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Sugarcane is just not paying

Growers leaving occupation due to poor payment by sugar mills; 15 factories owe them Tk 250cr

KONGRON KARMAKER

For the last one month, sugarcane farmer Abdul Salam has not received a penny from the state-owned Mobarakganj Sugar Mill in Jhenaidah district's Kaliganj upazila.

He supplied sugarcane worth Tk 4.5 lakh to the mill in batches between December and mid-March and only received a total of Tk 1 lakh in installments.

"The latest installment of Tk 5,300 was paid through mobile banking on March 22," Abdul told the Daily Star on April 28.

"I already used the Tk 1 lakh to repay loans and other dues. Now I have nothing left to feed my family during this shutdown," said the farmer from Kaliganj's Gobordanga village.

Mahedi Hasan, another sugarcane grower from Chhoto Ghighati village, received only Tk three lakh out of Tk 10 lakh that the mill owes him.

"I do not know when I would get the rest of the dues. I am borrowing money from different people to feed my family," he said, declaring that he will never cultivate sugarcane again.

It takes almost a year to cultivate sugarcane and farmers often have to wait two to three months to receive payment from the sugar mills, he explained.

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Children apparently unaffected by the crisis plaguing the world enjoy running around in the rain near Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

DIGITAL SECURITY ACT 3 journos sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Three journalists were sent to jail by a Narsingdi court yesterday in a case filed under the Digital Security Act over quoting a police official without contacting him.

The journalists are Ramjan Ali Pramanik, 45, news editor of local daily Dainik Grameen Darpon, Shanto Banik, 35, a reporter of the newspaper, and Khandaker Shahin, 32, publisher and editor of web portal "Narsingdi Pratinidin".

Jahangir Hossain, inspector of Special Branch of Narsingdi police, said the three were picked up from their houses on Friday morning.

Inspector Johirul Alam, in-charge of Ghorashal Police Outpost, filed the case with Palash Police Station on Thursday night.

According to the case statement, the online version of Dainik Grameen Darpon ran a report on Thursday under the headline "Youth beaten dead by police on charges of stealing" and Narsingdi Pratinidin published a report headlined "Man dies in Ghorashal police custody; allegation made against police about beating him to death".

Both the reports quoted comments of Inspector Johirul, but no reporters from those outlets contacted him, said the case statement.

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Two cops die from Covid-19

250-bed police hospital struggling with patients; 741 cops infected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two sub-inspectors died with coronavirus in the last two days at Central Police Hospital in the capital, raising the Covid-19 death toll among law enforcers to five.

Sultanul Arefin, 44, of Public Order Management (POM) at Dhaka Metropolitan Police, died around 7:00am yesterday at the Intensive Care Unit and Nazir Uddin, 55, of Special Branch, died Friday morning.

Sultanul was admitted to the hospital on April 27 with breathing difficulties and persistent cough. He tested positive for the virus later, said hospital Director Hasan ul Haider.

Sultanul left behind his wife, two daughters, and a son. He was buried after a namaz-e-janaza at his village in Jamalpur.

The other victim, Nazir, showed symptoms over a week ago, Haider said, adding that he had asthma and other underlying conditions. The report that he tested positive came on April 25.

Nazir, who was from Pabna, joined Bangladesh Police in 1983 and had been with the Special Branch since 2013.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Health centre at each thana



Representatives of the All India Peasant Union call on Bangabandhu on May 3, 1972.

May 2&3, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU VISITS DEFENCE MINISTRY

On May 2, 1972 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman visits defence ministry.

He meets with the senior staff of the ministry. He is accompanied by defence secretary, Chief of Staff Colonel Shafiqullah and Colonel Khaled Mosharraf, among others.

JAPANESE DELEGATION CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

A Japanese delegation calls on Bangabandhu on May 2, 1972 at his official residence. They discuss various issues related to the reconstruction of war-torn Bangladesh, rehabilitation of the displaced people and trade between the two countries.

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7 garment workers test positive

STAR REPORT

Seven garment workers in Savar tested positive for Covid-19 on Friday, according to sources at Savar Upazila Health Complex.

The local administration did not disclose whether the workers, aged between 28 and 36, came from outside Savar to join work.

The sources at the health complex said 51 samples were sent to a lab on Thursday for Covid-19 testing. Eight of them tested positive for novel coronavirus.

Dr Shayemul Huda, Savar upazila health and family planning officer, said most of the seven garment workers were from Savar's Ulaila area.

He said the area was put on lockdown and the workers were sent to a hospital in Dhaka.

Parvejur Rahman, upazila nirbahi officer of Savar, said houses of

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Biman gets Tk 1,000cr loan to stay afloat



RASHIDUL HASAN

Sonali Bank has approved a loan of Tk 1,000 crore to Biman Bangladesh Airlines, which sought Tk 1,500 from the state-owned bank as it was reeling from a fund crisis due to ongoing global travel restrictions thanks to Covid-19 pandemic.

The board of directors of Sonali Bank gave the nod at a meeting on April 30 on condition that the national flag carrier will give a sovereign guarantee, Mohibul Haque, senior secretary at the civil aviation and tourism ministry told The Daily Star yesterday.

The finance division has already given the sovereign guarantee to the bank on behalf of the national airliner, he said.

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Govt restricts the entry of toxic ship

Star report prompts action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday directed all departments concerned not to allow the highly toxic ship "J Nat" to enter Bangladeshi territory.

This ship, currently on its way to Chattogram from Indonesia, is illegally carrying around 1,500 tonnes of mercury mixed waste.

The government also warned all members of the Bangladesh Ship Breakers and Recyclers Association (BSBRA) not to purchase the ship.

The Daily Star published a report on April 30 titled "Toxic ship heading for Bangladesh".

"After seeing the newspaper report, we have already requested the Bangladesh Navy and the armed forces divisions not to allow the ship into Bangladeshi territory," AKM Shamsul Arefin, additional secretary, ship recycling wing, told The

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Hundreds of workers of a garment factory demonstrate on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Targach in Gazipur city after a rumour that the management was planning layoffs yesterday. Many readymade garment manufacturers have laid off their employees in recent weeks.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

US approves use of anti-viral drug

Spain, more US states ease strict lockdowns as France extends emergency until July 24

AFP, Madrid

American authorities have approved an experimental drug for emergency use on coronavirus patients, as more US states eased pandemic lockdowns despite another spike in deaths from the disease.

The measure was the latest step in a global push to find viable treatments and a vaccine for the coronavirus, which has left half of humanity under some form of lockdown, hampered the world economy and caused more than 3.3 million confirmed infections.

The virus has killed more than 239,000 people since it emerged in China late last year.

With signs the pandemic in their hardest-hit nations is slowing, European countries have begun to lift restrictions and to try to inject life into economies battered by weeks of closure.

Spaniards were allowed out of their homes to exercise and walk freely after 48 days of confinement yesterday while others like Russia faced a spike in new infections.

In Madrid and Barcelona, Spaniards took to the streets to exercise and walk freely as the government eased seven weeks of strict lockdown in a country with one of the highest number of fatalities at nearly 25,000.

"After so many weeks in confinement, I badly wanted to go out, run, see the world," said financial advisor Marcos

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