positive are in quarantine in the hospital. None of them has any symptom yet, the staffers

considering his condition, the hospital

The staffer said they were in dilemma as the high ups of the hospital were yet to take further steps. "We want the IEDCR to look into the issue," the official said.

50 staffers infected in Asgar Ali Hospital

At least 50 staffers, including 22

Gendaria were tested Covid-19 positive so far, according to Foundation for Doctors Safety and Responsibility.

Rahat Anwar, joint secretary of the organisation, said "We are very much concerned with the news that so many doctors and staffers of the private hospital were infected. As the hospital is still open, other doctors, staffers and patients are at high risk of Covid-19 infection.

An infected doctor yesterday said he worked at the hospital four days ago. "As I exhibited symptoms, I did test and was found infected," he told The Daily

Farah Nur, manager of the hospital, said she was unaware about infection among the doctors and staffers.

First doctor at Kurmitola General Hospital tested positive

A doctor working at Kurmitola General Hospital has tested Covid-19 positive on Friday. He is the first physician to be infected at the hospital dedicated for treating coronavirus patients.

"The doctor showed Covid-19 symptoms a couple of days ago. Samples were collected for test, and the report was released yesterday confirming that he was Covid-19 positive," said Dr Nirupam Das.

The doctor was receiving treatment at his home.

Contacted, a top official of the hospital confirmed that he was the first doctor at the hospital to be infected with the virus

WHO again warns

in the US and Europe, governments are starting to ease restrictions, weighing the need for economic recovery against cautions that lifting them too soon risks a second wave of infections.

The WHO yesterday warned that there is still no evidence that people who test positive for the new coronavirus and recover are immunised and protected against reinfection.

The warning came as some governments study measures such as immunity passports" or documents for those who have recovered as one way to get people back to work after weeks of economic shutdown. "There is currently no evidence

that people who have recovered from #COVID19 and have antibodies are protected from a second infection, WHO said in a statement. "People who assume that they are

immune to a second infection because they have received a positive test result may ignore public health advice," it said

On Friday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres asked for international organisations, world leaders and the private sector to join the effort to speed up development and distribution of a

Any vaccine should be safe, affordable and available to all, Guterres said at a virtual meeting, which was attended by the leaders of Germany and

Absent though were the leaders of China, where the virus first emerged late last year, and the United States, which has accused the WHO of not warning quickly enough about the original outbreak.

The spread of COVID-19 is increasing other medical risks as well with the WHO warning nearly 400,000 more people could die from malaria because of disruption to the supply of mosquito nets and medicines.

Saturday marked World Malaria Day, disease which the WHO said could kill around 770,000 this year, or "twice as much as in 2018". With more than four billion people

still on lockdown or stay-at-home orders, governments are debating how to lift restrictions without causing a spike in infections and how to revive economies battered by weeks of closure. The daily death toll in Western

countries seems to be falling, a sign

hopeful epidemiologists had been

looking for, but the WHO has warned that other nations are still in the early stages of the fight. Global COVID-19 deaths have climbed past 197,000, according to an AFP tally, but new reported cases

appear to have leveled off at about

80,000 a day. Death rate

FROM PAGE 1

Health Services (DGHS).

Experts blamed mismanagement in the treatment of patients and failure in engaging specialised doctors in the fight against the deadly virus for the poor recovery rate.

The country recorded its first novel coronavirus case on March 8. Within a few weeks, the number has seen a sharp According to DGHS data, the

on April 13 and that of death was 39. A total of 722 patients were undergoing treatment on that day.

The following day, the death toll went up to 46, surpassing the number of recovered patients -- 42

Since then, the number of deaths continues to go up. Yesterday, the death rate was 2.8 percent against the recovery rate of 2.2 percent.

Yesterday, the recovery rate in neighbouring India and Pakistan has been 22.24 percent and 23.1 percent respectively. The recovery rates in the USA, Italy, Spain, Turkey and France have been 11.9 percent, 31.3 percent, 42 percent, 20.7 percent and 27.2 percent respectively so far. These five countries have seen thousands of deaths from the virus, according to data from covid geobd.com.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh yesterday saw two more districts having Ćovid-19 patients. Of the country's 64 districts, the virus has now spread to 60.

Speaking at an online briefing, Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the DGHS, said nine more people died of Covid-19 in 24 hours till 2:30pm yesterday.

With the latest deaths, the death toll from the virus stood at 140. A total of 309 patients tested positive for novel coronavirus during the 24 hours, she added.

The total number of infected people n the country was 4,998.

Nasima said 3,337 samples were tested for Covid-19 across the country during this 24-hour. The DGHS official also said two

more laboratories in Savar and Kushtia started testing samples for Covid-19. Statistics from covid.geobd.com show that 30 people in each 10 lakh have so far been infected with the novel

Contacted, Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) of the DGHS, said the government did not fight the whole battle against the Covid-19 in an organised way from the very beginning.

coronavirus in the country.

"Had it taken measures in an organised way from the very beginning, the recovery rate would have been much higher," he said. Pointing out that the government

was arranging treatment at specialised

hospitals with doctors having medium-

level experience, Be-Nazir observed that it should involve experts in the process. Experienced doctors could have provided critical patients with better suggestions. Thus, the fatality rate

would have been reduced." He said such arrangements could be

made through videoconferencing.

CJ suspends limited court functions till Apr 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain yesterday suspended till April 27 his earlier decision to run court functions in a limited

Supreme Court (SC) Registrar General Md Ali Akbar issued two separate circulars to this effect yesterday, citing unavoidable reasons.

The chief justice however convened a full court meeting with judges of Appellate and High Court Divisions today. The meeting is scheduled for 11:30am through video conference, according to another circular issued by the SC registrar general.

Syed Mahmud Hossain on April 23 decided to operate functions of courts on a limited scale following demands from some lawyers, in order to hear and dispose of very urgent cases. This decision has now been suspended till April

The chief justice that day extended shutdown for courts across the country till May 5 due to ongoing outbreak of coronavirus. This decision will remain



WHEN BEING SAFE IS ALSO IN FASHION ... A family takes a rickshaw ride, dressed up in full protective gear -- gowns, headcaps and eyewear, and even the child is not left out. For the rickshaw-puller, however, a fabric mask is all that is in affordable range. The photo was taken from Motijheel yesterday.

RASHED SHUMON

No homecoming for frontline heroes Doctor couple being barred by

landlord, municipal mayor from returning home after Covid-19 recovery Tuhin Shubhra Adhikary

A couple -- both doctors working at Agailjhara Upazila in Barishal -recovered from coronavirus after taking treatment at hospitals for around 10 days.

But they are now facing a new problem.

They cannot return home in Gournadi upazila headquarters, as the house owner and local municipality mayor are opposing it, the couple

We were infected with Covid-19 while treating patients. But, now we can't return home. We're feeling very helpless," the husband, a medical officer of Agailjhara Upazila Health Complex, told The Daily Star.

For the couple, returning home becomes more imperative as they have stayed in quarantine for 14 days.

The wife, a medical officer at Paisarhat Sub Health Center in the upazila, tested Covid-19 positive on April 13 and her husband tested positive three

At first, they took treatment at Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, and later at Kurmitola General Hospital in the capital.

"Last night [Friday], we got fresh test results and came to know that we tested negative. We were told by hospital authorities that we would be released today," the husband said.

When he called his house owner on Friday night to let him know that they were returning home as they have recovered, he was told that he and his wife would be allowed to return if upazila nirbahi officer and Gournadi municipality mayor give permission.

UNO Israt Jahan gave her nod when he contacted her, the doctor said.

"But, when I called Gournadi Mayor Harisur Rahman, he told us not to go home as people may panic and he [mayor] would not take any responsibility for an untoward situation," he said. The mayor asked them to stay in Agailjhara where they work, he said.

He then talked to Agailjhara UNO and Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer and they asked the duo to stay at Agailjhara Upazila Rest

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

288 Bangladeshis repatriated from prisons of Oman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Oman has sent back some 288 Bangladeshi workers who were imprisoned or in deportation camps, on various grounds, including not having valid documents.

"Carrying the Bangladeshi citizens, a special flight of Oman Air landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Friday night," Group Captain AHM Touhid-ul Ahsan, director of the airport, told journalists.

Last month, Oman sent back 180 Bangladesh nationals amid the outbreak of Covid-19. According to media reports, the Oman government has taken steps to repatriate foreign prisoners following the outbreak, under a special amnesty of the Sultan of the country.

The returnee workers received Tk 5,000 on arrival at the airport, in accordance with government decision taken early this month.

Besides, the expatriate welfare ministry decided to provide loans -- from Tk 5 lakh to Tk 7 lakh -- upon return of the jobless expatriate workers amid the pandemic to help them pursue economic activities especially in the agriculture sector.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen earlier told the media that a few Middle Eastern countries urged Dhaka to take back "our undocumented workers including inmates". The foreign minister said his office would try everything

possible to prevent any major setback involving "our migrant workers".

Bangladesh, he said, was ready to receive its nationals in principle but Dhaka informed the Middle Eastern countries concerned that "we would take them back in phases for quarantine preparedness" and "facilities are being developed for their accommodation".

On Wednesday, the foreign minister at a video conference with his counterparts of OIC executive committee member states, urged the OIC countries to give utmost importance to the issue of job retention of domestic and resident migrant

Momen also urged humanitarian organisations to advocate for migrant workers job retention in the OIC countries.

Market Monitoring 'Do it with help from the army'

SC lawyer says in legal notice to govt STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday sent a legal notice to the government requesting it to monitor the prices of daily essentials with assistance from armed forces, in order to keep the market stable during the oly month of Ramadan.

Advocate Moniruzzaman Lincon served the legal notice through email to the secretaries to the commerce ministry and Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), asking them to take necessary steps to this effect within five days.

He said in the legal notice that the prices of everyday commodities have reportedly hiked, although the government has said there is no shortage of goods.

Most people of the country are facing problems in purchasing daily essentials during the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, he said in the legal notice.

The lawyer said in the legal notice that army personnel are now in the field and they are working very well to tackle the coronavirus crisis in the

Drug Smuggling

New Rab DG Mamun warns of stern action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Newly-appointed Director General of Rab Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun yesterday warned of stern action and "not giving any concessions" if anyone is found carrying out narcotics smuggling or militant activities during the period of coronavirus.

"We are trying to get vehicles carrying daily necessities cross through highways very quickly. A group of drug dealers are trying to smuggle narcotics taking the chance, but I would like to warn them that they will not be exempted and will face maximum punishment," the DG said yesterday.

He made the remarks while addressing reporters through video conference from the Rapid Action Battalion headquarters regarding the force's initiatives during the month of Ramadan.

The elite force has continued their crime-prevention activities during the coronavirus situation, and arrested around 1,382 people on charges of different criminal activities between March 8 to April 24, said the DG.

He said that they are also working to suppress militant activities, and some 32 militants were arrested between The DG said they have operated 358 mobile courts so

far, and a total of 2,240 people have been fined Tk 3.4 crore for violating social distancing protocol. Eighteen companies have been sealed and nine people

were imprisoned for illegally importing low-quality testing kits and selling unhygienic masks and gloves in the capital's Uttara, Gulshan, Mohammadpur and Babubazar areas, he said, adding that a fine of Tk 62 lakh has also been realised.

Mamun said the retail market will also be monitored during Ramadan to curb undue price hike.

DG Mamun further said, "We have to be careful during the crisis so that no rumors can be spread." He suggested verifying the information before sharing anything on social media.

"We have already arrested 11 people for spreading rumors on social media and have kept 50 other sites under monitoring," said Mamun.

Grameen Shakti giving food to 1,750 families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As part of its humanitarian efforts, Grameen Shakti head office staff has started providing food assistance to some 1,750 underprivileged families across the country. Initially, a "Food

Distribution Program" targeted 1,000 families in 10 districts, with rice, lentils, potato, soybean oil and soap being distributed to each of the families, says a press release Between April 3 and

April 14, it reached 800 of the targeted families in 8 districts -- Tangail, Jamalpur, Dinajpur, Kishoreganj, Shariatpur, Madaripur, Faridpur and Nilphamari.

They are set to provide the rest of the relief in Netrakona and

Furthermore, Grameen Shakti started a new initiative to provide food for three months to an additional 750 underprivileged families, the release adds.

Due to lockdown measures taken to tackle the coronavirus crisis, underprivileged lowincome people have lost their means of livelihood and are facing a terrible food crisis, the release further says.

Legal aid for those who can't afford it

Govt helps resolve 4.3 lakh disputes free of cost

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Shah Alam and Jahanara got married seven years back in Cumilla, and they were living peacefully with their two children despite struggling with finances. But as time went on frequent disputes among family members ultimately led to the two getting divorced.

Witnessing the conflict, after the divorce, neighbours sent Jahanara to the district legal aid office in Cumilla for a settlement. After a discussion, the office sent a notice to Shah and a family member of his, but they did not respond.

Six months later, Shah applied to the legal aid office to restore his conjugal relationship with Jahanara. The office took necessary legal initiatives and called Shah, his family members and Jahanara to the office in February this year and finally resolved everything through mutual understanding and compromise.

A marriage registrar was called, and the two got married again, in presence of representatives from USAID, International Consortium for Court Excellence and Democracy International. The couple is doing well now, according to a recent

study report of the law ministry.

Like Shah and Jahanara, thousands of low-income citizens are getting legal aid free of cost from National Legal Aid and Services Organisation (NLASO) under the law ministry.

The government has provided legal aid to 4,29,723 helpless individuals in the last six years -- since 2014-2015 fiscal till February, 2020 -- bearing all costs. A total of 1,02,296 cases related to such disputes were disposed of through NLASO during the same period.

NLASO operates through its district legal aid offices across the country.

Besides, 19,011 people have received legal aid at the Supreme Court through Supreme Court Legal Aid Committee (SCLAC) during the period, the report said.

SCLAC has provided legal assistance to 216 underprivileged prisoners who had been suffering in SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

CORONAVIRUS IMPACT 32 fellowships

offered for students of 9 public univs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SAVE Youth Bangladesh, a Dhaka Universitybased youth platform, is offering 32 students from nine public universities fellowships to conduct social research on different aspects including impact of Covid-19 in the country.

Funded by UKaid, the programme will jointly be implemented by SAVE Youth Bangladesh and International Foundation for Electoral Systems, says a press release.

Fellows will also work on erasing misleading information, rumours and other issues over coronavirus and its socioeconomic impact, Avnul Islam, moderator of the project and an associate professor of DU, told The

Daily Star. The 32 students are from Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, Barishal University, Islamic University, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, BSMSTU, JKKNIU and Jagannath University.

Prices of essentials shoot up in Ctg

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

after Shab-e-barat.

With Ramadan already underway, prices of essentials continue to soar in Chattogram kitchen markets -- at a time when hundreds of thousands of people are struggling with reduced income due to the restrictions brought about by the coronavirus outbreak.

Shoppers at the port city alleged that retailers are charging high prices at will, taking advantage of weak market monitoring. Prices of edible oil, lentil, ginger, onion, ginger, garlic,

chickpeas, chicken and palm and soybean oils have seen a sharp rise over the last two weeks. However, prices of items like sugar, green chili and cucumber were still stable, giving some comforts to

During the first week of the month, prices of lentil saw a hike by Tk 15 per kilogramme due to sudden rise in demand, the price increased by Tk 10-15 per kilo again

Traders in Kajir Dewry Bazar and Karnaphuli CDA market were found selling Australian red lentils at Tk 90-95 a kg, which was Tk 78-80 per kilogramme just two weeks A five-litre can of soybean oil saw a price hike of at least

Tk 25 in the last two weeks. Prices of different quality of chickpeas also rose by Tk 10-20 while traders were selling it for Tk 72-80 a kg. "We face this every year during Ramadan," said homemaker Saju Ara Begum. "On top of that, with the

complicated now. Meanwhile, prices of ginger saw an exorbitant hike in the last two weeks, reaching Tk 280-300 per kg against the previous rate of Tk 220 a kg.

restriction in place for coronavirus, the situation is more

According to Mohammad Suman, a retailer at Karnaphuli CDA market, sudden price hike in the wholesale hub at Khatunganj is to be blamed.

He also said the supply of ginger is quite low in the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

settle for a street corner nearby.



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

No homecoming

"How long can we live there when all our belongings are at our home? So, I called my house owner again today [Saturday] to ask when I will be allowed to return home,

"But he [house owner] took a strong position and said you can only return when situation becomes normal in the country," he added.

When he contacted Mayor Harisur yesterday, he once again said, "You can return home but I would not take any responsibility if anything untoward occurs."

Contacted yesterday, Harisur Rahman said he is not the authority to grant permission whether someone can return home or not; rather it is the responsibility of the local

Claiming that the UNO locked down the area, Harisur said, "If local administration, taking their responsibility, allows them to return, that's great. I can't allow or bar

When this correspondent mentioned that the house owner said the mayor's permission was needed, he said, "I don't know what the house owner said. Who am I to give permission?"

Asked whether he has any responsibility, Harisur said, "I won't take any responsibility regarding this."

"If they can return after talking to local administration, good for them. But if they return saying that the mayor has given permission and any untoward incident happens, I would not take responsibility," he said.

Contacted, Gournadi Upazila Nirbahi Officer Israt Jahan said the doctor couple would be allowed to return home if they can show papers that they recovered from Covid-19. Asked about resistance from the house owner, the UNO said they would ensure the couple's security.

Dr Nirupam Das, chief administration of Bangladesh Doctors Foundation, said, "Such harassment of doctors, who are now on the frontline in the fight against Covid-19, is very unfortunate. We want the authorities concerned to take prompt action in this regard."

At least 324 doctors have been infected with Covid-19 so far and six of them have recovered, Dr Das told The Daily Star.



Riajuddin Bazar kitchen market's new home at the nearby Railway Station parking lot. Not only shops are spaced out to ensure social distancing, law enforcers have also put up signs to generate awareness among shoppers. This photo was taken on Friday afternoon.

Prices of

Contacted, Md Idris, a wholesaler at Khatunganj, said the wholesale price of ginger went up around two weeks back due to supply shortage caused by the disruption in delivery of imported ginger from Chattogram

Wholesale price of onions -- both local and from Myanmar -- also went said, "I find it strange that these two

result, the retail price also rose by Tk 20-25 a kg and reached Tk 60-65 per kilo yesterday.

Iftar items such as green chili and cucumber were being sold at Tk 30 and Tk 40 per kg at kitchen markets

Shahajahan Khan, a service holder,

up by Tk 20 a kg at Khatunganj. As a items are still within the reach of consumers.'

Meanwhile, Reajuddin Bazar, one of the largest and major kitchen markets in port city, was relocated to the nearby Chattogram Railway Station parking lot on Friday to ensure social distancing.

The initiative was taken by Chattogram Metropolitan Police.

18-bed ICU set up at Barishal SBMCH

Our Correspondent, Barishal

From now on, coronavirus patients will get ICU support at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) as an 18-bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU) with ventilators has been set up at its isolation unit.

There will be a doctor and a nurse at the ICU in each shift; a panel of four doctors and 30 nurses will work at the unit," said the hospital's Director Dr Bakir Hosssin.

Four intern doctors, a number of nurses and hospital staff have tested positive for Covid-19 in the last four days. Around 150 intern doctors of the hospital have been quarantined since Tuesday, as all hostels of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College (SBMC) were locked down, as is Medicine unit-3 of the hospital.

According to SBMCH authorities, 31 coronavirus patients were treated at the hospital till yesterday morning.

Legal aid

FROM PAGE 3

different jails for over five to ten years across the country, SCLAC sources said.

A total of 64,785 disadvantaged prisoners received legal support during the six-year period, the report added. Moreover, NLASO has collected Tk 35.2 crore by settling

27,070 cases out of court and awarded the money to victims of the cases. Meanwhile, the law ministry has been running a

national helpline (16430) to provide legal aid to poor people, particularly labourers, free of cost, even during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. A total of 83,918 people have received legal assistance through the helpline since its launch in 2016, according to the report.

Masuda Yeasmin, assistant director of NLASO, told The Daily Star that the toll-free helpline is open 24/7.

She said many helpless people from across the country communicate with NLASO through the helpline every day. The organisation then tries to solve their problems either via district-level offices or instantly over phone.

Taking care of the neglected

CEO Mithun Das Kabbo.

It now runs two schools in the Bede and Harijan pallis of Munshiganj's Sirajdikhan upazila and Natore municipality.

It has so far supported around 4,000 transgender, Bede, Harijan, tribal, differently-abled persons, fishermen and labourers' families in 13 districts, including Nilphamari, Natore, Munshiganj, Cox's Bazar, Bhola, and Barishal, during this time. In Dhaka, it provided cooked meals to more than 2,000 rickshaw pullers.

Gift for Good is running with the financial assistance from non-profits and organisations such as ASA, Hope for Bangladesh, and Food Bank Network Bangladesh, and local youth organisations, Mithun said.

Around 200 local volunteers in the 13 districts have been working to provide support for these communities since March

like symptoms, died yesterday.

10:30am, the doctor added.

to the health on Friday night.

health and family planning officer.

the KMCH.

vesterday.

in Habiganj.

The volunteers wear personal protective staples, if able to raise sufficient funds.

upazila was admitted to the hospital on

Friday night as he was suffering from loose

motions and respiratory problems, said Dr

Shailendranath Biswas, spokesperson of

was shifted to the hospital's isolation

ward where she breathed her last around

after suffering from respiratory problems

at Ramu Upazila Health Complex early

Chattogram became sick at his in-law's

house in Ramu on Friday. He was admitted

Dr Nobel Kumar Barua, Ramu upazila

As her condition deteriorated, she

In Cox's Bazar, a 22-year-old youth died

The youth from Satkania upazila of

He died around 4:00am yesterday, said

In Sylhet, a 30-year-old-man died

from Covid-19-like symptoms at Shaheed

Shamsuddin Ahmed Hospital yesterday.

The deceased was from a Nizampur villager

The man was admitted to Habiganj

Sadar Hospital on April 21 with respiratory

problems. As his condition worsened,

he was shifted to Shaheed Shamsuddin

The feared impact of coronavirus on Tunisia's

fragile public health system has provoked

a flurry of innovation from robotics to

digitalisation efforts to bolster the North

The government has even turned to

African country's pandemic response.

will aid virus fight

Six more die after showing

The child from Bagerhat's Kachua Rahman Uzzal.

equipment and maintain distancing during relief distribution. Alongside food, they also provide hand sanitisers and masks to the vulnerable

groups. "To continue providing support for families in this crisis, we regularly raise awareness about our work and campaign on social media to raise funds," he said.

A member of the Harijan community in Natore municipality said the relief supplies they received from the local administration were inadequate. So, such support from volunteer organisations came as a welcome relief for them.

Tashnuva Anan Shishir, a member of Gift for Good and a transgender rights activist, said many transgender persons of various brothels in Jashore and Mongla are crying out for help during this time. However, the initiative is unable to reach out to them due to a lack of funds.

Mithun added that they would soon also provide floating sex workers with food

Ahmed Hospital on the same day, said Habiganj Civil Surgeon Dr Mokhlesur

In Laxmipur, a 45-year-old housewife

died of coronavirus-like symptoms at

Kamolnagar upazila yesterday.

Laxmipur Sadar Hospital.

Health Complex.

FROM PAGE 12

India plans

bought is not significant.

her home in Charjangalia village of

health complex with fever and respiratory

problems on Friday. As her condition

deteriorated, doctors there referred her to

her to Laxmipur Sadar Hospital. Rather,

they took her home where she passed away

The Chinese Embassy in New Delhi has called

A senior Indian government source who

is involved in policymaking told Reuters

that New Delhi will try to approve any

investment proposal in a non-sensitive

sector within 15 days when the stake being

students for help, asking the engineering

school in Sousse, south of the capital Tunis,

to task its students with designing a locally

made ventilator as their end-of-year project.

ill Covid-19 patients, but as in many countries,

Tunisia's poorly equipped hospitals lack

sufficient numbers of the devices.

Ventilators are crucial for treating critically

the new screening policy discriminatory.

Noakhali contributed to this report.

But her family members did not shift

She was admitted to Kamolnagar upazila

5 private

University of Bangladesh ranked 301.

The rankings are the

only global performance table that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable **Development Goals** (SDGs). It use carefully calibrated indicators to provide comprehensive and balanced comparisons across three broad areas: research, outreach and

The second edition included 766 universities from 85 countries.

The list is once again led by New Zealand's University of Auckland, while three Australian universities complete the rest of the top four: University of Sydney, Western Sydney University and La Trobe University.

Japan is the mostrepresented nation in the table with 63 institutions, followed by Russia's 47 and Turkey's 37.

Charity dogs

FROM PAGE 12 be able to screen hundreds of people very, very rapidly so we know who needs to be tested and isolated," Claire Guest, founder and chief executive of Medical Detection Dogs, told AFP.

yesterday morning, said Rezaul Karim Rajib, "We have evidence that medical officer of Kamolnagar Upazila dogs can detect bacterias and other diseases, so we Our correspondents from Faridpur, believe that taking this Khulna, Cox's Bazar, Moulvibazar and project forward will make a huge difference to the ability to control Covid-19 spread."

Guest is working with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and Durham University in northeast England -- the same team that recently collaborated to show dogs can be trained to detect malaria.

Trump FROM PAGE 12

disinfectant product be administered into the body through injection, ingestion or any other route," it said in a tweet.

have been encouraging people for some time to wash their hands thoroughly with soap or to use hand sanitizer to help stop the spread of the virus. At the Thursday briefing,

Health professionals

Bryan unveiled findings that the coronavirus appears to weaken more quickly when exposed to sunlight, heat and humidity. That message stuck with Trump, who, while conceding that he is not a doctor, has used his metaphorical megaphone as president to talk up treatments and put a positive spin on his administration's handling of the outbreak.

"I do think that disinfectant on the hands could have a very good effect," he said on Friday, continuing with the theme.

No settlement without Bangladesh's

power resources.

talks with Pakistan because it is an independent country and thus free to have a dialogue with anyone it wishes.

The report says that the point Bangabandhu made repeatedly, at times in a raised voice, was that Bangladesh is an independent country without any string pulled from outside.

He further said that Pakistan held that Bangladesh was dependent on New Delhi's wishes and that the surrender of Pakistan Army before the joint command of Indian and Muktibahini forces was a fiction.

Bangabandhu said, "It is not fiction but a hard fact.'

He said that he knew that Bhutto wanted to exchange the PoWs with the Bangalees in Pakistan. Soldiers were never exchanged with civilians, "I am willing to exchange the Biharis in Bangladesh with the Bangalees in Pakistan," the Bangladesh Prime Minister added.

INDIA-BANGLADESH WATER TALKS OPEN

Bangladesh and India reaches complete understanding today in all issues in the first round of ministerlevel talks on flood control, water and

In a two-hour long talk, the representatives of the two countries discuss the sphere of mutual cooperation in the fields of flood control, flood forecasting, flood and cyclone warning and irrigation of common rivers. The topic of power resources also features in the discussion.

INDO-PAK TALKS BEGIN

The emissaries of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and President Bhutto today hold a discussion for three and half hours on various aspects of India-Pakistan relations in a bid to frame an agenda for a summit meeting between the two countries.

SUGGESTION INVITED FOR THE **DRAFT CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution Drafting Committee has so far considered the clauses relating to fundamental rights and the fundamental principles of state policy

for inclusion in the draft.

Interested people have been requested to submit their suggestions to the committee for consideration. These suggestions should reach the secretary of the Committee by May 8, 1972 ABANDONED PROPERTY

OWNERS ASKED TO SUBMIT VALID DOCUMENTS

Dhaka Nagar Committee has asked the lawful owners of abandoned properties to come forward with valid documents to establish their right of ownership.

The persons concerned have been advised to submit applications to the sub-divisional officer, Sadar South, within three days.

SOURCES: April 27, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and

Stigma making it worse

the battle against Covid-19.

due to [fear of] stigma. Our approach to coronavirus patients is supposed to be informed by empathy, but instead we stigmatise them. It is very dangerous as a single person is putting the whole community and subsequently the country at risk," Benazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) of the DGHS, told The Daily Star.

He said from sample collection to burial the whole communication strategy should be reviewed as the existing system is faulty.

"If people are confident that they would not be stigmatised, the situation will improve and risk will lessen," the public health expert suggested.

Till yesterday, the number of coronavirus positive cases in the country rose to 4,689 with 131 deaths. The magnitude of the problem can

be measured from an statement of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

don't conceal the disease as you

made all kinds of arrangements for "People are hiding their disease the treatment and we've also taken across news reports about people steps to protect those who will provide treatment to the Covid-19 When contacted, Director General

of Directorate General of Health Services Prof Abul Kalam Azad said, "We are reviewing the communication strategy and changing it constantly. We are requesting people not to hide their infections.' According to a news report last

month by a Sri Lankan media outlet, anyone found hiding symptoms of the novel coronavirus in the island nation would be handed a six-month jail term, as there were individuals who had avoided going into quarantine centres after arriving from virusaffected countries. Mekhala Sarkar,

professor of psychiatry at National Institute of Mental Health, said right information and proper knowledge can defeat fear.

"If the thought of isolation or The PM on April 7 said, "Please quarantine is scaring them, we surely need to spread awareness and clarity

may infect others if you hide it. regarding isolation and quarantine, doctors, who are on the front line of It's not a matter of shame... we've which will remove the fear," she said. It is unfortunate, she said, to come

> escaping quarantine facilities. Take another example of how a suspected corona patient was socially

> stigmatised. A woman said she, along with her husband, had been suffering from severe flu-like symptoms from March 18 and they went into self-isolation

and had gone into home quarantine. "We contacted the IEDCR for testing and when they came to test, the building's committee secretary called us up and was very rude to us, accusing us of hiding our situation,'

she said. "We told him that we had nothing to let them know until the IEDCR would give us our test results."

"When the results came, we sent a message saying that we are negative, but he sent the caretaker to our house to let us know that he would not believe it until he saw the reports himself. He demanded the reports. As residents of this building we were happy to oblige and share the medical

Office of the Muktagacha Pourashava Disrtict: Mymensingh.



Memo No.: Mukta:Poura/Prokow:2020/094

Date: 23/04/2020

2nd Corrigendum for e-Tender No-03/2019-20

This is notify to all concern that e-Tender Notice No- 03/2019-20 vide memo no Mukta/Poura/Prokow:2020/064, Date:05/03/2020. Has been amended as follows due to unavoidable circumstances (General Holiday declared by Government due to corona crisis.

Tender Package No. ID No.		Subject	Old Value	New Value		
		Tender Document Selling date & Time	04-05-2020,15:00 PM	18-05-2020,15:00 PM		
433665 3/AF/MUKT/MF/01/ 2019	Tender Security Submission Last date & Time	05-05-2020 13:00 PM	19-05-2020 13:00 PM			
	Tender Closing date & Time	05-05-2020 14:00 PM	19-05-2020 14:00 PM			
		Tender Opening date & Time	05-05-2020 14:00 PM	19-05-2020 14:00 PM		

All Others documents, terms & conditions will remain unchanged. This amended notice will be treated as the parts & parcel of the tender document.

> Sd-(Md. Mukhlesur Rahman) Executive Engineer Muktagacha Pourashava District-Mymensingh.

World Health Organization Bangladesh

Tunisia hopes novel methods

World Health Organization (WHO) invites applications from the interested and eligible candidates for the following position under Special Service Agreement:

 Data and Information System Associate (ROSTER), SSA6 For further details on the terms of reference and deadline for applications, please

visit our website: https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/employment and

http://www.searo.who.int/bangladesh/about/employment/en/ Qualified female candidates are highly encouraged to apply

KN95 masks from China unusable

Says Canada AFP, Montreal

The Canadian government said Friday that one million KN95 masks imported from China did not meet its strict standards and so could not be distributed to frontline health workers amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Public Health The Agency of Canada "has identified approximately one million KN95 masks as non-compliant with specifications for healthcare settings," a spokesman said.

"These items were not distributed to provinces and territories for frontline health care response, and are being subsequently assessed for use in non-healthcare settings,' he said.

Chinese model KN95 masks are similar to N95 masks, as well as the FFP2 model used in Europe.



People hold signs during a protest against the coronavirus shutdown in front of State Capitol in Madison, Wisconsin, on Friday. Gyms, hair salons and tattoo parlors had a green light to reopen in the US state of Georgia on Friday as the death toll from the coronavirus pandemic soared past 50,000 in the US.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

LATEST UPDATES

•••••

DEATH TOLL NEARS 200,000

The death toll from the novel coronavirus pandemic rose to 197,871 yesterday, according to a tally from Johns Hopkins University yesterday at 1200GMT. More than 2,826,904 declared cases have been registered in 193 countries and territories. In US, the death toll stood at 51,949. Italy is the next most-affected country with 25,969 deaths. It is followed by Spain with 22,524 fatalities, France with 22,279 deaths and Britain with 19,567 deaths.

51,000 DEATHS IN US

The death toll in the United States surpassed 51,000 amid more than 890,000 cases. But the number of daily deaths in New York has gone down, with 422 reported on Friday the lowest since April 1. Meanwhile, China reported it has not had a new death from the virus in 10 days.

NO DEATHS IN CHINA FOR 10 DAYS

China has reported no new deaths from the coronavirus in the last ten days, as attention has turned to northern provinces bordering Russia. The vast majority of new cases in the country have been imported, according to

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

India, Pakistan ease curbs

Allow limited opening of small businesses amid lockdown

REUTERS, New Delhi/Islamabad

The Indian government allowed a limited reopening of shops in neighbourhoods and residential areas from Saturday, more than a month after the nation went into a lockdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus, officials said.

Late on Friday the federal home ministry said retail shops could start operations with the staff number reduced by 50%, while also requiring appropriate social distancing, wearing of masks and gloves during work.

The sale of liquor and other non-essential items will continue to be prohibited, and no shops in large market places, multi-brand and single-brand malls will be allowed to open for business till May

India has reported 24,506 cases of the coronavirus and 775 deaths, with authorities setting up new teams to focus on compliance and implementation of lockdown measures.

In neighbouring Pakistan, the government extended the nationwide lockdown till May 9. However, it is switching to a so-called "smart lockdown" from Saturday for targeted tracking and tracing of cases while allowing some industrial and commercial activities to begin under safety

"Isolating these cases and their contacts will improve our ability to contain the disease alongside allowing the economy to function and people to get employment," said Asad Umar, infections, including 253 deaths.



Pakistan's planning minister, who also oversees the coronavirus national response body.

"This upcoming month of Ramadan will be decisive," he said, emphasising that adhering to the government's virus containment measures will enable the further re-starting of parts of the economy.

Prayer congregations for Ramadan have also been allowed in Pakistan with the exception of the southern province of Sindh, where doctors have warned the virus could spread rapidly.

In Karachi, the capital of Sindh and Pakistan's largest city, most mosques were closed to the public for the Ramadan evening prayer gatherings, which began on Friday.

As of Saturday, Pakistan reported 11,940 cases of

More than a lung disease

NY doctors try new ways as patients show new signs

As the novel coronavirus spread through New York City in late March, doctors at Mount Sinai Hospital noticed something strange happening to patients' blood.

Signs of blood thickening and clotting were being detected in different organs by doctors from different specialties. This would turn out to be one of the alarming ways the virus ravages the body, as doctors there and elsewhere were starting to

At Mount Sinai, nephrologists noticed kidney dialysis catheters getting plugged with clots. Pulmonologists monitoring COVID-19 patients on mechanical ventilators could see portions of lungs were oddly bloodless. Neurosurgeons confronted a surge in their usual caseload of strokes due to blood clots, the age of victims skewing younger, with at least half testing positive for the virus.

"It's very striking how much this disease causes clots to form," Dr J Mocco, a Mount Sinai neurosurgeon, said in an interview, describing how some doctors think COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, is more than a lung disease.

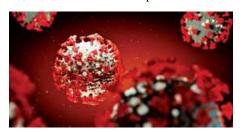
In some cases, Mocco said, a stroke was a young patient's first symptom of COVID-19.

As colleagues from various specialties pooled their observations, they developed a new treatment protocol. Patients now receive high doses of a blood-thinning drug even before any evidence of clotting

"Maybe, just maybe, if you prevent the

clotting, you can make the disease less severe," said Dr David Reich, the hospital president. The new protocol will not be used on certain high-risk patients because blood thinners can lead to bleeding in the brain and other organs.

In the three weeks beginning mid-March, Mocco saw 32 stroke patients with large blood blockages in the brain, double the usual number for that period.



Five were unusually young, under age 49, with no obvious risk factors for strokes, which is crazy," he said. "Very, very atypical." The youngest was only 31.

At least half of the 32 patients would test positive for COVID-19, Mocco said.

As their wards began to overflow with COVID-19 patients, the Mount Sinai doctors read papers describing similar findings from doctors in China's Hubei province and other hard-hit areas, and discussed them with their peers in phone calls and webinars.

The American Society of Hematology, which has also noted the clotting, says in its guidance to physicians that the benefits of the blood-thinning therapy for COVID-19 patients not already showing signs of clotting are "currently unknown.



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Gasping for oxygen guards to call the nurses again several patients get between six to 10 litres patients get between six to 10 litres

cylinders, and in Kuwait Maitree Hospital, there are 123 cylinders," she said, adding that even though there is no central oxygen supply in these hospitals, there would be no problem.

However, healthcare workers and patients alike are finding this to be a major problem.

A central oxygen supply means having a dedicated place in the hospital where oxygen is stored and supplied to all patient beds, using lines in the wall. There are staffers who monitor how much oxygen the storage chamber has and make sure that patients are not out of oxygen.

Doctors said the problem with cylinders is that they need to be constantly monitored by doctors or nurses to see if there is enough left or if it has been properly refilled.

This was proving to be an issue in coronavirus-dedicated hospitals because of acute mismanagement and manpower shortage, while also increasing the chances of a patient dying.

Bikash Saha was already in need of serious medical attention when he was admitted to Kurmitola General Hospital on April 18. He had been referred to Kurmitola from a hospital in Khanpur, Narayanganj.

He started having difficulty breathing around midnight, and his wife could not manage to get oxygen for him until three hours later. The family, however, claimed the cylinder may not have been working.

Anirban Saha, son of the patient, said, "There were no doctors or nurses at the ward. They were stationed elsewhere, but nowhere near the ward. There was no way to contact them because attendants cannot go out of the wards themselves. The only way to call the nurses is through the Ansar men guarding the entrance to the floor. My mother was at the hospital as my father's attendant, and she asked the guards several times to call a nurse, but they did not pay any heed."

The nurses finally came and hooked him up to a cylinder and left again. However, Anirban claimed his father had told him that the cylinder was not working. "He had received oxygen earlier during the day and he felt better after taking it. This time the oxygen was not helping him. He still kept having breathing difficulty and kept asking us to call the nurses to check his oxygen."

everything will be okay and we need to have patience," he claimed.

"Around 6:00am, the nurses came to see my father, but my father had died by then.

Even before the nurses came, my father's fingers and toes were turning blue. He took four or five large breaths and went still," Anirban said.

Similarly, Snigdha Farhana Surovi claimed her father died because he did not get oxygen, the lack of which led to cardiac pain. This incident happened around 12 hours after Bikash Saha died at the same hospital.

Her father, Sohel Rana, had chronic kidney disease and has a pacemaker in his heart. He was admitted on April 17 with the need of emergency dialysis.

"Around 5:00pm on April 19, my mother noticed that my father's oxygen cylinder was empty. She tried to call the nurses but failed to do so for more than one and half hours. My father had developed intense chest pains by then," claimed Surovi.

"Since there is no central oxygen supply like in private hospitals, we have to run after nurses to get oxygen, and there is no direct way to call a nurse from the ward," she said.

"When the nurses finally came and provided him with oxygen, that cylinder too emptied very quickly. After that my mother went to call the nurses again and was able to manage another cylinder only after a similar time interval," she said.

But the chest pain that began while Surovi's mother searched for oxygen, persisted, and he expired later that night. "He was shifted to the ICU at 11:00pm that day. Not a single doctor visited my father when he was taken to the ICU. Around 3:30am, his chest pain and breathing worsened and while my mother pleaded the guards to bring a doctor, nobody came to visit him and he died. It was only a whole hour after his death that a ward assistant dropped by the ICU to see why my mother was crying."

An oxygen cylinder contains 2000 litres of oxygen, said Rubel Ahmed Babu, proprietor of Next Care Surgical, a surgical supply shop on Topkhana Road.

"How a long a canister lasts depend on how much oxygen is being given. A minimum of 3 litres per minute has to be given," he said. Doctors at Kurmitola General Anirban's mother went to ask the Hospital interviewed by this arrived yet.

outside of medical colleges, there times, but nobody came to see them. patients get between six to 10 litres are 13,745 cylinders. In Kurmitola "The guards told my mother that since" per minute. This means a 2000-litre General Hospital, there are 450 my father has been given oxygen, cylinder lasts between 3.5 to 5.5 hours depending on the patient.

None of the three doctors interviewed agreed to be named because a government directive restricts them from speaking to the

They stated that with the kind of patient load they have, oxygen cylinders are emptying out quicker and that empty cylinders at a time of need is something that they are having to contend with. In addition, the entire staff of the

hospital has been divided into three groups, and while one group works, the other stays in quarantine. This means the hospital is running with a third of its staff, and it is impossible to monitor which patient's cylinder is emptying when.

The director of KGH could not be

reached over phone. Other hospitals dedicated to treatment of coronavirus patients do not have central oxygen supply facilities either.

While Dr Shehab Uddin, the superintendent of Kuwait Maitree Hospital, claimed that 123 canisters for the 128 patients currently admitted is enough, the director of Railway General Hospital Dr Firoz Alamgir said that this just means he cannot currently provide critical care.

"I can manage with oxygen cylinders, but I can only take patients who are medium-risk. If their condition deteriorates, I need to refer them to other hospitals with ICUs," said Dr Alamgir.

Director of Lal Kuthi Hospital, Dr Shamsul Karim, also said that the hospital has no central oxygen supply and will be dependent on cylinders.

"I cannot imagine running a hospital without a central oxygen supply. This is mandatory," said Dr ShagufaAnwar, chief of Business Development at United Hospital Ltd.

"Cylinders have a limit on how much oxygen can be provided for patients. With the cylinders, I cannot give concentrated oxygen at an increased force to critical patients. Being able to do this means I can delay putting my patient on a ventilator," she said.

Besides, they can go empty at crucial moments and then they have to be refilled by an oxygen supplier outside of the hospital, she added

অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী

Dr Nasrin Sultana of DGHS said that 3,500 more oxygen cylinders are being imported but they have not

গণপ্রজাতস্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

প্রকল্প পরিচালকের কার্য্যালয়

কর্মেল মালেক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও ৫০০ শব্যা বিশিস্ট হাসপাতাল ছাপন শীর্ঘক প্রকল্প, মানিকগঞ্জ

স্মারকন্য-সিএমএমসি ও ৫০০ বেড/প্রকল্প/মানিকপঞ্জ/২০১৯/১৪৮

বিশিস্ট হাসপাতাল স্থাপন শীর্ষক প্রকল্প, মানিকগঞ্জ এর ২০১৯-২০২০ ইং আর্থিক বংসারের জন্য নিমুলিখিত মেতিকেল যন্ত্রপাতি, এমএসআর সাময়ি, রাসারনিক ও বইপত্র সামন্ত্রিকী সরবরাহের উদ্দেশ্যে প্রকল মেডিকেল মন্তুপাকি, এমএসআর সামন্ত্রি, রাসায়নিক ও বইপত্র সামন্ত্রিকী সরবরাহকারী ঠিকানারী রচিষ্ঠান/ আধাসরবারী/ শাস্তরশাসিক প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে উনুক্ত দরপত্র আহবান করা হ'ল ।

١.	মন্ত্রনালয়,বিভাগ	শাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রনা	লয় ডিজিংসা শিকাও সাকা।	स्वर्गात विवयन				
2	সংস্থা সাধ্যহক সন্তার নাম ও বিকানা		1					
•	ব্যক্তেট ও অর্গের উৎস	প্রকল্প পরিচালক, কর্মেল মালেক মেত্রিক্যাল কলেজ ও ৫০০ শয়্যা বিশিস্ট হাসপাতাল ছাপন শীর্ষক প্রকল্প, মানিকগঞ্জ জিওবি (উন্নয়ন), প্রকল্পের নিজস্ব অর্থায়েন মোতাবেক ।						
8	সংগ্রহক সন্থা ও সাধ্বহকারীর নাম, পদবী ও	জিবাব (জ্বাংশ), শ্রক্তের লাল্ডব কর্বারণ মোতাবেক । ভাঃ খাদ মোহান্দ্রল আরিফ, প্রবল্প পরিচালক, বর্ণেল মালেক মেজিকাল কলেজ ও ৫০০ শয়্যা বিশিন্ট হাসপাতাল স্থাপন						
0	व्यवा	তাঃ খন মোহাখল আন্তক, অকল্প শান্তলক, কলেল মানেক মোককালে কলেল ও ৫০০ শতা। খাশক হানশাকাল ছাল শীৰ্ষক প্ৰকল্প, মানিকপঞ্জ						
¢	দরপরের পর্যতি	ভিনুত দবপর পর্যতি (বটিএম)						
6	দরপর কাজের বিবরদী	উন্তে বরণার পরতে (বাস্থান) উন্তে বরণারের মাধ্যমে মেডিকেল যম্মণাতি, এমএসআর সাময়ি, রাসারনিক ও বইণার সাময়িকী ক্রয়						
9	দরদাতার যোগ্যতা	সরকারী/ আবাসরকারী/ খারতুশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠান/উন্নয়ন প্রকল্পের সংশ্রিষ্ট মালামাল সরবরাহের অভি						
	Adding Markot	ট্রতলাইসেল, ভাটরেন্নিট্রেশন এবং দিনদাধার সহ আরকর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র থাকতে হইবে।						
b	দরপত্র সিভিউল সংগ্রহের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	পত্রিকার বিশ্বপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিশ হতে ১৮/০৫/২০২০ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত ক্রমিকনং-০৯ এ বর্নিত কার্য্যালয় হইতে সিহি						
		করা যাবে বিকাশ ২,৩০ মিঃ পর্যশত (সরকারী ছুটির দিন ব্যাতীত) ।						
>	দরপত্র সিঠিউল প্রান্তির স্থান	পরিচালকের কার্য্যালয়,কেন্দ্রিয়	পরিচালকের কার্যালয়,কেন্দ্রিয় উচ্চলাগর, তেঁজগাঁও, ঢাকা ও হিসাব শাখা, জর দওর ।					
20	হরপর জনা/দাখিলের স্থান	পরিচালকের কার্যালয়,কেন্দ্রিয় উফরাণার, তেঁজপাঁও, চাকা ও প্রকল্প পরিচালক, কর্মেল মালেক মেডিকটেল কলেজ ও						
		৫০০ শফা বিশিস্ট হাসপাতাল	৫০০ শহা বিশিস্ট হাসপাতাল স্থাপন শীৰ্ষক প্ৰকল্প, মানিকণঞ্জ কাৰ্যালয়ে বঞ্চিত্ৰ দৱপত্ৰ বাস্ত্ৰ ।					
22	প্রিটেভার সভার সময়,তারিখ ও স্থান	০০/০৫/২০২০ ইং ভারিখ সর	ল ১১,০০টার প্রকল্প পরিচাল	কের কার্য্যালয়, কর্ণেল মালেক মেডিকাাল কলেজ ও ৫০০				
	242 242 242 242 242 242	শয়্যা বিশিষ্ট হাসপাতাল স্থাপন	শীর্ষক প্রকল্প, মানিকগঞ্জ।					
24	দরশর দাখিদের শেষ করিব ও সময়	১৯/০৪/২০২০ইং সকাল ৯,০০ ঘটিকা হইছে বেলা ১২,০০ ঘটিকা ।						
70	দরণর বান্ধ খোলার ভরিথ ও সমর	১৯/০৫/২০২০ইংবেলা ২,৩০ ঘটিকার প্রকল্প পরিচালকের কার্ব্যালয়, কর্পেল মালেক মেডিক্যাল কলেজ ও ৫০০ শ্যা বিশিষ্ট হাসপাতাল স্থাপন শীর্ষক প্রকল্প, মানিকগঞ্জ (সংক্রিম) দর্বতাতাগণের সামনে যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন)।						
38	দরপত্র সিভিউল সংগ্রহের পর্যত	নিদাখাক্ষরকারীর অনুকুলে নিমুবর্ণিত হারে ট্রেজারী চালানের মাধ্যমে কোতনং-১/২৭১১/০০০০/২০৬৬ তে সোনার্গ						
				দের মূলকণি স্বমা দিয়ে দরশত্র সিতিউল ক্রর করা বাবে ।				
20	দরপত্র ও নিরাপন্তা জামানতের পরিমান	দরপর জামানত ৪-সে কোন	and the street and the street and					
		(ফেরত যোগ্য) দরগরের সাচ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০%	েপ্রদান করতে হরে । নিরাপ 6 হারে অর্থ নিরাপন্তা জামানং	খোদবকারীর অনুকূলে নিনুলিখিত হারে টাকার পে অর্জ রা ভাষানতঃ-নির্বাচিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুটিখাদরের পূচ র হিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্জার/ব্যাংক ড্রাকটের মাধ্য শবে কেরত যোগঃ ।				
26	সংবৃদ্ধিত ক্ষমতা	(ফেরত যোগ্ট) দরপরের সাচ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০% উল্লেখিত দগুরের অনুকুলে জম	া প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ 6 হারে অর্থ নিরাপন্তা জামানং 1 দিতে হবে । চুক্তির মেতান	হা ভামানতঃ-নিৰ্বাচিত অভিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুজিখাকরের পূচ চহিসেবে বাংক গারান্টি/পে-অর্ভার/বাংক ড্রাকটের মাধ্য পবে কেরত যোগ্ড ।				
26	সংবৃদ্ধিক ক্ষমতা কারের বিবলী ঃ	(ফেরত যোগ্ট) দরপরের সাচ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০% উল্লেখিত দগুরের অনুকুলে জম	া প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ 6 হারে অর্থ নিরাপন্তা জামানং 1 দিতে হবে । চুক্তির মেতান	রা ভামানতঃ-নির্বাচিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুক্তিখাকরের পূং হ হিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্জার/ব্যাংক ব্রাকটের মাধ্য				
26 29 व्यालगर		(ফেরত যোগ্ট) দরপরের সাচ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০% উল্লেখিত দগুরের অনুকুলে জম	া প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ ই হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । চুক্তির মেরান । টেডিরেকে যে কোন সহপর বা	হা ভামানতঃ-নিৰ্বাচিত অভিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুক্তিখাকরের পূচ চহিসেৰে বাংক গারাকি/পে-অর্ভার/খাংক ড্রাফটের মাধ্য পবে কেরত যোগ্ড।				
۶۹	কাজের বিবরনী ঃ দরপক্রের নাম	(ফেরত যোগ্) পরণাত্তর সাং সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দগুরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃপক কোন কারন দর্শানো ব	থেপান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ হারে অর্থ নিরাপন্তা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । চুক্তির মেরাদ টেতিরেকে যে কোন দরপার বা 	হা ভামানতঃ-নির্বাচিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুক্তিখাকরের পূচ চহিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্তার/খ্যাংক ড্রাফটের মধ্য প্রেফ ক্ষেত্রত থোগাঃ। সকল পরপত্র গ্রহনবা বাভিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন				
১৭ গ্রুপনং	কাজের বিবরদী ঃ দরপক্রের নাম GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01	(ফেরত যোগ্য) পরণারের সাচ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দগুরের অনুকুলে জম কর্তুপক কোন কারন দর্শানো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০	থ প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ হারে অর্থ দিরাপপ্তা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । ফুক্তির মেরান । য়াভিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র বা নিভিউলের মূল্য ক্রে,০০০.০০	হা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুক্তিসাক্ষরের পূর্ হ হিসেবে বাংক গাারন্টি/পে-অর্জার/বাংক ড্রাফটের মাধ্য প্রে কেরত যোগ্য । সকল দরপুর গ্রহনবা ব্যক্তিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য				
১৭ গ্রুপনং ০১	कारका विकामी । महलादात नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-02	(ফেরত যোগ্ট) পরণরের সাল সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারন দর্শানো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০	থেপান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ হারে অর্থ নিরাপন্তা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । চুক্তির মেরাদ টেতিরেকে যে কোন দরপার বা 	হা ভামানতঃ-নির্বাচিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুজিযাক্ষরের পূর্ব ইংসিবে বাংক গাারন্দি/পে-অর্জার/বাংক ফ্রাফটের মাধ্য শবে কেরত থোপ্ট । সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা বাজিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সর্বাহ্য মোজাবেক				
১৭ গ্রুপনং ৩১ ৩২	कारका निकामी । महाभारता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH-01	(ফেরত যোগ্ট) পরণরের সাল সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারন দর্শানো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০	া প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ বার অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । চুক্তির মেরাদ । ।চিত্রেকে যে কোন নরপার বা চিত্তিইকার মূল্য ৫,০০০.০০ ৫,০০০.০০	হা ভাষাদতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠাদের সাথে চুচিত্রাক্ষরের পূর্ছ হ হিসেবে ব্যাংক গাারাকি/পে-অর্জার/ব্যাংক ফ্রাকটের মাধ্য শবে কেরত যোগ্ড । সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা ব্যতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য দরণার মোতাবেক ্রী-				
১৭ প্রপদং ৩১ ৩২	कारका निकामी । मतभारता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02	(ফেরড যোগ্ট) পরণরের সাচ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কার্চ্পক কোন কারন দর্শামো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০	া প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানত । নিতে হবে । মুক্তির মেরান । ।চিতে হবে । মুক্তির মেরান । ।চিতিইসের মূল্য ৫,০০০.০০ ৫,০০০.০০ ৫,০০০.০০	হা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুচিত্রাক্ষরের পূর্ব হ হিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাকটের মাধ্য শয়ে ক্ষেত্রত ঘোণ্ড । সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা বার্তিক করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সরবার নােতাবেক ই-				
১৭ গ্রুপনং ৩১ ৩২ ৩৩	कारका विकामी । माभारका नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03	(ফেরড যোগ্ট) পরণরের সাচ্ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকুলে জম কর্তৃণক কোন করন দর্শানো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ৩০,০০,০০০/০০ ২৪,০০,০০০/০০ ২৪,০০,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । ইন্ডিন মেরান । ভিরেকে যে কোন সরপার বা সিভিউলের মূল্য ক্র্তিত্তত্ত্ত্ত্ ক্রতত্ত্ত্ত্ত্ত্ ক্রতত্ত্ত্ত্ত্	ল্লা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুচ্চিখান্সরে পূর্বে হিসেবে ব্যাকে গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্তার/ব্যাকে ড্রাকটের মাধ্য সংস্কা করণর গ্রহনবা ব্যক্তিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সর্বাদ্ধর মোভাবেক ই- ই-				
১৭ গ্রাপনং ০১ ০২ ০৩ ০৪	कारका विकामी । मालपात नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDM-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01	(ফেরড যোগ্য) পরণরের সাল সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃপক কোন কারন সর্গানো ব নরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হৈ বার অর্থ নিরাপন্তা জামানহ । দিতে হবে । ফুক্তির মেরান । র্যান্ডিরেকে যে কোন দরপর বা নিভিউলের মূল্য ক্র্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০	ল্লা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুচ্চিখাকরের পূর্ব হ হিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাক্টি/পে-অর্তার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফটের মাধ্য শ্যে ক্ষেত্রত যোগ্ড । সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা বার্তিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষম করেন মন্তব্য সরণার মোভাবেক -ই- -ই-				
১৭ গ্রুপন্ ০১ ০২ ০৩ ০৪ ০৫ ০৬	कारका विकामी । मालभारता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDM-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDC-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01	(ফেরড যোগ্য) পরণরের সাল সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০% উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারন সর্শানো ব সরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ ই হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ টি হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ টিকেরক যে কোন নরপার বা হিনিটিউলের মূল্য ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০	হা ভামানতঃ-নিৰ্বাচিত প্ৰতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুচ্চিমাক্ষরের পূর্বে হাকে পারাকি/পে-অর্জার/বাাকে ব্লাকটের মধ্যে শবে কেরত যোগ্য । সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা বাজিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সরপার মোতাবেক ই- ই- ই- ই-				
১৭ এলপনং ০১ ০২ ০৩ ০৪ ০৫ ০৬ ০৬	नास्त्र निकामी । मत्रभावता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDM-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDC-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDBJ-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01	(ফেরড যোগ্ড) পরণরের সাল সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃপক্ষ জোন কারন সর্শানো ব সরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ৪০,০০০/০০ ৬০,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ ই হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ টি হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ টিটেরকে যে কোন নরপার বা হিন্তিউলের মূল্য ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০	হা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুক্তিবান্ধরের প্র হ হিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ব্লাকটের মাধ্য শবে ক্ষেত্রত ঘোণ্ড । সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা বার্তিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সরবা সরবা সরবা সরবা নাত্র- -ট্র- -ট্র- -ট্র- -ট্র- -ট্র- -ট্র-				
১৭ গ্রুপন্ ০১ ০২ ০৩ ০৪ ০৫ ০৬	कारका विकामी । मालभारता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDM-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDC-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01	(ফেরড যোগ্ড) পরণরের সাচে সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ জিল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কার্চ্পক কোন কারম দর্শামো ব সরপের জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২,০০,০০০/০০ ২,০০,০০০/০০ ৪০,০০০/০০ ৪০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ ই হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ টি হারে অর্থ নিরাপদ্রা জামানহ টিটেরকে যে কোন নরপার বা হিন্তিউলের মূল্য ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০ ক্রেত্ত,০০০	হা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুক্তিবান্ধরের প্র হ হিসেবে ব্যাংক গাারাকি/পে-অর্ভার/ব্যাংক ব্লাকটের মধ্যে শবে ক্ষেত্রত থোপ্ড। সকল বরণার গ্রহনবা বার্তিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সরপার মোহাবেক -ঐ- -ঐ- -ঐ- -ঐ- -ঐ- -ঐ- -ঐ- -ঐ				
১৭ এলপনং ০১ ০২ ০৩ ০৪ ০৫ ০৬ ০৬	नास्त्र निकामी । मत्रभावता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDM-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDC-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDBJ-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01	(ফেরত যোগ্য) পরণরের সাচ্ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকুলে জম কার্চ্পক কোন কারম দর্শামো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৩,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২,০০,০০০/০০ ২,০০,০০০/০০ ১০,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হারে অর্থ নিরাপপ্রা জারান্য । দিতে হবে । ইন্ডিন মেরান ক্রিন্তের বে কোন সরপার বা ক্রিন্তের ক্রেনে স্বর্থা ক্রিন্তের ক্রেনে স্বর্থা ক্রিন্তের ক্রেনে স্বর্থা ক্রিন্তের ক্রেনে স্বর্থা ক্রিন্তের স্বর্থা ক্রিন্তের পার্যানিক প্রকিটরমেন্ট	হা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুজিপাক্ষরের পূর্ব হিসেবে ব্যাংক গ্যারাকি/পে-অর্থার/ব্যাংক ব্রাফটের মাধ্য শয়ে ক্ষেত্রত যোগ্য । সকল করপরা রাহনবা ব্যক্তিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষম করেন মস্তব্য সর্বাদ্ধর মোজাবেক ই-				
১৭ এলপনং ০১ ০২ ০৩ ০৪ ০৫ ০৬ ০৬	नास्त्र निकामी । मत्रभावता नाम GDT-02,Packege- CMMCH-01 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 02 GDT-03,Packege- CMMCH- 03 GDM-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDC-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01 GDBJ-01,Packege- CMMCH- 01	(ফেরত যোগ্য) পরণরের সাচ্ সরবরাহ কৃত মালামালের ১০ উল্লেখিত দপ্তরের অনুকূলে জম কর্তৃণক কোন করেন দর্শামো ব দরপর জামানতের পরিমান ৬,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২০,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ২৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০,০০০/০০ ১৫,০০০/০০	র প্রদান করতে হবে । নিরাপ হ হারে অর্থ নিরাপপ্র জারান্ত্র । দিতে হবে । ইন্ডিন মেরান ব কিন্তিইলের মূল্য কি,০০০.০০ কি,০০০.০০ কি,০০০.০০ কি,০০০.০০ ১,০০০.০০ ১,০০০.০০ কারের পার্বাদিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট	হা ভামানতঃ-দিব্যতিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে চুজিসাক্ষরের প্র হাসেবে বাাংক গারাকি/পে-অর্থার/বাাংক ব্লাফটের মাধ্য শয়ে ক্ষেত্রত যোগ্য । সকল করপরা রাহনবা বাজিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষন করেন মন্তব্য সরপরা মোহাবেক ্নী- — ্নী- — — — — — — — — — — — — —				
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দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত শর্তাবলী প্রযোজ্য ।

কর্মেদ মালেক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও ৫০০ শহ্যা বিশিক্ট হাসপাতাল স্থাপন শীর্ষক প্রকল্প,মনিকণঞ্জ

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DHAKA SUNDAY APRIL 26, 2020, BAISHAKH 13, 1427 BS 🧿 starbusiness@thedailystar.net

TAMING CORONAVIRUS RAMPAGE

Time for MFS providers to shine



STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The coronavirus pandemic has proved a stroke of luck for mobile financial service providers as people are increasingly opting for digital payment in a bid to steer clear of the health risks the lethal pathogen poses, experts said

The expansion of MFS in recent times will also help the government advance a step closer to a cashless society, they said at a virtual discussion on 'Digital Payment Solutions during Coronavirus Pandemic', organised by The Daily Star yesterday.

"The coronavirus pandemic has given a strong message to all that there remains scope to embrace the digital financial tools to run the economy under any circumstances," said Mustafa Jabbar, posts and telecommunication minister.

Banks hardly run their financial activities in rural backwaters, but the MFS providers have brought the underprivileged people of these territories to the formal financial sector, he said.

"A difficult situation would have been created if we had not taken adequate preparations to widen the base of the mobile financial services on time."

Factories in the export-oriented industries

should be allowed to reopen gradually

for the sake of the economy, said business

They called for a quick decision in this

regard, if necessary, by forming sector-wise

taskforce, according to a statement from the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of

In a discussion organised by the FBCCI

Bangladesh

in Dhaka, the leaders from Bangladesh

Garment Manufacturers and Exporters

Manufacturers and Exporters Association,

and other chambers and trade bodies said

the industrial units should be opened

Bangladesh's rivals like China, Vietnam,

gradually considering the lives

livelihoods of millions of workers.



now make the government's fight against director of Dutch-Bangla Bank. coronavirus easier.

"We have already brought the workers of the garment sector under the MFS platform. The necessity of traditional banking has already diminished as we have entered a digital era.

required soon due to the rapid expansion of digital banking and the strong base of the MFS, Jabbar added.

"Economic activities should remain vibrant during the ongoing shutdown such that the wheel of the economy keeps moving," said Tanvir Ahmed Mishuk, managing director of Nagad, an MFS provider of the Bangladesh Post Office and a private entity.

The benefits of the stimulus package offered by the government should reach the marginalised people, including farmers, and small entrepreneurs, he said.

Half the country's population has been benefitted by financial inclusion and efforts should remain underway to bring the rest on board, he said, adding that the ongoing measures taken by the MFS providers will deepen financial inclusion

The popularity of MFS has increased significantly in the last one month as the pandemic has forced people from all walks of life to take the service, said Kamal Quadir, chief executive officer of bKash, a leading MFS provider.

But the volume of transaction plunged 28 per cent at one point as the central bank reduced the extent of banking operations.

The Bangladesh Bank has recently increased the banking hours to four hours from two/three hours, which has helped boost MFS transactions gradually.

If the MFS agents cannot deposit or withdraw money from banks smoothly, they will be unable to run the service properly, Quadir added.

bKash, the country's largest MFS

India and Cambodia have already opened

their export-oriented industrial sector,

they said, while welcoming Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina for announcing a stimulus

prime minister on private industry and

investment, echoed the views. He, however,

said the factories should be opened

carefully and by following the health and

Countries like Germany and France have

restarted their production lines, he said,

adding that Bangladesh should follow suit

said they have been working from the very

beginning with the finance and commerce

ministries, Prime Minister's Office and

Bangladesh Bank on how to offset the

FBCCI President Sheikh Fazle Fahim

through discussion with the FBCCI.

Salman F Rahman, adviser to the

package for the sector.

safety measures.

provider, has 225,000 agents and 60,000 digital e-KYC centres across the

April 6 to April 25 to help Prime Minister's Office. disburse funds from the government's

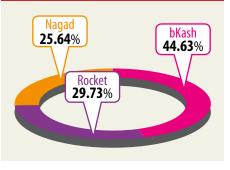
Factories need to be opened soon, but in phases

The strong foundation of MFS will said Abul Kashem Md Shirin, managing

Some 16 lakh MFS accountholders in the garment sector used to receive their wages through the digital platform earlier, but the pandemic has played a role in expanding the service further

Clients usually withdraw Tk 7,000 crore The banks' cash counters will not be via cash machines of DBBL per month, but Rocket, the bank's MFS platform, witnesses a total transaction of Tk 10,000 crore a

Share of MFS accounts opened in Apr 6-21



"This is a very good sign. But we should ensure that clients can also use the money to purchase goods and pay their house rents through the MFS platform."

The government should take measures to this end, Shirin added.

'Social distancing cannot be maintained among the economically vulnerable people if we fail to give them social protection," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The government should prepare a list of vulnerable people to offer them the required support with cash and food.

As distributing food among them will create a risk of virus infection, the government could start a programme to provide cash support to them during the ongoing lockdown, and MFS providers can offer support in this regard, Hussain added.

Previously, only 5 per cent of the electricity bills were paid through digital platforms, but the ratio has now reached MFS operators opened 60 per cent, said Abul Kalam Azad, former after receiving their products. This means 30 lakh new accounts from principal coordinator for SDG affairs at the delivery persons have to receive cash."

stimulus post-coronavirus period. MFS cash-out transactions through their MFS accounts, package of Tk 5,000 crore for should be brought down as part of our which will help create a full-fledged export-oriented industries, journey towards a cashless society.

Initiatives should be taken to offer trade licences to small businesses through the digital tools, Azad added.

The coronavirus pandemic is leaving a positive impact on widening the digital payment services as people now try to avoid cash transaction as a health precaution, said Rahel Ahmed, managing director of

Nagad can open 1-2 million accounts a day, said Mohammad Aminul Haque, the MFS provider's chief financial officer.

"So, we can help disburse funds quickly from the government's stimulus package."

Nagad can also support in developing an eco-system for e-money to promote the country's digital financial programme as it has the adequate technical capability as well as the experience of handling a huge amount of transactions every day, Haque

Many workers in different sectors, as well as a good number of general people, have just started using MFS to settle their transactions as part of the social distancing measure to fight the coronavirus, said Sheikh Monirul Islam, chief operating officer of bKash.

'We are also taking awareness campaigns to protect our users from fraudulence."

As the owners of the export-oriented industrial units will soon start paying salaries from the government's stimulus package, the law enforcement agencies should help the MFS agents run their outlets in the areas put under lockdown.

If the owners of grocery shops, who are yet to manage trade licences, are allowed to use the point of sale (PoS) terminals, transaction through e-money will increase

"The authorities concerned should take measures to this end as getting trade licences is hard in our country," Islam

SSL Wireless had taken an initiative to deliver groceries to clients even before the lockdown was imposed, said its Chief Operating Officer Ashish Chakraborty.

There has been a trust deficit for the settlement of e-commerce transactions. In most cases, clients make payments

The MFS providers will play a big role "We have to play a bigger role in the this regard such that clients can settle the cashless society, Chakraborty added.

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director

of Policy Research Institute, also gave his

opinion in favour of opening the factories,

but he called for taking appropriate safety

measures. Mahbubul Alam, president of

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and

Industry, urged the government to allow

importers to release all imported goods

from the port without any compensation

Ahmad and AK Azad, three former FBCCI

presidents; Mahfuz Anam, editor of The

Daily Star; Matiur Rahman, editor of the

daily Prothom Alo; Mozammel Babu, editor-in-chief of Ekattor Television;

Manjurul Islam, chief editor of DBC News;

Dewan Hanif Mahmud, editor of Bonik

Barta; Shyamal Dutta, editor of the daily

Mir Nasir Hossain, Abdul Matlub

to bring them back, she added.

up to this month.

closure of factories, it would be very difficult Bhorer Kagoj, also spoke among others.

Social safety nets, farm economy to take centre stage in fiscal 2020-21 budget

Social safety net schemes and the farm sector are set to get prime focus in next fiscal year's budget as the government looks to mop up the destruction of the global coronavirus pandemic, which stands to wipe off the gains Bangladesh made in poverty reduction over the past decade.

Millions of people have lost jobs owing to the countrywide general shutdown announced from March 26 to flatten the curve on coronavirus.

The measure has left the economy in a state of induced coma, so next fiscal year's budget, expected to be presented on June 11, would look to bring it back to

The finance division is aiming to finish its budget preparation by May.

Finance Secretary Abdur Rouf Talukder has written to more than 50 noted economists of the country and thinktanks requesting them to send in recommendations about the upcoming budget through email by May 5, as pre-budget discussions can't take place because of the countrywide lockdown and the need for social distancing.

He sought the recommendations on how to tackle the economic risks brought on by the coronavirus pandemic and keep up the higher economic growth trajectory and development.

"But everything would depend on how the pandemic plays out," said a finance ministry official.

The budget would incorporate the spending the government would have to incur to implement the Tk 95,619 crore stimulus packages, which is equivalent to 3.3 per cent of the country's gross domestic product The stimulus packages aim at mobilising working

capital for the export-oriented industries, affected industrial and service sector firms, micro and SMEs, incentives for health professionals, distributing food for free and reduced prices, cash support for the poor who were rendered jobless, widening social safety nets, agriculture subsidy, farm mechanisation and farm loans.

The health sector, which has come under huge pressure because of the outbreak of the deadly pathogen, would get a major allocation in fiscal 2020-21 as the COVID-19 has unmasked the serious shortcoming the sector faces.

Beyond the domestic impact of the health crisis, the two main channels through which the Bangladesh economy will be impacted are remittance and export of garments, both of which rake in the lion's share of foreign currency.

The subsidy allocation for the export-oriented ndustries, which have been witnessing plunge in incomes because of coronavirus-induced demand collapse in the export destinations, and remitters, who have been struggling in their host countries as many of them have lost jobs, would increase.

This year, Kamal had set aside Tk 3,060 crore for providing 2 per cent cash incentive to remitters. The export subsidy currently stands at Tk 6,000 crore.

The government usually sets aside Tk 9,000 crore in subsidy for the agriculture, but in fiscal 2020-21 it is likely to be Tk 10,000 crore for fiscal 2020-21. Farm mechanisation would receive Tk 4,000 crore.

The total subsidy for the current fiscal year stands at Tk 47,000 crore.

The budget deficit is on course to hit 6 per cent of GDP this fiscal year, which is above the recommended 5 per cent. In fiscal 2020-21 it may go up to 7 per cent in because of the heightened expenditure to counter the rampage of coronavirus and sluggish revenue generation.

Initially, the government thought that the collection from the National Board of Revenue would fall short by Tk 52,000 crore this fiscal year. But now it seems the deficit may be Tk 100,000 crore.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal would also look to cut expenditure through, for example, slashing the allocation for foreign tours.

So, the budget size would be between Tk 550,000 crore and Tk 560,000 crore, down from Tk 580,000

crore initially planned. The finance ministry would set aside Tk 213,000 crore

for annual development programmes.

Layoffs unlawful during general shutdown

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

STAR BUSINESS DESK

leaders and experts yesterday.

Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

The Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) has launched an investigation to find out whether the garment factories that are going for temporary closures following mass order cancellations are doing so by the book.

The trend of temporary shuttering is a matter of concern as the government on March 25 announced a Tk 5,000 crore package for export-oriented factories to help them pay their workers' salaries for three months, which usually tend to be their major

"So, we will mainly find out whether the factories laid off the workers following the rules of Bangladesh Labour Act or not," said Shibnath Roy, inspector general of the DIFE, which published a notice in this connection on April 17 seeking information from factory management.

The Deputy Inspector Generals of the DIFE have been investigating the

expected this week.

fallout of the pandemic.

If any factory wants to temporarily close it must inform the DIFE and fill in a specific form, popularly known as form 10. But very few have informed the DIFE or filled in the form so far.

The full list of factories that have abandoned production without following the rules will be sent to the labour ministry for punitive action.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Association last week said the factories that have no work because of the pandemic are within their rights to temporarily shutter as per provisions in the labour law.

"Laying off a worker during such a critical moment is illegal and unjust," said Amirul Haque Amin, president National Garment Federation.

The reason being, workers will not get their full remuneration but 53 per cent of their gross salary.

Article 16 of the labour law that will allow 45 days of closure.

management can easily terminate the workers," Amin also said. "If any factory has gone out of Nearly 50 per cent of the garment

Some 865 factories have so far expressed

Work orders worth more than \$3 billion

intention to resume production, said

have been cancelled by the international

retailers so far, she said, while seeking

cooperation from all for opening factories

in phases. If the work orders are shifted to

other countries for Bangladesh's continued

BGMEA President Rubana Huq.

A worker at a garment factory in Ashulia checks whether her name is on the list If the management sees their of employees terminated by the management. The photo was taken yesterday.

factories since April 17 and a report is problems prolonging, they can choose production for such a long time, the factories have temporarily shuttered, Amin said, adding that the number would have been a lot higher had the government not warned the factory management.

The finance ministry in a notice on April 19 said the factories that have temporarily shuttered would not be eligible to enjoy the stimulus package to pay the workers' salaries.

So, many are now forfeiting their plans, Amin said.

But a good portion is sticking to their plan. "It is not free money. The factory owners will have to pay it back," he added.

The management cannot announce temporary closure during the general holiday, said Nazma Akter, president of Sammilito Garment Sramik Federation.

Jafrul Hasan Sharif, a labour law expert, supported Akter's view.

"It is not covered by the law."

The constitution of Bangladesh in Section 152 said any notice of the government during any emergency is

situation.

The government announced a general holiday in the notice, so the vorkers are also under the general

"The factory management cannot run the production units, cannot temporarily shutter them and cannot terminate the workers," Shatif added.

Uttam Kumar Das, an advocate of the Bangladesh Supreme Court, termed the move as immoral and illogical considering the current

"The factory management should not go for temporary suspension although they have the right to do so as private property."

There is a lot of ambiguity in the government notice on general

"All those should have been cleared and explained," he said, adding that issues like workers' payments, layoffs and positions of the factory management should have been clearly defined in the notice.

TAMING CORONAVIRUS RAMPAGE

No thirst for soft drinks even amidst hot spell

MAHMUDUL HASAN

The soft drinks industry has been pounded by the outbreak of coronavirus in Bangladesh at a time when it typically enjoys mounting sales for the rise in mercury.

In April, which is typically marked as the beginning of summer, beverage sales are poised to drop more than 80 per cent, thanks to the countrywide shutdown in a bid to contain the spread of the highly infectious virus.

The shutdown on March 26 prompted the closure of shops, hotels, restaurants, movie theatres, convention and party centres, which are the topmost point of sales for beverages.

"Our sales have come to a near halt," said Md Nahid Yousuf, an assistant general manager for brand at Partex Beverage, the franchisee of Royal Crown Cola (RC Cola).

Sales of RC Cola, which has five variants, is set to come down to less than 20 per cent in April. The previous month, it managed to sell about 30 per cent of the products.

Its popular drinking water brand MUM, which was rolled out in 2001, is not faring any better: its sales nosedived about 70 per

"We paid the salary for March and would do for April too. After that, if this trend continues, it would be hard to pay every staff," he said, adding that Partex Beverage directly employs about 2,500 people.

PepsiCo's popular brands such as Pepsi, 7UP, Mirinda, Slice, Mountain Dew, Pepsi Diet and 7UP Light have also taken a beating, with its sales crashing to less than 20 per cent.

"Usually, the months of March, April and May see a spike in sales. Now, the whole economy is down and the country's carbonated soft drink (CSD) market plunged," said a senior official of Transcom Beverage, the exclusive PepsiCo franchisee for Bangladesh.

However, its drinking water brand Aquafina's sales have suffered less than the

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa

Kamal yesterday approached the

Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

seeking assistance in the areas of food

STAR BUSINESS REPORT



ZINA TASREEN

he is not authorised to speak with the media. According to the insiders, the industry has tremendous potential in Bangladesh as it grows along with the economy.

The annual per capita consumption of soft drinks in Germany is 450 bottles, 550 in the US and 600 in Mexico.

But in Bangladesh, it is only 17 as of 2018, said a top official of Transcom Beverage.

Bangladesh also lags behind its peers in Asia: in India, it is 25 bottles, Vietnam 45 and Sri Lanka 40.

Transcom Beverage has not laid off any of its staff and even provided advance salary to some of its employees who work in the field so that they do not face any problem in running their family expenses, the senior official added.

Pran, which has a wide range of beverage lines, also saw dwindling sales from March. "We have a range of products and many of

He sought the assistance while

of the multilateral development lender,

security, health and agriculture sector during a teleconference, the finance of the group's assistance in all of the

others, he said requesting not to be named as them are manufactured targeting the village population. But now rural distribution is getting harder due to the shutdown," said Nurul Afsar, head of corporate brand at Pran RFL Group.

The company's beverages sale would nosedive in April.

Sales of beverages surge during Eid

"But this year will be a different one. I see a bleak future," Afsar said.

The global pandemic is also affecting the company's beverage export to India, the Middle East, Nepal and other countries.

He projects that beverage exports would fall nearly 40 per cent year-on-year in April. "Due to coronavirus, we are receiving less export order. Now, in some cases, we

cannot deliver our product to the buyers for congestion in the port and delays in shipment.'

pull the country out of the pits that major challenge is to mobilise financing. of financing and timelines, he said,

and rehabilitating the affected the low-

Hajjar assured the finance minister pandemic.

the global coronavirus pandemic has Ensuring food security for the people according to the press release.

Afser also partly blamed the low sales to in the last few weeks.

the widespread fake news that consumption of cold drinks could make consumers more susceptible to COVID-19.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has not issued any warning on cold drinks. The United Nations' public health agency even said there is no scientific evidence that eating hygienically made frozen food and

The WHO, however, said alcohol may put people at increased risk of coronavirus, weakening the body's immune system and leaving drinkers at risk for other risky behaviours that could increase the likelihood of contracting coronavirus.

Global drinking brand Coke's sale also

fell drastically.

"We are facing the same problem like other beverage companies," said an official of Coca-Cola Bangladesh requesting anonymity.

He attributed it to weakening purchasing ability of people as many are now out of

"People are now buying essentials, so sales of other products are falling," said Rafique Masud, sales manager for Meghna Group of Industry's fast-moving consumer goods division.

Meghna Beverage manufactures Super Fresh Drinking Water, Fresh Dhoom Cola, Fresh Mejanda, Fresh Soul Up, Gear Energy Drink etc.

Its CSD sales have plunged to less than 20 per cent due to the virus outbreak.

Akij Food and Beverage, which manufactures Mojo, Frutika, Speed, Clemon and drinking water Spa, echoed the same as other, said an official wishing anonymity.

However, in supermarkets, which open for a few hours every day amid the crisis, sales of soft drinks have remained stable.

"Sales of CSD have not dropped. In some cases, it increased," said Mohammad Aurangzeb, manager for procurement and operation at Khulshi Mart.

Drinking water sales too nearly doubled

Jeddah-based IsDB has announced

A founding member of the IsDB,

member countries fight the coronavirus

BATBC's profit falls despite higher turnover

Company's AGM held virtually approves 400pc cash dividend

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Profits and dividends of British American Tobacco Bangladesh Company (BATBC), the listed cigarette manufacturer, both fell in 2019 despite registering higher

In 2019, the British multinational company's turnover was up by about 16 per cent to Tk 26,985 crore. However, its profit plunged 8 per cent to Tk 925 crore

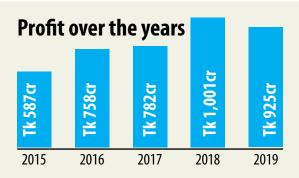
and dividends to 400 per cent from 500 per cent in cash and 200 per cent in stock dividend the previous year. The dividend in 2019 was one of the lowest in recent

The company distributed 600 per cent cash dividend in

2017 and 2016 and 550 per cent in 2015, according to the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

"Higher tax burden contributed to the profit decline," said Shehzad Munim, managing director of BATBC.





The company's tax deposit in the form of value-added tax, supplementary duty and other taxes stood at Tk 22,630 crore in 2019, up 18 per cent on 2018.

BATBC contributes almost 8 per cent to the total government revenue from the domestic sector, making it by far the highest taxpayer in Bangladesh, said Munim.

Average tax incidence accounts for 78 per cent of the retail price, he added.

The company's sales volume declined 1 per cent in 2019, mainly driven by low segment volume de-growth of 14 per cent, according to the annual report of the company.

The 30 per cent minimum price increase enforced on the legal cigarette industry in the 2018 budget led to an unprecedented increase in illicit cigarettes throughout 2019, impacting BATBC's overall financial performance, it

The company's financial reports were passed by the shareholders yesterday at the 47th annual general meeting held online due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission has directed all listed companies to use digital platforms to hold AGMs.

At the meeting, presided over by BATBC Chairman Golam Mainuddin, five key decisions were taken by the shareholders unanimously. The decisions were related to the financial statement of 2019, election of the board of directors, appointment of statutory auditors, appointment of corporate governance auditors, and approval of 400 per cent cash dividend, the company said in a press release.

A significant number of shareholders from the remote areas of Bangladesh and abroad took part in the AGM using digital platforms.

BATBC Directors Mohammad Moinuddin Abdullah, KH Masud Siddiqui, AKM Aftab Ul Islam, Md Abdul Halim, Md Abul Hossain, Tahmina Begum and Stephan Matthiesen, and Company Secretary Md Azizur Rahman were present at the meeting.

The share of the company was traded at Tk 907.60 on the DSE on March 25, the last trading day before the country enforced a nationwide lockdown to flatten the curve on coronavirus.

Shrimp farmers in no-win situation orders amounting to Tk 460 crore

Farmers who have cultivated black tiger shrimp for the export markets in the hope of making profits were dealt with a massive blow by the coronavirus pandemic, which has shattered their dreams by devastating the supply chain and prompting a collapse in demand.

More than 8 lakh farmers cultivate shrimp on 2.72 lakh hectares in the southwestern coastal region and supply the produce to the European and the US markets to earn a living.

The prices of a fresh harvest of black tiger shrimp halved to Tk 300-360 each kilogram at the farm level this month from a year earlier as the coronavirus ate up demand from buyers abroad.

"Exporters have almost no appetite for shrimp this year and we have to sell the item at very low prices. The coronavirus has thrown us into deep trouble," said Tipu Hawlader, a shrimp grower in Mongla under Bagerhat district, one of the major shrimpproducing areas.

April to October comprises the main season of shrimp as farmers harvest crops.

Farmed shrimp contributed 48 per cent to the total shrimp and prawn production of 2.54

lakh tonnes in fiscal 2017-18. Bangladesh shipped 36,200 tonnes of shrimp in the same year, showed data from the fisheries

nudged it to.

development and mechanisation as ministry said in a press release.

department. alternatives vanammei compared

Shrimp export has been declining since fiscal 2013-14 as buyers opt for cheaper

and freshwater prawn varieties of shrimp grown in Bangladesh. Shipment declined 2.31 per

Kamal now turns to IsDB for help

speaking to Bandar MH Hajjar, president need of the hour," Kamal said.

cent year-on-year to \$291 million in July-March period of this fiscal year, data from the Export Promotion Bureau showed.

"Initially, we were told to delay

with the expensive black tiger shipment. Later, many cancelled orders. Now, whatever the sales we see are from Japan," said Kazi Belayet Hossain, president of the Bangladesh Frozen Foods

income people are the most important a \$2.3 billion package to help its 57

areas. The IsDB and Bangladesh would Bangladesh is currently implementing 11

The association estimates that

buyers from Europe and the US have so far cancelled nearly 300



"And the rate we are getting now is less than what we got at this time last year," Hossain said. Prices of larger size shrimps are Exporters Association (BFFEA). \$4.5-\$4.80 per pound, down 20 per cent from \$4.80 a year ago.

"But the same quality shrimps are sold at higher prices in the domestic market," he added.

Consumption of shrimp reduced in the markets such as

This has caused a decline in the prices, said Atiqur Rahman, executive director of the National Seafood Industries. "If the low prices persist, it will

be very tough for farmers to sustain because the domestic market is not big enough to consume all the shrimp grown and ensure profitable prices for growers."

Only a couple of processing plants that make exportable shrimp are buying now, according to Didarul Alam Dulal, a shrimp farmer and depot owner.

Shrimps also can't be transported smoothly to two major markets -- Dhaka and Chattogram -- because of the ongoing lockdown and limited opening hours of markets.

"All involved in this sector will suffer if the lockdown continues,

Midland Bank rolls out Islamic banking window STAR BUSINESS DESK

Midland Bank has recently launched a Shariah-based Islamic banking window named "Midland Bank Saalam" to cater to the needs of the customers who want to do banking as per Shariah requirements.

The customers now can avail all Shariah banking products through the window from any of its branches and digital channels.

Nilufer Zafarullah, chairperson of the bank, introduced the service by opening the window at its Gulshan branch at the beginning of the board meeting held through video-conferencing, according to a statement.

The platform will provide state-of-the-art Shariah banking services to the customers, she said.



Bank Alfalah gets new country head STAR BUSINESS DESK

Bank Alfalah has recently appointed Adil Islam as its country head.

He has held business and functional head positions both in Bangladesh and abroad, working for HSBC, ANZ, American Express, Mashreq Bank and Bank Saudi Al Fransi (Credit Agricole), according to a statement.

Islam has completed post-graduation banking international and financial studies from Herriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Fishermen demand easing curbs on fishing in Bay "This is a major time for breeding," said marine catch.

Sea fishermen have urged the government to relax the restriction on trawling in the deep waters of the Bay of Bengal to help them recoup losses in sales inflicted by the ongoing shutdown caused by the global coronavirus pandemic.

They demanded the government reduce the fishing ban period: it can begin from May 1 and go on until June 15 instead of May 20 to July 23, according to a letter sent by the Bangladesh Marine Fisheries Association (BMFA) to the fisheries and

livestock ministry last week.

The request comes as many of 231 trawlers are sitting idle in the face of poor sales of marine fishes in the domestic market and problems of exports as the deadly coronavirus has led to a stunning

collapse of the global economy. "White fishes breed throughout the year and there would be no effect on fish resources if the government slaps the ban early for the current year," the BMFA said.

The government first imposed the 62day ban on fishing in the waters of the bay in 2015 to ensure proper breeding.

Md Latifur Rahman, director for marine of the fisheries department. The government decided on the ban

based on opinions of different stakeholders and experts in the sector, he said, adding that views of all stakeholders are needed to reduce the ban period or bring it forward. Deep sea fishing operators are not the

only group that catch fishes there. More than 60,000 fishing boats involving about 4 lakh fishermen are engaged in fishing in the coastal regions and they account for 85 per cent of the total

Rahman said. "We also have the month of Ramadan and a ban on fishing may affect protein

supply in the domestic market," he said, adding that his office shared his views with the higher authorities in this regard. Fish caught from marine water accounted for 15 per cent of the total fish of 42.76 lakh tonnes produced in fiscal year

Their views also need to be considered,

2017-18, according to the DoF. Marine catches rose 2.66 per cent year-onyear to 6.55 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2017-18.

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The Paily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA SUNDAY APRIL 26, 2020, BAISHAKH 13, 1427 BS

Healthcare providers at tremendous risk

Why is the government failing to protect them?

EALTHCARE providers at community clinics across the country are risking their lives—and that of their loved ones—by providing services to thousands of people suffering from fever, cough, and cold. With many hospitals and private clinics refusing to treat patients with symptoms similar to that of coronavirus, there has been a sharp rise in the number of people frequenting the community clinics. However, despite repeated requests to respective authorities, they have not been provided with sufficient protective gear to protect themselves and their families from the virus which has already killed over 131 people.

Most of the healthcare providers interviewed by *The Daily Star* stated that they were closely interacting with patients—at times even treating those who had returned from abroad—without any PPE. Many providers have had to buy gloves and masks with their own money in a desperate bid to protect themselves. Providers in selected upazilas did receive one PPE, a pair of gloves, a mask, and a bottle of hand sanitiser two weeks ago, but even those are barely enough since the PPEs and gloves are not reusable and the bottle of sanitiser is long gone. Meanwhile, the government has instructed these providers to collect samples from suspected patients after a one-day training. Unless it provides sufficient protective gear to each provider, such a move would have deadly consequences.

The government would have us believe that there is sufficient protective gear for all our healthcare professionals. If that is indeed the case, why are we exposing our dedicated healthcare providers to such immense risks? According to Bangladesh Doctors Foundation (BDF), an organisation of physicians, nearly 30 doctors across the country have tested Covid-19 positive daily in last one week on average, and as many as 324 doctors from government, private and specialised hospitals have so far been infected with Covid-19 till April 25.

It is unacceptable that we are failing so miserably at providing even the most basic of safety equipment to those sacrificing their own wellbeing to protect others. We urge the government to address this issue most urgently before we lose more of our valuable caregivers to the deadly virus.

Keep prices of essentials in check during Ramadan

Make sure there is no artificial crisis

VERY year, prior to and during Ramadan, prices of daily essentials go beyond the reach of common people, despite the steps taken by the government to keep them under control. And this year is no exception. As this daily reported yesterday, prices of most of the essential items have increased in the city's kitchen markets and grocery shops as Ramadan begins. While the price of each kilogramme of ginger was between Tk 100 and Tk 160 a month ago, according to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), the same amount was sold at Tk 320-350 at a Jatrabari kitchen market a day before Ramadan. The prices of other necessities such as garlic, onion, lentil, sugar, dry chili, chickpeas, palm and soybean oils have also increased by Tk 5-100 over the past week.

For people who have been struggling to bear their regular family expenses with no or reduced income due to the coronavirus outbreak and the ensuing lockdown, the spiralling prices of the essentials is just too much to bear.

While scarcity of transport could be a key reason for the increase in prices, other reasons include congestions at the Chattogram port and the artificial crisis created by a section of importers and wholesalers. Moreover, panic-buying could have also contributed to the situation.

In order to keep the prices of essentials under control, the government should strongly monitor the large kitchen markets in the country and make sure that there is no artificial crisis created by unscrupulous traders, wholesalers and retailers. Mobile courts can help in this regard by taking action against the hoarders. To solve the transportation problem, the government should ensure trucks for suppliers. Moreover, steps should also be taken for uninterrupted import of products and containers carrying food items at Chittagong port must be cleared quickly. The government should also consider increasing open market sales to give the low-income people some relief.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Impose strict measures

From all the recent reports surrounding COVID-19, it seems that Bangladesh is gradually turning into one of the badly hit countries in the world. As our population density is higher, so are the risks of getting infected. Despite the government's effort to contain the pandemic, many seem to be ignorant about the seriousness of it and are roaming around carelessly. Thus, stricter measures need to be in place.

The situation was somewhat similar here in Malaysia where I live when the news first broke. However, implementing strict lockdown measures have proven to be rather beneficial. Since many are disregarding the lockdown in Bangladesh, I believe a curfew is necessary. Nobody should be allowed to step outside unless it is an emergency. As for the poor and homeless, the government should arrange shelters for them. How difficult is it to comprehend that our safety lies in staying indoor at all times? If we don't take it seriously now, the number of infections and the death toll will inevitably skyrocket.

Fardin N Khan, by email



Why COVID-19 is not a leveller

KAMAL AHMED

HEN COVID-19 reached some of the most protected and powerful people of the world like the resident of Number 10, Downing Street and the best known royal Prince Charles or forced Prime Minister Trudeau to self-isolate, many people described this virus as a great leveller. Top grade protection details deployed by security agencies failed to detect its mysterious invasion. The global contagion has affected most of the seven billion people of the planet in various ways. Yet, can it truly be called a leveller? Can it be termed as a non-discriminatory enemy which is what it initially appeared to be?

Some facts are so unbelievably contrasting that one has to wonder whether such variations are at all possible. One such fact is while COVID-19 makes millions of people across the world jobless, and trillions of dollars have been wiped off the value of stock markets, yet it also made the richest billionaires even richer. The Guardian on April 15 reported that the world's wealthiest person, Jeff Bezos became USD 24 billion richer during the coronavirus pandemic than he was at the start of the year. His paper fortune, held mostly in Amazon shares, rose by 20 percent in value over this period taking the total to USD 138 billion. Earlier in February, few weeks before the global pandemic was declared he sold of USD 3.4 billion worth of his Amazon shares. There is no suggestion that Bezos acted improperly.

Likewise, several hedge fund managers have made windfalls. Trade union leaders were angry after revelations that one London hedge fund had made 2.4 bn pounds betting on market moves over a global economic shutdown. Frances O'Grady, general secretary of the TUC, the largest trade union body of the United Kingdom, launched a stinging attack on hedge fund managers and demanded imposition of large taxes on such earnings. While healthcare systems in most of the western countries have been struggling to cope with unprecedented surge in demands for lengthy critical care, many of these super rich have moved into luxurious holiday villas in secluded islands with plenty of supplies.

Investment bankers, few fortunate Bangladeshis included, who reside in million dollar apartments in Manhattan moved away to safer holiday homes for the lockdown period. It is difficult to figure out whether to admire their "prudence" or pity on the expressed selfishness. In New York, which became the epicentre of the COVID 19 pandemic, more than 50 percent of deaths of Bangladeshis abroad occurred. And the reason is largely due to the impoverished conditions they were living in.

In both the United States and the

United Kingdom, available statistics show that the immigrant communities have been hurt disproportionately. These immigrants help these metropolitan cities run their essential services like healthcare, policing and transport services. In the UK, holding a public inquiry into this tragic development has been decided, once the pandemic is over. Unfortunately, immigrant workers in Arab and Gulf countries have been enduring the worst and governments in South Asian nations have now initiated the process of humanitarian evacuation of their stranded nationals.

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and rumours, only to find out that they were deceived.

In India, it also had a communal dimension and minority Muslims are facing the hardest brunt. It hit them in so many ways as too many Hindu groups resorted to several ridiculous Islamophobic theories suggesting that the COVID-19 pandemic is an Islamic importation to destroy India. The alleged Tablighi Jamaat infections were being exploited by the Islamophobic establishment to generate hostility against Muslims at such an extent that some hospitals are refusing to accept any patient of Islamic faith unless s/he

and criticisms. Whether such reports are true or not, differences could not be starker in health service in Bangladesh on the basis of financial abilities and political influence. Despite our constitution guaranteeing medical care as a fundamental right, it has always been a subject to affordability. As most of those state-run hospitals are not preferred by our VIPs, designated cabins in those establishments did not raise much controversy. But, things are quite different during a pandemic when everyone has equal right to seek the state's protection equally which explains netizens' anger.



Unable to find work in the almost deserted kitchen market, a porter sits idly under a foot bridge at the capital's Karwan Bazar.

Workers in their homelands are not spared either from the immeasurable sufferings caused by the pandemic significantly less from the disease itself, but more from the economic consequences. Workers from rural areas employed in both formal and informal sectors, be it export-oriented industries or domestic help, were forced to leave cities overnight, many in crammed public transport paying unusually higher fares. Some of them had to walk back all the way to village homes. In India, millions of workers walked hundreds of kilometres and the world has seen dehumanising images of disinfectants being sprayed on them in herds. Our garment workers made similar journeys with false hopes based on misinformation

provides coronavirus negative certificates. Videos emerging show that vendors are denying selling essential food items to Muslim residents in some areas under lockdown. Amidst the global outcry over such divisive and discriminatory practices, on the April 19 Prime Minister Modi tweeted, "COVID-19 does not see race, religion, colour, caste, creed, language or borders before striking. Our response and conduct thereafter should attach primacy to unity and brotherhood". Yet discriminating against Muslims amidst the pandemic continues.

Following press reports that the government in Bangladesh is designating a top-grade hospital for the VIPs, social media platforms are abuzz with anger

The United Nations food agency, WFP chief David Beasley told the Security Council on April 21 that the world is not only facing a global health pandemic, but also famines of "Biblical proportion". It warns of doubling of hunger in the world in coming months. In Bangladesh, too, thousands of poor people have come out on the streets demanding food and work. All these predictions and warnings show who faces greater risks and are more vulnerable. So, can a pandemic that leaves millions of people jobless and pushes them towards hunger and death be called a non-discriminatory leveller?

Kamal Ahmed is a freelance journalist based in London.

Printing money is not an option for Bangladesh



O support the COVID-19 affected economy, some experts are suggesting that the government of Bangladesh should go for printing money. However, I feel that there is no

need to take such a radical measure since Bangladesh has a number of policy tools at its hand at the moment to heat up the economy.

What are the developed economies doing?

Before discussing Bangladesh's options, let us have a look at how the developed countries are dealing with the liquidity situation in their own countries right now. This is because, many of us often get confused and cannot distinguish among circumstances of different economies.

Countries across the world have rolled out stimulus packages to prop up the economy. Bail out packages range from providing more funds for healthcare services to income support measures to loans for the affected businesses at easy terms. As the corona pandemic created both demand and supply shocks, governments have resorted to a policymix that includes fiscal, monetary and sectoral measures.

As the objective is now to revive economic activities, make up for the lost output, recuperate employment and feed the poor, countries need a lot of money. So, they are using all types of monetary policy tools that they have at their disposal, such as lowering interest rates and Quantitative Easing (QE) to pump money into the financial system.

Bail out packages of the developed countries including Australia, Canada, the USA, the UK and Japan are massive. But not all of them have enough fiscal space. Rather, many of them have large debt-GDP ratio. Also, these countries have already cut their interest rates so much that they cannot lower it any more to create more liquidity to support their stimulus packages. As these countries have run out of all options, the only option they have is to go for "money printing scheme" through QE. In simple words, when QE is adopted, central banks

of countries buy government bonds and other financial assets from banks. This creates liquidity space for banks and financial institutions which they can lend to individuals and businesses. It is claimed that QE has worked well for countries like the USA, the UK, Europe and Japan in dealing with the impact of the global financial crisis in 2009.

But this experience varies from country to country. All economies are not on the same footing. They have differences not only in terms of size and growth of the economy, fiscal situation, money supply and inflation, but more importantly, in terms of financial governance and structural reforms. QE may have brought some success in the developed economies, but not totally. Because, QE has made some people better off while others continue to live in financial difficulty even in the USA. And debt burden on their people continues to rise.

Where did money printing fail miserably?

Some low-income countries fell into hyperinflationary situation by printing money. In the 2000s, the government of Zimbabwe printed huge amounts of currency to finance war with Congo and bribe corrupt officials. And in 2008, prices had gone up to as high as 231,000,000 percent in a single year in Zimbabwe. In 2019, Venezuela experienced hyperinflation of 10,000 percent when its government printed money to finance its huge budget deficit of 30 percent. Due to lack of strong economic management and high corruption these countries found it extremely difficult to reverse their situation. While Zimbabwe recovered from the crisis by changing its currency to USD, Venezuela is struggling to come out of the situation.

How can Bangladesh generate liquidity?

For Bangladesh, following the footstep of other countries in printing money will not only be unwise, but also self-destructive. As opposed to the developed countries, Bangladesh can, at present, mobilise liquidity in several ways.

First, to support the fiscal stimulus announced by the government, Bangladesh Bank has taken a number of measures. It has reduced Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) of banks by 1.5 percentage point and REPO rate by 0.5 percentage

point. This has generated Tk 18,600 crores. Besides, the commercial banks have a deposit of Tk 3,13,000 crores with the central bank in approved securities against the Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) requirement of Tk 2,10,000 crores. Liquidity can also be created through

REPO against those securities.

Second, Bangladesh Bank has increased the Advance-Deposit Ratio (ADR) for all the conventional banks by 2 percent.

This should increase loanable fund for commercial banks by about Tk 20,000 crores.

Third, the government can think of relaxing ceiling on purchasing savings certificate for the time being. In June 2019, at the beginning of the current fiscal year, the government had imposed restrictions on sales of savings certificate. As a result, sales of savings certificate declined and bank deposit increased by about 10 percent. Now in the changed circumstances, savings certificate can be another means to general liquidity, if

Fourth, the government should put on hold the projects which can wait for some time or which have just been initiated. Block allocation in the Annual Development Programme should also be cancelled and the money should be used for corona-related measures.

Fifth, salaries and allowances of ministers and member of parliaments can be reduced by at least 20 percent. Some countries, including India have implemented this. Besides, the government should instruct all its departments except for the health-related ones, to reduce their cost at least by 50 percent during this critical time. Indian government has asked to reduce such expenditures by 60 percent.

Sixth, as an oil importing country, Bangladesh will gain due to oil price shock. Resources saved from low oil prices in the international market can also be another source of fund at this moment.

Seventh, a number of international funding agencies including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank have come forward to support Bangladesh. This will also give the government some leverage to spend for healthcare improvement and economic recovery.

Where lies the danger?

While the above measures will be enough for reviving economic activities without printing money, we also need to be mindful of the existing unsound fiscal management and fragile financial sector. The macroeconomic management has been deteriorating gradually with low revenue collection and high public expenditures. The government itself has relied heavily on borrowing from banks during the current fiscal year FY2020. Narrow tax base, high tax evasion, illicit financial flow and wastage have created resource constraint to support development activities.

Misuse of resources in public investment makes infrastructure development unusually expensive. Additionally, with high non-performing loans, (NPLs), large amount of loan write-off, low net profitability and weak management the financial sector has become vulnerable. It is feared that the loans which are to be given to the affected businesses as part of the stimulus package may lead to wilful default, resulting in higher NPLs in banks. If the past record is any indication, one cannot but be afraid of the of the misuse of the loans announced for the affected businesses. Some of this money will float in the market without producing goods and services. And this will add to the inflationary pressure.

Though inflation in Bangladesh is 5.6 percent as of March 2020, the supply distortion has increased prices already. If money is printed in addition to the measures taken by Bangladesh Bank, it will create rapid circulation of money and will create hyperinflation which will become unmanageable. And if liquidity-induced high inflation cannot boost economic output and aggregate demand, the economy will experience stagflation.

Therefore, "money printing scheme" is not an option for Bangladesh. Rather, the government has to concentrate on managing the resources which will be generated through the policy measures of Bangladesh Bank and collected in other ways as discussed above. Efficient management and coordination of activities are the keys to succeeding in the ongoing fight against the health and economic impact of corona pandemic.

Dr Fahmida Khatun is the Executive Director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

When will Bangladesh's curve peak?

MANZOOR HASAN and SANAUL MOSTAFA

FTER a month of corona-induced lockdown, Bangladesh's infection rates and death records are proportionally still lower than many other countries, according to official data. Credit must be given to the government for taking firm steps and the population deserves kudos for complying with the stiff restrictions. However, according to World Health Organization, the global situation hasn't reached a peak as yet. This is also true for Bangladesh, when it finds itself in stage 3 of the corona spread (out of 4 stages), while China, Europe and the USA are coming out of peak.

In order to understand the overall coronadriven situation of Bangladesh, we have identified a set of 11 indicators, distilled from global experience. The indicators set out below are either available in the public domain or can be calculated from available data. Generally, there is a dearth of data in Bangladesh and decisions taken in such circumstances could be seriously flawed. Let us put forward the health-related indicators in order to determine the timing of the "flattening of the curve" after the peaking of coronavirus infection cases.

Cumulated number of infections: Based on John Hopkins University's real-time online data, Bangladesh's infections figure (April 23) appears negligible (4,200) considering the population size in comparison with other affected comparable countries. It is even proportionately lower than that of Pakistan (11,000) and higher than India (23,000). Calculated per million Bangladesh, Pakistan and India have 25, 47 and 17 infections, respectively.

Cumulated number of deaths: The number of total deaths in Bangladesh (127) observed on April 23 appears much lower as in the case of number of infections (India: 721,

Pakistan: 235

Cumulated number of recoveries: The recovery rate is low (Bangladesh: 108, India: 5,012, and Pakistan: 1,378 based on data dated April 23), which is a source of huge concern.

Daily increase/decrease of infections: The daily infection increase data, which is widely published, provides significant information. If the number of daily increase over time rises steeply before peak is reached, it is a source of serious concern. In such a situation the healthcare system will come under huge pressure. Unfortunately, the data from April 16 to 23 indicates a steep upward rising curve, doubling the number of infected persons within about four days. It will be premature to draw any firm conclusion by just looking at the decreasing infection figures of three days (April 21-23). In comparison to India and Pakistan, the shape of the Bangladeshi curve is disturbing, even though the total number of infections remains low.

Mortality rate (cumulated deaths/ cumulated infections * 100): The mortality rate illustrates the effectiveness of our healthcare system to diagnose, treat the infected, and save the not-yet affected. The data available so far (April 23) shows the mortality rate in Bangladesh is 3 percent, which is on the lower side (India: 3.1 percent and Pakistan: 2 percent).

Recovery rate (cumulated number of recoveries/cumulated number of infections *100): The recovery rate is much lower than the neighbouring countries (Pakistan: 21 percent and India: 22 percent) and one of the worst among the affected countries. This shows that that our healthcare system is already under stress, even at a time, when the total number of infections is relatively low.

Potential spread multiplier (number of household members who could be infected if



Bangladesh's infections figure appears negligible considering the population size in comparison with other affected comparable countries.

one member is infected): This is not a reported indicator but created to reflect the reality in Bangladesh. It shows the extent of potential spread if one person is infected in a family. Unlike other heavily affected countries, where about 30 percent of households (e.g. USA) have only single member and an average family size of 2.4, Bangladeshi household size is around 5-6 (estimated), which includes a household aide. If one person is infected, it may affect others, assuming that these persons weren't tested on time and declared unaffected, healthcare service wasn't accessible, and family members didn't practice physical distancing given limited living space and social values. In the context of slums and refugee camps, the situation

will be naturally worse, and the multiplier will be a bigger number. The existence of this multiplier *could* be one of the reasons behind the steep daily increase.

Access to tests: The percentage of people tested is considered to be an important tool to identify the infected cases. Countries with a high rate of testing, accurate counting of new cases and effective contact tracing have shown better results due to availability of accurate information. Bangladesh has conducted a total of 322,600 tests (198 tests per million) while India and Pakistan have conducted 362 and 563 tests per million, respectively. The limited number of tests undertaken casts doubts about the real picture of infections prevailing in Bangladesh.

Access to immediate healthcare services, if infected: What is the status of hospitals, which are expected to handle corona cases? Do they have test kits, PPE, and ventilators? The situation may be improving with new hospitals getting enlisted to deal with corona patients, but it is far from satisfactory. The relatively high mortality rate and low recovery rate in Bangladesh lead to the inference that the percentage of people who are infected and have access to suitable healthcare facilities is extremely low.

In the absence of reliable data, it is difficult to visualise a clear picture based on the aforementioned indicators. However, it can be deduced that Bangladesh is facing the prospect of a steep curve and that Bangladesh will not reach the peak soon—it will be weeks rather than days. Some experts fear that a huge spread of corona in Bangladesh cannot be ruled out, particularly due to the existence of this indicator—potential spread multiplier, as discussed above. We urge the policymakers to take cognisance of the aforementioned indicators when deciding on the duration of the lockdown period. They should also make the lockdown far more effective as news reports from different parts of the country draw a very disturbing picture. Will Bangladesh become another case of "too little too late"? Despite the fact that Bangladesh is caught between the rock (coronavirus) and the hard place (economic meltdown), political leadership has to step up and take some very tough and bold decisions before it is too late. Otherwise the sacrifice and sufferance of the last few weeks, particularly by the poor, will be in vain.

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The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position

Expectations of a post-pandemic patch up

ZOBAIDA NASREEN and GOPA BISWAS CAESAR

A'AM, could you possibly tell me when would the university go back to its usual routine?"
When you meet 10 such "rhetorical" queries per day, it is not unusual that you answer curtly with a straight "no", then add a customary precautionary phrase "DO NOT roam outside"; and finally, genuinely mean "stay safe"!

On the completion of almost one month of class suspension, next, what you hear oozes dismal melancholia and *angst*, "I am worried, not that I will die of corona. But what if I live on the other side of this pandemic. I am tensed about my future. Probably, I will lose all my tutoring gigs. It will be a lot more difficult to find new ones then. My father was never in a position to support me. What will happen then?"

All you could manage to say at the end of that semi-monologue is, a not-very-assuring template, "We will try our best to address your issue. This too shall pass!"

This can be called a précis of many conversations that almost each of us are having with the students these days. The beauty of public universities in Bangladesh is that it holds a beacon of hope for students from even the humblest of backgrounds and diversity has always been a dominant feature in here. Thus, a huge portion of these students earn not only their educational expenses but also contributes to their families by giving tuitions or by doing parttime chores. Solely for this reason, many of these students were simply not interested to leave their dormitories even when a strong campaign for suspending classes and complete shut-down was going on in different university campuses following the detection of the first positive case of COVID-19 in Bangladesh on March 8.

Both the teachers and the students of Dhaka University agreed on the fact that it will be a cataclysm if any DU student/ teacher/staff get infected as the campus is densely populated. When the authority was still asway before the official announcement came up, some DU students went on fast-unto-death for complete shut-down as fear had already gripped general students over the global outbreak of coronavirus. Classes were deserted; mid-terms were cancelled and with dorms closed, when the entire country was

gradually walking towards an eventual lockdown, some were still calling us up to know when could the classes resume!

These queries do not stem from their recklessness or insensitivity, rather from dire nightmares of looming starvation and uncertainties of semester fees to be paid. Even our students studying abroad have been facing a similar challenge, as many of them lack a steady source of income. For example, Australia seems to have chosen to shoo away the "extra" populace. The Aussie Prime Minister Scott Morrison has already asked the struggling international students to go

of now

After World War I, humans first realised the concept of home or being safe at home did not exist anymore. By then, they had seen that even kids could get bombed in their cradles amid lullabies. Poets came up with "fancy" words like angst, ennui or alienation to describe the time of that "wasteland". When, hyperbolically, many are mulling over whether this pandemic has the stature of WWIII or not, we cannot deny that it has a similar take on "home". We are not getting over the frenzy of the phrase "stay home" any time soon. But, what about those who



PHOTO: FEROZ AHMED

home as he believes it is time for his country to focus on its own citizens and residents. Similarly, USA already has arranged three special flights to take their citizens off from Bangladesh to show their responsibility to their citizens. On the other hand, with all these incoming crowd who were previously employed elsewhere, Bangladesh is going to face serious crises in the upcoming days. Corona crisis might leave by the end of May or September, as per popular speculations, but the scar it will leave behind economically, socially and culturally will keep taking its toll for a very long time. Amid these, all our "assuring" replies to our students falter and fall apart, because we barely have any contingency plan, at least, as

do not have one? This is a most cogent question that our professor emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury has aptly asked. Let alone the homeless lot, a big chunk of our menial workers live in crowded spaces in dingy slums. Thus, "being home" cannot simply be a euphemism for "being safe" and we must not forget that, it is a privilege to be able to practice "social distancing" that many do not have.

While scrolling through homepages, we all have come across philosophical quotes like "things will not be the same again" or "life before corona and life after corona", etc. That makes us wonder how different it is going to be at the other end of this pandemic. According to World Employment and Social

Outlook report of 2020 of ILO (International Labour Organization), about 40 million people will be jobless this year, solely in South Asian countries. In a time when, number of corona cases are rapidly rising, and institutionally quarantined COVID-19 patients are fleeing in trawlers, after bribing the security guards with Tk 50,000, with zero inhibitions, saving lives is the only reality.

Being unsure about whether it is the right time to get alarmed about post-pandemic crises is not unusual. Nevertheless, this hesitance might cost us heavily as we will exhibit severe lack of preparedness once again. And, we must not forget that our severe lack of preparedness in handling an outbreak of this stature is what has made us into "hilarious" living memes, flooding the social networking sites on a daily basis. No wonder a widely-shared report by Global World Index, featured by World Economic Forum, showed that our Gen Z (age group 8-23 years) are spending most of their time online by sharing memes and streaming audiovisual contents rather than caring about corona-updates while the millennials are the confused lot, oscillating fiercely between cooking recipes and online news portals.

As millennials, we have come across a report by Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention which showed 0.2 percent of children and teenagers died compared with nearly 15 percent of people over the age of 80 which invariably led to speculations that the pandemic will leave the world with a younger demographic to wade on. Along came the idea of selective elimination which is nothing new to human history In countries like Italy, France and even United States, the medical professionals are choosing to spend their limited resources "wisely" on those who are more likely to survive, namely the younger demographic. While, a senior citizen is gradually withering away like the last leaf of autumn, they are bound to focus on some young blood. Even in Italy, one of the senior citizens requested the caregiver to transfer his ventilator to a young boy who had shortage of breath while stating "he needs it as I already have had a fairly long life". Now, the question is "what gives"? What would a post-corona world look like to a young survivor?

From our points of view what it looks like is scary. Inevitably a significant number of students will drop out from schools.

Unemployment and a looming famine might hit our agro-industrial-economy way below the belt, the first priority for all will be to eat three square meals with their family rather than paying semester fees to sit for mid-terms. And all students, ranging from primary levels to undergraduate levels, might undergo this struggle to choose between a well-fed family and a month at school.

Several DU teachers as well as departments have already made announcements to lend a hand to those in need, but they are all afraid that it will not be enough. Without institutionalised coordination and systematic distribution, all aiding efforts might just blunt off a potential weapon to fight the post-pandemic crises. Many agree that scraping off all the poor funds right away might not be a great idea, either. Rather, putting aside a certain sum to help out the poor students who will run risks of dropping out because of lack of fund could prove to be useful.

Even though each of the departments have one or more designated student advisors dedicated to look out for the students, we are still falling short. Not because we lack will, but because we lack preparation. We are not designed to handle a crisis of this stature, yet. On top of that there are no directives that we can follow. On a broader scale, it could be said that Bangladesh Ministry of Education as well as University Grants Commission are no exceptions either. We, altogether, desperately need to figure a way out.

During such a pervasive situation, we all should carry out our due roles. It would be a stupid idea for a ward councillor to get trigger happy with a baton in Tangail or wearing PPEs allotted for doctors without being one just to look like an astronaut in Facebook selfies. While forming a Central Committee to prevent corona, having doctors and researchers on board should be a priority, not the red-tape bureaucrats. Similarly, the intellectuals of the nation have their role to play as well, especially to secure the education sector in coordination with the Ministry of Education and UGC. This is their time to tear apart the torpor around the education sector and weave yarns for a postpandemic patch up!

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ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR ACCIDENT

April 26, 1986

A devastating environmental catastrophe occurred early this morning in 1986 when an explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine released large amounts of radioactive material into the atmosphere.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 1 Leopard features 6 Jeans joint 10 Flat 11 Book of maps 13 French farewell 14 Sell tickets for profit 15 Skillet 16 Cheering cry 18 "Fifth Beatle" Sutcliffe 19 Nocturnal wanderer 22 Director Spike 23 Sunrise site 24 Audibly

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25 Clubs, in bridge
26 Here

27 Made suitable
29 Money machine
31 Hawk's grasper
32 Singer
Carpenter
33 Put in office
34 Takes ten
39 Had supper
41 Anger

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TUESDAY'S **ANSWERS**

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BEETLE BAILEY

YOU'RE WEARING MY PLAID ONES ARE PAJAMAS AT THE CLEANERS



BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

BY MORT WALKER



Violence against women during COVID-19

STAR HEALTH DESK

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, a dramatic increase has been reported in recorded cases of violence against women and domestic violence worldwide. Here are some key information about what you can do during to prevent and address violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Home is not a safe place for me. What can I do?

If you are experiencing violence, it may be helpful to reach out to family, friends and neighbours, to seek support from a hotline or, if safe, from online service for survivors of violence. Find out if local services (e.g. shelters, counselling) are open and reach out to them if available. Make a safety plan in case the violence against you or your children escalates. This includes:

- Identifying a neighbour, friend, relative, colleague, or shelter to go to in case you need to leave the house immediately for safety.
- Have a plan for how you will exit the house safely and how you will reach there (e.g. transport).
- Keep a few essential items (e.g. identification documents, phone, money, medicines, and clothes) available, and emergency phone numbers.
- If possible, develop a code with a trusted neighbour so they can come to your aid in case of an emergency.



and feelings

I need medical attention because of violence. Who can help me and where should I go?

If you need urgent medical attention, call for an ambulance or contact your country's emergency health services. If you need any other support, contact a specialised service if available or a health provider.

I am safe, but I am suffering from mental/sexual/social/long-term physical health problems because of violence. Is there anyone who can help me during COVID-19?

As much as possible, reduce sources of stress:

- Maintain contact with and seek support from family and friends via phone, email, text, etc.
- Try to maintain daily routines and make time for physical activity and sleep.

• Use relaxation exercises (e.g. slow breathing, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation etc.) to relieve stressful thoughts

- Engage in activities that in the past have helped with managing adversity.
- Seek information about COVID- 19 from reliable sources and reduce the time spent consuming news (for example, 1-2 times per day, rather than every hour).

Seek care from a trained health provider for symptoms and conditions including injuries that need medical attention. Due to restrictions on movement, and pressure on health systems, it may be difficult to access healthcare in person at this time. In this case, find out what is available in your locality and seek alternatives, including information and support offered by phone or online

I am worried about someone I know. How can I help?

If you know of, or are concerned about, someone in an abusive relationship there are some things you can do:

- Keep regularly in touch with the person to check that they are safe, ensuring that it is safe for them to be in touch with you. Assume that a perpetrator of violence can see, hear and or monitor communications, so find out how best to communicate with the person that you are concerned about. Be discrete in connecting with them when the abuser is present in the home so that they are not placed at risk of additional harm. Check each time, as this may change.
- If someone you know needs urgent help for whatever reason, be prepared to call emergency health services, the police, health centre, or hotline.

Violence – in all its forms – can have an impact on a woman's well-being throughout the rest of her life. This is unacceptable, and the risks of violence that women and their children face during the current COVID-19 crisis cannot be ignored.

When we are able to prevent violence, or to support women survivors of violence, we help to safeguard women's human rights, and promote physical and mental health and well-being for women throughout their lives. This also helps to alleviate pressure on already stretched essential public services, including the health system.

Source: World Health Organisation

COVID KINDNESS

Global leaders pledge universal access to new vaccines, tests & treatment

Heads of state and global health leaders made an unprecedented commitment to work together to accelerate the development and production of new vaccines, tests and treatments for COVID-19 and assure equitable access worldwide.

There is an urgent need, while following existing measures to keep people physically distanced and to test and track all contacts of people who test positive, for innovative COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and treatments. The challenge is to speed up and harmonise processes to ensure that once products are deemed safe and effective, they can be brought to the billions of people in the world who need them.

So the leaders came together at a virtual event recently, co-hosted by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the President of France, the President of the European Commission, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The event was joined by the UN Secretary General, the African Union Commission Chairperson, the G20 President, heads of state of France, South Africa, Germany, Vietnam, Costa Rica, Italy, Rwanda, Norway, Spain, Malaysia and the UK.

Health leaders from different coalitions committed to come together, guided by a common vision of a planet protected from human suffering and the devastating social and economic consequences of COVID-19, to launch this groundbreaking collaboration.

They pledged to work towards equitable global access based on an unprecedented level of partnership. They agreed to create a strong unified voice, to build on past experience and to be accountable to the world, to communities and to one another.

HEALT Hulletin



FDA warns about limits of SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently issued a letter warning healthcare providers about the limits of serological tests to detect SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. The agency is urging clinicians to "not use serological (antibody) tests as the sole basis to diagnose COVID-19 but instead as information about whether a person may have been exposed."

In mid-March, the FDA "provided regulatory flexibility" for test developers, the agency noted, which has resulted in scores of antibody tests quickly hitting the market without the agency's usual review. As of April 18, just four antibody assays had received emergency use authorisation from the FDA.

The agency said it "is not aware of an antibody test that has been validated for diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection." The tests measure IgM or IgG antibodies, but IgM antibodies may not develop at all, and IgG antibodies usually do not develop until later in the disease process. Therefore, using such tests to diagnose COVID-19 will miss infections.

COVID-19 & gastrointestinal symptoms

STAR HEALTH DESK

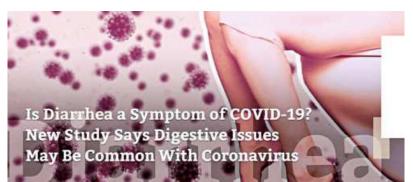
A fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath are hallmark signs COVID-19, the illness caused by the new coronavirus. But early research suggests that another common symptom may be often overlooked: stomach upset.

A recent analysis of more than 200 people admitted to hospitals in Hubei, China where the virus SARS-CoV-2 originated, with mild cases of COVID-19 found that almost 1 in 5 had at least one gastrointestinal symptom, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, or belly pain. The problem, including watery stool, was usually not severe. The diarrhoea lasted for an average of 5 days. Nearly 80% also lacked an appetite

Those symptoms can stem from other common causes, including stomach flu or food poisoning. But if you have COVID-19, gastrointestinal (GI) problems may slow your recovery. And the digestive symptoms may worsen as you get sicker.

Once any virus infects your body, it can destroy healthy cells and make multiple copies of itself. COVID-19 mainly attacks the cells lining your airways. This makes it hard for you to breathe and can lead to pneumonia. But researchers think the illness also may harm your digestive tract and liver tissue.

Those with digestive symptoms were more likely to have a positive stool test for the coronavirus, which means they had SARS-CoV-2 RNA



in their poop. It also took them longer to clear the virus from their bodies, compared to those without gastrointestinal symptoms.

What you should do

If you have diarrhoea, nausea, or vomiting, does not mean that you have COVID-19. But it is wise to pay extra attention to your symptoms during this pandemic, especially if you have a health condition that raises your chances for an infection or if you live in an area where the new coronavirus is widespread.

Stay home. Most people who test positive for the coronavirus get mildly sick and get better without treatment. Avoid going out unless you must, such as for urgent medical visits.

Have a "sick" bedroom and bathroom. If you can, use a separate bathroom for yourself if you live with others to prevent spreading illness through your poop.

Wash your hands often. Soap and water for at least 20 seconds is best, especially after you use the bathroom, blow your nose, or sneeze, and before eating or cooking. Next best is a hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol. Clean and disinfect surfaces

regularly. This includes the toilet seat and flush handle, bathroom doorknobs, phones, counters, and other things you touch often.

Drink lots of fluids. If you have

diarrhoea or are vomiting, it is important to replace the lost fluids. An oral rehydration solution from the drugstore is best as it has salt and sugar that your body loses in diarrhoea.

Eat a bland diet. Try foods like bananas, white rice and toast, which can help limit your urge to poop and replenish carbohydrates that your body needs.

If your stomach troubles are due to a GI bug or food poisoning, you usually should feel better within 48 hours. If you do not, consult a doctor. It could be a more serious bacterial infection or an early sign of COVID-19.

Source: WebMD

Are you immune to COVID-19 after you have had it?

Based on data from other viruses and coronavirus strains, we know that people make antibodies 7-10 days after infection and that, depending on the type of virus, these antibodies can fend off reinfection for months to years after recovery (antibodies provide immunity only to the specific strain of coronavirus that a person was infected with). Since coronavirus disease (COVID-19) causing SARS-CoV-2 is a new virus, we still do not know how long antibodies will stay in our system after this specific viral infection.

It is highly likely that the antibodies we make after infection with the COVID-19 virus will provide immunity for a period of time. Chinese scientists have conducted some early research with rhesus monkeys and found that antibodies after recovery from COVID-19 protected the monkeys from becoming reinfected after another exposure to the virus. WebMD says, after the SARS outbreak, one study showed antibodies lasted for up to 3 years.

The level and time period of immunity can also depend on how an individual's immune system responds, so there is a lot more we still need to learn about immunity after COVID-19 infection.

Several reports from China have described cases of people with mild symptoms continuing to test positive for the virus, even after recovery. A small study of Chinese healthcare workers also described findings where people continued to test positive even after they had recovered. The study found that these individuals no longer had symptoms and that they did not go on to infect their family members.

According to experts, these scenarios require further study, but are unlikely to reflect reinfection. Research will continue to look at this question, but from what we know about our body's ability to fight of viruses, it is highly unlikely that a person that has recovered from COVID-19 and made antibodies will become reinfected in such a short period of time.



HOW TO HOME QUARANTINE

The home quarantined person should:



Stay in a well-ventilated single-room preferably with an attached toilet



Wash hand frequently with soap and water or with alcohol-based sanitizer



Needs to stay away from elderly people, pregnant women, children

Avoid sharing

household items

like dishes, glasses,

cups, utensils,

towels, bedding



Restrict his/her movement within the house



Under no circumstances attend any social/religious gathering



Wear a surgical mask at all time. The mask should be changed every 6-8 hours



Dispose off used mask in a closed bin and bin should also be handled responsibly



If symptoms appear, he/she should immediately inform the nearest health centre





Spotlight on Shakib even in the dark

Nabid Yeasin



The brightest of stars do not always need a clear skies to draw attention and make their presence known to the world. Such can be said about Shakib Al Hasan,

undoubtedly the brightest star of Bangladesh cricket, as the premier all-rounder also does not always necessarily need to be involved in a cricketing activity to hog

The 33-year-old all-rounder always seems to find his way into buzzing topics. While often it is his blistering centuries, a magnificent five-wicket haul or an incredible effort while fielding that catches everyone's eye, it is also not rare to

see him make headlines for off-the-field misdemeanours. Be it reacting too strongly to the Mirpur crowd's booing by making an inappropriate gesture in a big as a World Cup game (after the group stage match against West Indies in the 2011 edition) or venting his anger towards the camera which had zoomed on him more than

once while he was in the dressing room,

Shakib has often grabbed attention for

his off-the-field activities. The sporting world has come to a standstill for the past two months due to the coronavirus pandemic. Even during this period, with almost no outdoor activities going on around the globe, it was Shakib whose name came up in the news and headlines more than any other Bangladeshi athlete in the past few days.

Shakib, who has been banned -- a twoyear sentence imposed by the ICC with one of those suspended -- since October last year, made the headlines when he announced himself to be in self-isolation at a hotel in the United States through a video on social media on March 21. The premier all-rounder travelled to the US to be with his family but not before imposing a 14-day isolation period on himself as advised in order to fight the coronavirus pandemic currently sweeping

One would be wrong to think that the all-rounder will not make the news at least during that 14-day period of self-isolation as Shakib's trait as an allrounder once again came to the fore. This time for an off-the-field noble initiative, as The Shakib Al Hasan Foundation joined forces with The Daily Star, Sheba.xyz and Samakal in their joint initiative named 'Mission Save Bangladesh' on March 28 --

isolation. The joint initiative was aimed at providing needy families with groceries and also carrying out community based services like disinfecting public places.

Not long after that, on April 3, Shakib was once again in the news -- again for a good reason. This time the Shakib Al Hasan Foundation announced their collaboration with Bangladesh's leading manufacturing engineering company, Confidence Group, to provide Taka 20 lakh worth of coronavirus testing kits to recognised hospitals and medical institutions across the country.

However, the next time Shakib made the headlines, it was for a negative reason. Around 200 workers of an aquaculture farm in Satkhira, co-owned by the star all-rounder, had gathered for a movement

when Shakib was on his eighth day of self- demanding their due salaries on April 20. All those workers, who had blocked the Munshiganj-Nildumur road, claimed they were owed four months' wages -from January to April 18 -- before Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) dispersed the gathering outside Shakib Al Hasan Agro Farm Limited.

> The next day, on April 21, Shakib had instructed the authorities of his aquaculture farm to clear all the due salaries of the employees who had demonstrated a movement. It was the same day when Shakib's partner in the farm Sahagir Hossain Pavel also informed The Daily Star that the movement was a shocking one as they had requested the employees for time till April 30 to pay their dues. Sahagir, who mentioned that Shakib was not personally involved with the matter and had no prior clue

headlines on two occasions. The premier all-rounder had announced through a long Facebook post that he resolved the

regarding it, also informed that he was

instructed by the premier all-rounder to

clear all the salaries of employees after he

The next day, however, Shakib made

had contacted Shakib over phone.

situation by taking full responsibility to pay all the due salaries from his own personal funds and without any assistance from company funds or the co-owners. The left-hander, however, talked about 'hidden agendas' and 'ill intentions' by people, who he claimed to have instigated the workers into taking the streets. Not only that, Shakib also took a swing at the media personnel, blaming them for blowing the whole issue out of proportion by going for sensationalising headlines, which Shakib claimed to be 'partly false and mostly misleading'.

On that same day when he blamed the media for false accusations, Shakib was praised by the same media for his noble gesture of selling one of his favourite bats, the one he used during his impressive campaign at the 2019 ICC World Cup in England, for a price of 20 lakh Taka through an online auction arranged by a page named 'Auction 4 Action' on social media. Shakib had expressed his willingness to put his favourite bat up for auction and donate the funds for battling the coronavirus crisis prior to that.

Shakib's good deeds -- be it leading Bangladesh to victories single-handedly or raising funds and taking initiatives to help the needy ones at times of crisis -- have always come in a bag mixed with some negative events -- ranging from making inappropriate gestures towards fans to lashing out at media for a fault that has clearly his name involved. The last few days were just another example of his idiosyncrasy and may be that is the reason the spotlight always seems to find Shakib even when he is off the field.



Spectators enjoy in Vanuatu, where a women's final was played yesterday.

Vanuatu offers live action



Vanuatu is very likely to be the only venue in the world to have hosted a competitive cricket final this weekend as most international sport remains shut around the globe.

The women's final was preceded by a men's exhibition match and streamed live from the capital Port Vila on the Vanuatu Cricket Twitter feed and Facebook page.

Vanuatu Cricket Association chief executive Shane Deitz, the former South Australia left-hander, had invited anyone missing live action to tune in to a live stream from the tropical island in the South Pacific.

"It's one of the only live sports around the world at the moment. We can showcase a bit of cricket for everyone who is in lockdown," Deitz told the Associated Press. He also said that they were surprised by the huge

response from the viewers so far. Bored sports fans, he added, "can see something a bit different. We can offer some entertainment - that's what

we're trying to do". Vanuatu went into lock down late last month as a precaution during the coranavirus pandemic, and was then

hit by a destructive cyclone on April 6. The country, some 2,000 kilometres off the east coast of Australia, has a population of 300,000 but has not yet recorded a single case of COVID-19.

'We're lucky here in Vanuatu and life is returning to normal so we thought it was our duty to provide the world with some live sport," Deitz said in a video posted on Twitter ahead of the final. "We really hope that everyone around the world can tune in and watch some fantastic cricket coming from Vanuatu and break up the boredom you must be suffering stuck in your living rooms."

While they're celebrating a reopening, there's work to be done in parts of the island archipelago that are rebuilding after Cyclone Harold.

Cricket is a serious sport in Vanuatu, which has roughly 80 islands and a population of nearly 300,000. In the past, Deitz said stars including former Australia captain Steve Waugh and fast bowler Merv Hughes visited Port Vila.

After a decade of playing first-class cricket for South Australia. Deitz moved into coaching in New Zealand. then in Bangladesh and has lived for five years in Vanuatu, where he made his international debut as a player in 2018. His aim is to keep developing the game and facilities,

hoping to make Vanuatu a destination for club teams and national junior teams to practice and play.



Shakib Al Hasan rarely fails to hog the spotlight, the premier all-rounder often making headlines for impressive performances on the field while sometimes even being the topic of discussion for some of his off the field antics too.

No winners as Dutch league called off



The Dutch football federation (KNVB) called an end **eredivisie** to the 2019-20 season on Friday, as the Eredivisie became the first top European league called

No team will be declared champions after Ajax and AZ Alkmaar were left level on points at the top of the table with nine games still to play.

off due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Unfortunately, given the measures taken by the government, it became impossible to finish the 2019-2020 season," the KNVB said in a statement. "Public health always comes first. This is not just a football problem given what the coronavirus is doing to society. Nonetheless, the professional football committee is aware that the decisions today are going to cause great disappointment for some," it added.

Leaders Ajax, above AZ on goal difference, will qualify for next season's Champions League group stage, which will await a definitive verdict from UEFA on May 25. AZ will likely enter the qualifying rounds, with Feyenoord, PSV Eindhoven and Willem II set to compete in the Europa League based on the final standings.

There will be no relegation, nor promotion," said the KNVB, which is expected to face legal action from SC Cambuur and De Graafschap -- the top two clubs in the second division.



Brazil superstar Marcelo was lounging at home with his dogs as the coronavirus pandemic continued to force people to stay indoors and practice social distancing.

BPL fate in the balance

A meeting of the profes-

SPORTS REPORTER

sional football league committee of Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday heard suggestions from the representing clubs of the Bangladesh Premier League regarding the league's fate in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. The league was suspended after March 15, with only six rounds of matches having taken place. The meeting took place online, with representatives of the 13 clubs communicating through a videoconference. BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag said that they received a few suggestions from the club representatives, including the most prominent of scrapping the league altogether. However, he said any decision regarding the league will not be taken before the last week of next month.

"There have been quite a few suggestions made during the meeting. The clubs are in financial crisis and since nothing is certain at this point of time, the majority consensus from the clubs is scrapping the league. There have been other suggestions such as removing relegation, helping the clubs through AFC/ FIFA funds, and in case the league is held how it could be held without foreign players. We will discuss these issues at the executive committee and might come to a decision towards the end of next month, if situation allows," Shohag told The Daily Star.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্য্যালয় কানাইঘাট,সিলেট। E-mail: kanaighat@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

স্মারবানং- উত্থাক/ কানাই/এমএসআর/সঞ্চাহ/২০২০/৩৮৮

তারিশ ঃ ২৫/০৪/২০২০ইং।

এতহারা উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্ত্তার কর্মেলয়, বানাইখটি, সিলেট এর জন্য ২০১৯- ২০২০ ইং অর্থ সদের "ক" 'ব" "গ" "হ" 'ভ' এন্দেপ এম, এস আর সামগ্রী জন্তের

2	মন্ত্ৰনাগন্ত / বিভাগ	:	বাছ্য সেবা বিভাগ, সাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রনালয় / সাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর
ą	এজেপী	8	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, কানাইঘাট, দিলেট
۰	সংগ্রহকারী সংস্থার নাম	:	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, কানাইদাট,দিলেট
8	তব পঠিবা	:	উনুক্ত দরণর আহ্বাদের মাধ্যমে (পিশিস্তার - ২০০৮ মোডাবেক)।
¢	অর্ডের উৎস	8	সাধানন রাজস্ব বরান্দ (গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার)।
ъ	দরশর বিজঙ্কি নং ও ভারিখ	:	উপাক/ কানাই/এমএসজার/সঞ্চাহ/২০২০/ ও৮৮ ডাং -২৫/০৪/২০২০ইং।
9	দরপ্রের নাম / কাজের বিবরন	8	২০১৯-২০১২০ ইং অর্থ বছরে উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কর্যালয়,কানাইঘটি, সিলেট এর জন্য এমএসজার সামগ্রী সরবরাহ। প্রপদাং ক- উষধ পত্র - খ- মেডিকেল যন্তপতি, গ- গজ, বেডেজ ও ভূলা, ঘ- আসবাবপত্র ও কিচেন সামগ্রী, ৬- লিলেন সামগ্রী।
¥	দরণর আহানকারী দঙ্কের নাম	:	উপজেলা যাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্য্যালয়, কানাইঘাট,দিলেট
b	দরণত খোঁগার ছান	8	উপজেলা যায়্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়,কানাইঘাট, দিলেট
30	দরশত্র সিভিউল বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ ভারিখ ও সময়	:	বিজ্ঞত্তি প্রকাশের পর হাইতে ০৭/০৫/২০২০ ইং অফিস চলাকাণীন সময় পর্যস্ক (সরকারী ও সঞ্চাহিক চুটির দিন ব্যক্তিত)।
22	দরণত এইদের তরিখ , সময় ও স্থান	8	১০/০৫/২০২০ ইং সকাল ১০.০০ খনিকা হইছে মূপুর ০১.০০ খনিকা পর্যন্ত, উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্ত্তার কার্যালয়, কানাইখাট, সিলেট।
54	দ্বপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	:	১০/০৫/২০২০ ইং দুপুর ০১.৫০ খনিকা (দরপার লাভা কিংবা প্রতিদিধির উপস্থিতিতে যদি কেহ' থাকেন)।
20	দরপত্র সিভিউল বিক্রবের স্থান	8	উপজেলা স্বাস্থ্য ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তার কর্ম্যালয়,কানাইখাট, দিলেট এর হিসাব শাখা।
38	দরণর দাতাদের যোগাতা	:	এমএসঝার সামগ্রী সরবরাহ কাজে পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রকৃত ব্যবসাধী/প্রতিষ্ঠান/ চিকানার / সরবরাহকারী / প্রস্কৃতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান।
30	দরণত্র সিভিউদের মূল্য	8	ঞাপ নং - ক ও ব প্রতি ঞাপে ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা এবং গ্, ছ ও ও ঞাপে ৭৫০/- (সাঙ্গত পক্ষাপ) টাকা (অফেরং ঘোগা) চালানের মাধ্যমে কোড নং - ১ - ২ ৭ ১ ১ - ০ ০ ০ ০ - ২০ ২০ এ সোনালী বাংক, কানাইখাট, সিলেট শাখায় জমাধান করিয়া চালানের মূলকণি অগ্রাফিনের হিসাব শাখায় সাধিল পূর্বক সিভিউল সংগ্রহ করিতে হইবে।
26	বরণত দলিসের নিরাপরা জামানত উপজেলা খাছা ও পঃ পঃ কর্মকর্তা, কানাইখাট, দিগোট"এর অনুকূলে বাংক ড্রাফট /পে - অর্তারের মাধ্যমে	8	গ্রুপ নং - ক - ৩৫,০০০/- (পর্যন্তিশ হাজার), গ্রুপ নং খ - ২০,০০০/- (বিশ হাজার), গ্রুপ নং গ - ১০,০০০/- (দশ হাজার), গ্রুপ নং ঘ - ৫,০০০/- (পাঁচ হাজার), গ্রুপ নং ৪ - ১০,০০০/- (দশ হাজার) (পরপত্র সংক্রোক্ত কার্য্যাদি সমান্তির পর অকৃতকার্য্য দরপত্র মাতার জামানত ফেরত যোগ্য)
29	সরবরাহ কাল	8	বার্ঘাদেশ (নোটিকৈকেশন অব এওয়ার্ড) মোডাকেক।

ং কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপর গ্রহন অথবা সকল দরপর বাজিল করার। কমতা সংরক্ষন করেন। 📑 জন্যান্য শর্তাবলী দরপর সিভিউলে। সংযুক্ত আছে।





PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM







Stigma making it worse

Experts say many hide Covid-19 symptoms putting others at risk of infection

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A person who later turned out to be coronavirus-positive had gone to Dhaka Medical College Hospital on April 8 after having visited a few other hospitals.

The patient was complaining of abdominal pain. Doctors performed an X-ray and suspected that the patient is probably infected with Covid-19.

When doctors suggested that samples be collected to be tested for the virus, the patient's relatives told the doctors that his sample had been collected earlier.

Later, the patient died and his namaz-e-janaza was held without following the WHO's burial guidelines as the family had kept his infection a secret.

Doctors learned later that his sample was collected and sent for testing when he had been at a private hospital prior to coming to DMCH, and the test results came out positive for Covid-19 the following day.

"Some of our doctors wore PPE during the treatment but there were other patients in the ward so they might have been infected," said a doctor wishing not to be named.

On April 9, nine doctors, six nurses and a ward boy of the hospital went into quarantine as they came to know that they had unwittingly treated a patient with coronavirus.

This is not an isolated incident. There are a number of reports that people suspected of coronavirus infection are avoiding quarantine facilities owing to fears of isolation

Experts said this is leading to panic and further spread of the deadly disease. Such patients are even infecting SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



People of Narayanganj, one of the districts hit hard by the coronavirus outbreak, disregard social distancing advice and are seen crowding a street in Fatullah yesterday.

ANISUR RAHMAN

Six more die after showing Covid-19 symptoms

STAR REPORT

Six people, including a 16-month-old baby girl, died after showing Covid-19-like symptoms in five districts yesterday.

Local health officials collected samples from their bodied for novel coronavirus

The houses of the five and those of their nearby neighbours were put on lockdown by the local administration officials.

In Faridpur, two patients, aged 17 and 30, died at the isolation ward of Faridpur Medical Collage Hospital with Covid

like symptoms yesterday. Saifur Rahman, superintendent of the hospital, said the 17-year-old girl from Sarukdia village in the district's Saltha upazila died around 11:45am. The 30-yearold housewife from Baliadanga village

around noon. The two were admitted to the hospital on Friday with fever and respiratory problems, Saifur added.

in Charbhadrasan upazila passed away

In Khulna, a sixteen-month-old baby girl, who was undergoing treatment at the isolation unit of Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) with novel coronavirus-

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

No settlement without Bangladesh's concurrence



Bangabandhu praying at the mazar of Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq on April 26 on the occasion of the 10th death anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla.

April 26, 1972

Shamsuddoza Sajen

BANGABANDHU'S INTERVIEW WITH THE STATESMAN

Bangabandhu is today quoted as saying India will not and cannot negotiate any settlement with Pakistan on the prisoners of war issue without Bangladesh's concurrence.

Resident Editor of The Statesman, Delhi, Kuldip Nayar, who had an 80-minute interview with Bangabandhu in Dhaka, says in despatch that Bangabandhu would not comment on India holding

5 private universities get world ranking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five Bangladeshi private universities made it to the second edition of the Times Higher Education's pioneering Impact Rankings, which assess the social and economic impact of universities, using metrics based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development

According to the report ublished on April 22, Brad University and Daffodil International University ranked 301-400, United International University and World University of Bangladesh ranked 401-600 while Independent University, Bangladesh, ranked 601+.

Last year in the first edition of The Times **Higher Education Impact** Rankings, Daffodil **International University** ranked 201-300 and World

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Charity dogs to 'sniff out' virus



Can dogs detect Covid-19? A British charity believes so, and has begun training canines to sniff out the coronavirus following previous screening success with various illnesses.

harness dogs' sharp sense of smell to detect human diseases, started working on the project late last In its training room in Milton Keynes, in central England, the dogs are being intensively trained to

Medical Detection Dogs, set up in 2008 to

sniff out samples of the virus, and indicate when they have found it to receive a treat. The approach is based on a belief that each disease triggers a distinct odour, which canines are

uniquely well-placed to smell. The charity has previously worked with its dogs

to detect cancers, Parkinson's disease and bacterial infections using samples taken from patients. "We believe dogs can detect Covid-19 and will

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'DISINFECTANT' ROW

Trump says he was being sarcastic

REUTERS, Washington

President he was Trump said being sarcastic when he raised the possibility of using disinfectant inside people's bodies to fight the coronavirus, seeking to walk back comments that alarmed medical professionals worldwide.

Trump said at a Thursday news briefing that scientists should explore whether inserting light or disinfectant into the bodies of coronavirus patients might help treat Covid-19, respiratory caused by the virus.

At an Oval Office event on Friday, Trump sought to walk back those comments while also seeming to continue to advance his theory that disinfectants sunlight ultimately help within the

"I was asking a question sarcastically to reporters like you just to see what would happen," he told journalists at an event in the Oval Office.

His remarks on Thursday, directed at Dr Deborah Birx, who is coordinating the president's coronavirus task force, and William Bryan, acting head of the US Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate, did not come across as sarcastic.

Pressed about the issue on Friday, Trump said he was not encouraging people to ingest disinfectant.

The Maryland Emergency Management Agency said it had received several calls about disinfectant use and Covid-19. "This is a reminder that under no circumstances should any SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



AZAN 4-04 12-45 4-45 6-29 8-00 JAMAAT 4-14 1-15 5-00 6-39 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

RAMADAN APRIL SEHRI IFTAF

India plans to fast track Chinese investments

REUTERS, New Delhi

India plans to fast track the review of some investment proposals from neigbouring countries such as China following concerns new screening rules could hit plans of companies and investors, three sources told Reuters yesterday.

To avoid opportunistic takeovers during the coronavirus outbreak, India said this week that all foreign direct investment from countries sharing a land border would require prior government clearance, meaning they can't go through a so-called automatic route.

Advisers to Chinese firms have said they are concerned the process could take several weeks and hit deals and investment timelines. Auto firms such as SAIC's MG Motor and Great Wall, and investors Alibaba and Tencent have placed major bets on India SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Two young volunteers of Gift for Good providing food among people of the Bede community which has been hit hard by the restrictions imposed to contain the coronavirus outbreak. The photo was taken in Malkhanagar area of Munshiganj's Sirajdikhan upazila last week.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Taking care of the neglected

Alokito Shishu delivering food, groceries to transgender, Bede, Harijan communities

MD MIZANUR RAHMAN HIMADRI

"This virus has affected everyone -- it did not even show any compassion for those already considered excluded, marginalised, and invisible."

Kanta (not her real name), a transgender person from Dhaka, said this while talking about the hardship the community is facing amid the countrywide shutdown enforced to combat the coronavirus outbreak.

For their livelihoods, many in their community either collect alms from roadside shops and on the streets or work in the sex trade.

Since the first day of the shutdown, they, like many others, have become jobless. On top of this, no one from the authorities came forward to help them in this time of In this dire situation, several young members of a

charity, however, appeared at their colony in Jatrabari area earlier this month, bringing groceries and other essential items. Those included rice, lentil, salt, flour, onion, potato, oil, puffed rice, soap, saline, and basic medicine. Gift for Good, an initiative of Alokito Shishu, aims

to support the families of underprivileged minority communities such as the transgender, Bede (river gypsies), and Harijan (also known as sweepers and cleaners) communities during the ongoing shutdown.

Alokito Shishu, a non-profit organisation, began its journey in 2015 with the aim of providing basic education to the children of Bede and Harijan communities, said its

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