

# Peak in 3rd or last week

Predicts govt's expert panel, says number of cases may cross 50,000 during that phase this month

#### RASHIDUL HASAN and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A government-appointed committee has said the Covid-19 outbreak may peak in the weeks around the Eid, but several independent experts said it is too early to make such a prediction.

Peak may last two

end of June

after June 25

>> New cases tolerable by

>> Restrictions can be lifted

>> More testing required

for reliable prediction

weeks

A reliable prediction would have been possible had there been more testing and stricter coronavirus restrictions, they said.

In a report submitted to the Directorate General of Health Services last week, the committee said the outbreak might peak in the third or fourth week of this month and the situation would remain unchanged

for almost two weeks, or until the first week of June. The number of new cases is likely to come down to a

"tolerable level" by the end of June, unless the restrictions are relaxed too early, said Prof Shah Monir Hossain, one of the eight members of the committee.

The report contains what officials call an exit plan with recommendations to lift restrictions after June 25.

The health ministry in late March formed the committee to supervise, monitor and support the coronavirus response.

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Policemen fire tear gas canisters from an armoured vehicle at demonstrating garment factory workers on Nabinagar-Chandra road in Gazipur's Kashimpur area. The workers of Doreen Apparels Ltd blockaded the road yesterday morning after they were told that the factory was closed for an indefinite period.

### Remdesivir Most city malls Eskayef submits samples to DGDA opt not to open

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leading pharmaceuticals company Eskayef yesterday submitted samples of remdesivir, the drug used for treating Covid-19 patients, to the deputy chief of the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA).

The reference number of the generic drug with brand name Remivir is SKF/DTL-



emivir"100

Spread of virus prompts decision; govt announced markets may reopen today RASHIDUL HASAN

Although the government had announced that shopping centres and malls

would reopen today ahead of Eid, most owners in Dhaka and Chattogram

cities have decided to keep the establishments closed as the number of

Top leaders of Dokan Malik Samity, a platform of shop owners, in

haka said the decision was made also as an untoward situation could

Epidemiological surveillance yet to be in place

Experts say it's crucial in fight against epidemics MOHAMMAD AL MASUM MOLLA

Bangladesh is yet to conduct an epidemiological surveillance which experts say is very important to understand the gravity of the coronavirus situation and will

help take any policy decision in this regard. They said such surveillance would

# Nine out of 10 recovering

IEDCR says 8 more died from Covid-19; 636 newly infected

#### MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN

Eight people died and 636 tested positive for Covid-19 across the country in the 24 hours until 2:30pm yesterday, said the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

While informing about the latest Covid-19 situation in the country through a bulletin yesterday, Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

brickbats at police. Police used tear gas water cannon to disperse SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

**RMG** workers

agitate for full

Clash with police in Savar, Gazipur

At least 10,000 workers

of 14 garment factories in Savar and Gazipur industrial belts yesterday

demonstrated demanding full payment of their

gross salaries for April as

The workers said they

opposed to 60 percent.

did not agree with the

government's decision to

cut the pay of those who

could not join work amid

the shutdown as many

transport as well.

factories were closed and

In Gazipur, at least

in Gazipur's Kashimpur

Dhaka-Tangail highway

the factory managements

started distributing payslips

The agitators vandalised

several vehicles and hurled

6,000 workers of six

area and blocked the

around 8:00am when

among the workers.

there was an acute crisis of

factories took to the streets

April salary

STAR REPORT

SAMPLE/2020/14, said a press release from Eskayef, adding that it received DGDA approval on pricing of the drug on April 7.

Once the approval comes from the testing laboratory, the drug will be supplied to the

markets in a few days, said the release. DGDA RELEASE

Meanwhile, the DGDA yesterday sent a press release to the media, clarifying the issue over the production of the drug.

In the press release, signed by DGDA Director Ruhul Amin, the drug administration said it would issue marketing authoritisation certificate to SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

arise when shop employees, as instructed by the authorities, including the police, would force shoppers to follow health guidelines.

Covid-19 cases keeps surging in the country.

On May 4, the government said it decided to reopen shopping malls, all types of shops and other businesses from May 10 on a limited scale ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr. Those would remain open from 10:00am to 4:00pm every day, according to a gazette from the Cabinet Division.

The shopping malls and centres were closed on March 25, a day before the ongoing nationwide shutdown was enforced to stem the coronavirus outbreak.

But on May 6, the authorities of Bashundhara City Shopping Complex and Jamuna Future Park -- the country's two largest shopping malls -decided not to reopen them, fearing that the coronavirus might spread to their customers, shop owners and employees

On Friday, another popular shopping destination in the capital -- Dhaka New Market -- also decided not to reopen before the Eid on the same ground, Dewan Aminul Islam Shahin, president of Dhaka New Market Business Association, told The Daily Star.

Talking to this correspondent yesterday, leaders of 14 other shopping SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

have allowed health officials to suggest the government about the next course of action like when and how the ongoing shutdown should be relaxed or withdrawn, which area is highly vulnerable and what measures to be taken.

Epidemiological surveillance is the discipline of continuously gathering, analysing, and interpreting data about diseases, and disseminating conclusions of the analyses to relevant organisations.

In Bangladesh, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) was supposed to do the surveillance on Covid-19.

Contacted, IEDCR officials said they had started the surveillance and it would be completed in about three weeks. SEE PAGE 2 COL 1 general (administration) of DGHS, said 5,465 samples were tested in 35 laboratories across the country in the 24 hours.

The eight people who died in the 24 hours were all male and aged between 40 and 80. With them, the total death toll of Covid-19 now stands at 214.

So far, a total of 116,919 individuals' samples were tested for Covid-19 and the total number of infections stood at 13,770.

Meanwhile, with four positive cases detected in Rangamati yesterday, people of all 64 districts in the country were now infected with the virus.

Prof Ridwanur Rahman, an infectious disease specialist, recently told The Daily Star that the number of positive cases would increase further as soon as the daily testing capacity goes up.

On April 28, the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19 officially recommended to increase daily testing facility as early as possible.

Prof Mohammad Shahidullah, president of NTAC, recently told The Daily Star, "We have recommended to address the issues as early as possible to increase the number of daily tests."

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### 2,329 inmates to be released

Govt takes step to minimise infections in prisons

#### Muntakim Saad

The prisons authorities are releasing another 2,329 convicted prisoners from jails in third phase to ease the accommodation crisis and minimise the risk of novel coronavirus transmission in overcrowded prisons.

"Most of the 2,329 inmates are supposed to be released by today [yesterday]. But a few of them have fine issues. They will be freed within two/three days," Col Abrar Hossain, additional inspector general (AIG) of prisons, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The prisoners, who were convicted of minor crimes, had been behind bars for less than three months.

Muhammad Monzur Hossain, AIG (admin) of prisons, said the prisons department sent release orders to the divisional offices on Friday.

The home ministry, after taking opinions from SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A couple in personal protective equipment and their two children take a little rest after waiting for hours to get tested for coronavirus at Mugda General Hospital yesterday. The family came from Narayanganj's Siddhirganj after days of suffering from what the couple said were Covid-19 symptoms.

PHOTO AMRAN HOSSAIN

### BIRTHING LIFE IN A PANDEMIC

# Fear grips mothers-to-be

#### NILIMA JAHAN

Pregnancy is a stressful and overwhelming experience in itself. Add to that a global pandemic and the whole ordeal can become even more difficult and frightening.

Amidst the Covid-19 outbreak, 20-year old Ferdousi, a pregnant mother of one, was expecting to deliver her second child. However, she lives in an area that has become a "hotspot" for coronavirus.

While she wanted to deliver her baby at the local Upazila Health Complex, it has become impossible right now as the hospital currently has 33 coronavirus positive staffers.

'I'm having trouble breathing due to severe anxiety. I need to go to a doctor immediately but I don't know where to go in this situation. I don't feel the hospitals are safe,' said Ferdousi.

"I'm very anxious about the whole thing as my husband lives abroad and I don't have any men in the family. My mother is old and sick," she added.

Ferdousi, who was married off at 16, gave birth to her first daughter via c-section two years ago.

In a situation so dire, she is not alone.

The coronavirus pandemic has uprooted the pregnancy plans of many and now, an overwhelming majority of them are going through both physical and psychological stress due to their antenatal appointments and finding a safe delivery place (hospitals or birthing centres) to welcome their newborns into this world.

Their fear is rational as some news reports have already said that hospitals are running out of medical staffers due to the current situation and people with emergencies are not being treated properly.

On April 24, a report went viral on social media about a 20-year old pregnant woman, Tania, being denied SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

# Vaccine orders plummet amid coronavirus outbreak: CDC

#### AFP, Washington

Orders for vaccines against diseases such as measles have declined since a national emergency was declared in the United States because of the coronavirus pandemic, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday.

The number of vaccine doses ordered around the country has fallen sharply since mid-March, the CDC said, citing data from the Vaccine Tracking System.

The study compared data from March 13 to April 19 of this year to the same period last year.

"There is a drop of 2.5 million doses of all routine non-influenza vaccines and 250,000 doses of measles-containing vaccines that appears to be the result of staying at home during the Covid-19 outbreak,' the CDC said.

Due to acute crisis of transport for shipping goods to districts from the capital, traders have started using package delivery service providers for the job. The photo taken on English Road in the capital shows packages scattered across the street as they are being loaded on to a truck of a courier service provider. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# Fear grips mothers-to-be

treatment at three hospitals although she had to run around for around nine

hours at a stretch to get to those places. Although Tania's delivery date was May 3, her water broke (amniotic membrane rupture) on that very day and she was in immediate need for ospitalisation for a safe delivery.

She was first refused Government Mohammadpur Maternity Hospital, which has shut down its delivery facilities. The other two hospitals, Ad-Deen Hospital and Azimpur Maternity Hospital, refused to treat her as those suspected her to be Covid-19 positive.

By this time, Tania began feeling like she might not survive as her lower abdomen had hardened and she was feeling unwell, the report read.

The ongoing pandemic has also forced many pregnant women to skip their antenatal appointments, even if they were unwell or facing severe health complications.

While some are avoiding checkups in fear of coming in contact with coronavirus patients, a large number of them are not being able to due to the unavailability of their ob-gyns.

Nujahat Jebin, who is in her 35th week of pregnancy and has been suffering from thalassemia, is currently facing a dire situation because her gynaecologist is currently unavailable.

"Since I have thalassemia, the doctor earlier said the baby isn't getting enough oxygen. To ensure that the baby gets oxygen, I needed to go to the clinic regularly, but now the clinic is so overcrowded.

"Besides, the movement of the baby

#### has also decreased and I have also felt a pain in my lower abdomen," said Jebin. "I don't know what's going on but I'm

medication, but I cannot contact my doctor. I needed the hepatitis B vaccine, but I feel so unsafe outside in the middle of this crisis," she said.

According to the interviewees, given the current global pandemic the world is facing, many obstetricians are increasing the interval between face-toface visits and encouraging them with telemedicine. However, this is not a viable option for many, especially those who require close examination or tests.

Taslima Afrin, who is expecting to deliver her baby on the June 2, told this correspondent that she was supposed to do an ultrasonogram, check her haemoglobin level as she is anaemic, and take a random blood sugar test. "However, this is not possible over phone and I am now told to stay home," she said.

Priyanka Saha, another mother-tobe in Gaibandha, said she has had a severe cough for the past week and her antibiotics are not working properly. "The doctor suggested seeing a chest

specialist for this, which is not possible from here," said Priyanka, who has a history of a miscarriage. Dr Nawsheen Sharmin Purobi, a

renowned gynaecologist, however said that they have not been discouraging anyone to come to visit the hospitals and have been attending emergency manage commodities.

#### cases. However, we prefer dealing with it over phone or online platforms if the problem is not severe.

"Our patients also prefer not to visit due to the current situation. What is more surprising is that we are getting a lot of queries from patients all over the country on our online platform --'Dr Purobi's Help Desk" (a Facebook

Page)," she added. She also suggested that pregnant women do not get stressed as it can have adverse impacts on the pregnancy, such as high blood pressure, high sugar level

or premature contractions. AKM Mohiul Islam, director general of family planning (DGFP), also believes that maternal health, such as, care during pregnancy, post-pregnancy and childbirth, are issues that demand special attention and treatment, and any interruption may increase risks.

A large number of pregnant women also said that they were discharged early from hospitals to limit the risk of inadvertent exposure and infection, while the hospitals' staffers and the obstetrics teams have been trying to minimise the number of people who enter the hospital.

Nazlee Shamima Ferdousi is also with child. She said she has planned to get admitted to hospital 13 days before her due date. "I'm lonely here due to the current situation. Both my mother and mother-in-law are outside the city and they cannot help me right now."

A number of mothers-to-be also noted that they were unable to do the necessary shopping for essentials, such as diapers, baby wipes, and formula milk, and are now facing difficulties to

## 2 Rohingyas killed in 'gunfight'

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two Rohingyas, who were allegedly involved in yaba trade, were killed in a gunfight with police in Teknaf upazila gunfight with police in a solution of Cox's Bazar early yesterday. Mohammad, 35,

Noor Mohammad, 35, and Mohammad Rafique, 25, were from Kutupalang Rohingya Camp in Ukhia upazila, said Prodip Kumar Das, officerin-charge of Teknaf Police Station.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of the police conducted a raid in Ulubania village around 6:00pm on Friday and detained Noor and Rafique, said the OC.

During primary interrogation, they confessed that they regularly smuggled yaba from Myanmar to Bangladesh, the police official said.

They also told police that they had recently brought a consignment of the illicit drug and concealed it somewhere in Ulubania village, Prodip said.

Police, taking along the two suspects, conducted a raid in the village around 1:30am yesterday to recover the yaba pills, he added.

As the law enforcers reached the spot, cohorts of the detainees opened fire on them, forcing them to retaliate that triggered a "gunfight", the OC said.

The two caught in the line of bullets during the incident and were taken to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex and later to Cox's Bazar General Hospital, where they succumbed to their injuries around 5:00am, OC Prodip said, adding that two policemen were also injured during the incident.

Two firearms, five bullets and 158,000 yaba pills were recovered from the spot, the police official said.

Three cases were filed in this connection with Teknaf Police Station.

## Nine out of 10

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In the last seven days until yesterday, the highest 6,260 individuals' samples were tested on Monday. Of them, 688 tested positive.

On Wednesday, the highest 790 cases were detected after testing 6,241 individuals' samples.

In the other days, it stayed stagnant near 5,500 on an average

RECOVERY RATE AROUND 92 PERCENT

In yesterday's press bulletin, Prof Nasima Sultana shared the recovery and death rate of the Covid-19 patients in the country.

Around 17.5 percent of all the detected Covid-19 patients in the country have recovered from their illness while 1.5 percent died, she said

"With 313 in past 24 hours [until 2:30pm yesterday], a total of 2,414 patients have recovered from the disease. In terms of all concluded cases, recovery rate is 91.8 percent while the mortality rate is 8.2 percent," she said. DHAKA CITY TOPS THE LIST OF **COVID-19 CASES** 

According to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) website, Dhaka city continued to be the worst affected region in the country with a total 6,423 positive cases detected here so far. It is more than 58 percent of all cases detected. Collectively, more than 81 percent cases were detected in Dhaka division and 12 other districts. With 1,177 positive cases until vesterday, industrial city Narayanganj continued to be the second worst affected district in the country, followed by Gazipur with 332 positive cases and Munshigonj with 212 cases. Among other districts outside Dhaka division, the highest 212 positive cases were detected in Mymensingh followed by 207 in Chattogram. Among the north Bengal districts, Rangpur district has 157 cases detected so far while all other districts in Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions have more or less 50 cases each.

#### Peak in 3rd or last week FROM PAGE 1 (Southeast Asia Region) of the WHO, The team includes public health experts said, "We won't be able to tell the actual

MA Foyez, Liaquat Ali, and Iqbal Anwar. "Our team forecasts... that at the peak, Covid-19 cases may cross the 50,000 mark," said Prof Monir, senior consultant of the World Health Organisation.

By the end of June, when the situation becomes tolerable, there will still be new cases, he added.

It will be quite some time before there will be zero transmission, according to the committee.

"But the crucial thing is we follow restrictions and implement the intervention levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. Then the peak period will be shortened.

"Our prediction will be proved right if we can continue the interventions," Prof Monir said, adding, "If we start lifting restrictions, the predictions will be wrong.

Meanwhile independent experts called for increasing the number of tests to at least 20,000 a day in order to assess the actual situation. Besides, they called for no further lifting of the coronavirus restrictions.

A member of the government committee also admitted that the predictions would have been more reliable if there were more testing.

Hundreds of garment factories started reopening across the country late last month although the number of new cases have been on the rise.

Besides, the government has already lifted restrictions on people gathering at mosques and shopping malls and many other businesses are going to reopen on a limited scale from today. MORE TESTING

Prof Muzaherul Huq, former adviser

# Eskayef submits

Eskayef for supplying the drug to the market if the result of the samples sent to the laboratory for testing was satisfactory.

PRESS NOTE FROM BEXIMCO

Beximco Pharmaceuticals Limited also issued a press note to the media regarding the production of remdesivir. In the note, it claimed it is the

first company to have produced the generic drug in the country.

help make a plan in advance.

produced in the country by Eskayef. In the note, Beximco said the news was "confusing" and "factually incorrect".

On May 7, Beximco submitted samples of the drug to the DGDA for approval.

The anti-viral drug remdesivir has been proved to fight against coronavirus infection. It was invented US-based biopharmaceutical by On Saturday, several newspapers company Gilead Sciences, Inc.

reported that the drug was first

rate and spread of infection until we can increase the number of daily tests. "We got confined between 5,000 and 6,000 tests. We have to test at least

20,000 people a day. The tests should be done across the country," he told The Daily Star yesterday. "Then we should observe the rise in

the rate of infections. Before that, it's not possible to give a prediction," he said.

He also said the government should not relax the restrictions any further. "The government should not allow

reopening anything like shopping malls and should ensure strict enforcement of the restrictions," he said.

People should be encouraged and involved in the fight against Covid-19, he said

Infectious diseases specialist Prof Ridwanur Rahman said, "Even though the number of tests is inadequate, we are observing a rising trend in daily detection of cases. The actual number of patients must be much higher."

Covid-19 outbreak usually reaches its peak three or four weeks after the daily new cases rise, he said.

"But, we are enforcing the lockdown halfheartedly. People are partially abiding by it. So, we have no example before us [to make proper predictions], he said.

"Such a lockdown has not been enforced anywhere in the world. Besides, the lockdown is not enough, we have to find the patients and isolate them."

### predictions are there to give an idea of how bad the situation might get and to

Asked Prof Shah Monir said, "Such

scared.' Fourteen weeks pregnant, Jannatul Ferdous needed to go to her checkups scheduled this month, but she

too couldn't make it due to the unavailability of her doctor. by

also needed a change of

# Epidemiological surveillance

FROM PAGE 1

conducting "We have been epidemiological surveillance in and outside Dhaka. We are hopeful that we will be able to complete it within two to three weeks," said ASM Alamgir, principal scientific officer at IEDCR.

Asked when did they start the work and what was the sample size, he declined to provide any details.

Bangladesh entered into its 61st day yesterday ever since the first case of the coronavirus was detected in Dhaka on March 8. The surge in infections continued with 636 new cases reported yesterday, taking the total to 13,770.

Yesterday, the authorities also reported eight Covid-19 deaths, bringing the death toll to 214.

Amid the worsening coronavirus situation, the government has reopened factories and decided to reopen businesses and shopping malls on May 10 on a limited scale, apparently in a desperate attempt to bring the economy back on track, but without an epidemiological surveillance report from the IEDCR, the reference body of WHO in Bangladesh.

"Policy makers are not public health experts. So, the health officials should suggest them based on evidence. We are yet to hear about such epidemiological surveillance," said Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) of the DGHS.

Without epidemiological evidence, which is needed to check the infection rate and help generate immunity in

a particular community, relaxing the shutdown may be dangerous and may expedite the spread of the virus, Be-Nazir warned.

Expert also said an epidemiological surveillance can decipher how many of a representative group of people of a community have generated antibodies to fight the virus despite been infected.

Scientists then may extrapolate from there the magnitude of the pathogen's spread in the broader population, experts said.

Such surveillance could also shed light on how the virus transmitted among people, including what role seemingly less-affected groups, like children, have played in its dispersion, they said, adding that the IEDCR should focus more on surveillance.

"IEDCR needs to concentrate more on the ongoing epidemiological surveillance of Covid-19 for analysis, which is very important for epidemic control. It will give us a clear idea about the Covid-19 situation of the country," IEDCR consultant and epidemiologist Mushtuq Husain told The Daily Star.

Abul Kalam Azad, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), also acknowledged it.

'It is important and we have asked the IEDCR to concentrate more on research," he said.

He also said currently their rojections are based on the trends of the identified cases.

"But to give an accurate picture, we need epidemiological surveillance."

FROM PAGE 1

centres in Dhanmondi area, including Gausia, Chadni Chak, Chistia, New Chistia, Noor Mansion, Dhanmondi Hawkers Market, Privangon, Islami Mansion and Eastern Mallika, said they would not reopen as well.

Ówners of wholesale markets in Gulistan, Phulbaria and Banga Bazar areas stated the same.

Aarong, a popular destination for many to buy Eid dresses, however, yesterday decided to reopen some selected outlets. It said special health safety measures would be ensured and that the decision was taken to save the livelihood of rural artisans and small entrepreneurs.

"To reduce health risk and ensure social distancing, Aarong has also, for the first time in Bangladesh, introduced an online booking system for customers who want to visit any shopping outlet. They can book their time slot at aarong.com and visit the outlet at their scheduled time for safe and comfortable shopping," Aarong said in a release.

Of its 21 outlets, two situated in Narayanganj city and Bashabo area of the capital, however, will remain closed as these two areas are considered as Covid-19 hotspots.

Dewan Aminul Islam Shahin said, "Following the government announcement, we had decided to

Sunday to save our livelihood. But we see coronavirus cases are increasing every day. Amid such a

Most city malls opt not to open

situation, most shop owners have decided not to reopen their shops before Eid." He also said the Dhaka Metropolitan

Police and the health ministry gave them various instructions on ensuring social distancing and hygiene at the market, but those would be hard to follow at the market.

"All shoppers might not agree to follow these guidelines and an untoward situation may arise if shop employees ask them to do so," he said. Replying to a query, he said some 506 shops at the market employ some

3,000 people. The DMP on Thursday came up with a set of directives following the government announcement. It said shoppers would be able to go to markets only if they were within two kilometres of their homes. The shoppers will have to carry ID cards or original copies of utility bills.

It also asked the shopping mall authorities to install disinfection tunnels and thermal scanners at the entrance to each mall.

Besides, the authorities of each shopping mall will have to ensure that no one enters the establishment without wearing masks.

reopen the Dhaka New Market today hawkers or temporary roadside shops contributed to this report)

will be allowed.

"Each store must have a separate temperature measurement system," reads the directive.

Talking to this correspondent, Kamrul Hasan Babu, president of Dokan Malik Samity, Gausia Market, said apart from the fear of getting infected with coronavirus, shop owners of different markets in Dhanmondi area said it would not be possible for them to ensure all the guidelines were followed.

Mohammad Bablu, president, Ismail Mansion Market, said they would not be able to do business if they had to remain occupied in ensuring those guidelines.

"That's why most of the shop owners and leaders of different markets in a meeting today decided not to reopen the shops before Eid, although it will deal a blow to our livelihood and earnings," he said.

#### SHOPPING MALLS IN CTG

Meanwhile, owners of 12 large shopping malls in Chattogram on Friday decided that the malls would remain closed till May 31 to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus.

The decision was taken at a joint meeting of the shop owners' association and the traders' association.

(Mohammad Suman, our staff According to the directives, no correspondent from Chattogram,

# RMG workers

FROM PAGE 1

the protesters as the protesters refused to pay any heed to their request, said Shusanto Kumar, additional superintendent of Gazipur Industrial Police, adding that the situation was brought under control around 2:00pm.

Several factories in nearby areas were shut down fearing a spillover of the violence.

In Ashulia, around 4,000 agitating workers demanded that the decision to reduce 40 percent of their house rents be implemented.

The decision was taken at a meeting among industrial police, house owners and local union parishad authorities on Friday

"If the decision comes into effect, we will accept the government decision regarding our salary," said the workers.

Earlier, to avert job cuts and temporary closures during Covid-19 outbreak, the government, on April 29, directed RMG factory owners to pay their workers 60 percent salary for April.

Asked about the workers' demand, a secretary at the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said the decision of paying 60 percent salary was taken at a meeting on Thursday where representatives of two workers' unions, the BGMEA, and the government came to an understanding on this score.

The workers who have worked will receive 100 percent of their salaries, he said.

The BGMEA has requested all members not to lay off any worker in May.

### 2,329 inmates FROM PAGE 1

the law ministry, recently ordered the prisons authorities to release 2,884 inmates who were jailed for one year or less for minor offences, but served months in jails.

Earlier, 555 prisoners were freed last week in two phases. Of them, 170 served six months behind bars, and the rest between three months and six months, jail sources said.

As per the home ministry's order, the prisons headquarters recommended releasing around 5,000 prisoners under three categories.

Under the first category, there were more than 3,000 prisoners who were sentenced to two-year imprisonment.

The second category included 1,413 life-sentenced prisoners who served more than 20 years in jail. Besides, there were 36 inamtes with physical disabilities under the third category. However, the list of 1,413 prisoners

is being shortened. Col Abrar said, "We are excluding inmates convicted of heinous crimes like murder, rape, abduction, throwing acid and in arms cases from the list. After exclusion, the number is now around 460. Preparation of the list is still under process.'

There are around 90,000 prisoners in 68 jails across the country against the capacity of 41,244. Such a large number of prisoners is posing a high risk of coronavirus transmission inside the prisons.

Twenty-two prison guards, two inmates and a doctor of prisons have tested positive for Covid-19 so far since the first Covid-19 case was reported in the country on March 8.

# Hundreds of repatriated Pakistanis test positive for virus

#### AFP, Islamabad

Hundreds of Pakistanis who were repatriated from the Middle East where many lost jobs amid coronavirus shutdowns and were living in cramped conditions -- have tested positive for Covid-19, officials said Friday.

Pakistan has so far brought about 20,000 nationals home, among them a large number of unskilled workers who had been labouring in Gulf nations only to see their jobs disappear as lockdowns slowed economic activity.

Of the 2,069 Pakistanis returning from the Middle East to the southern province of Sindh, more than 500 tested positive for the coronavirus, Murad Ali Shah, Sindh's chief

minister, told a press conference. And in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a senior government official told AFP that more than 200 of the 1,600 passengers repatriated to the city of Peshawar had

tested positive. According to the foreign office, about 4.5 million Pakistanis work in the Middle East.

In addition to the 20,000 who have already come back, around 110,000 more overseas Pakistanis have registered a desire to return home.

Pakistan has been chartering flights to bring back stranded nationals, as commercial flights into the country have been halted.

Labourers in many Gulf nations live in crowded dormitories or work camps where social distancing is million people.

impossible.

During a briefing Thursday, Moeed Yusuf, the prime minister's special assistant on national security, said that on some flights as many as half the passengers were infected.

'Our ministry of foreign affairs has raised this issue with those countries and we are finding ways so it should not happen again," he said.

pressures, Citing economic pressures, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday announced the easing of a nationwide lockdown, sparking fears coronavirus cases may increase dramatically.

More than 26,000 cases of Covid-19 have been confirmed so far, with the death toll at a relatively low 600 or so in the nation of about 215



Waliur Rahman Reza no more STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Waliur Rahman Reza, a former lawmaker and member of ruling Awami League's national committee, passed away following a cardiac arrest at his residence in Gaibandha yesterday. He was 85.

One of the organisers of the country's Liberation War, Waliur Rahman was an elected member of the then Purbo Pakistan Gono Parishad in 1970.

He left behind his wife, son and a host of relatives, colleagues and well-wishers to mourn his death. He will be buried at his family graveyard in Gaibandha. Meanwhile, Awami League President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock and

sorrow at his demise. In a condolence

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Drivers and helpers who could not leave Dhaka in time are now having to struggle for sustenance every day. Some set up a makeshift kitchen at Saidabad bus stand yesterday, buying ingredients using the meagre amount of money a few transport owners have provided. The workers alleged that transport workers' organisations have not come to their aid during this shutdown, and they're worried about their survival.

# COVID-19 VICTIMS Burial ground moved to Rayerbazar graveyard

#### HELEMUL ALAM

The government has started using the Rayerbazar graveyard as the designated place of burial for Covid-19 victims in the capital since April 30 as the previously assigned Khilgaon-Taltola graveyard has a waterlogging problem.

"Since the outbreak, burials of coronavirus victims have taken place at Khilgaon-Taltola graveyard. But we have shifted to Rayerbazar graveyard as the one at Khilgaon gets submerged after moderate to heavy showers," said Tanzina Sarwar, chief social welfare officer of Dhaka North City Corporation.

Till May 7 evening, 246 victims have been buried in the two graveyards since the beginning Covid-19 in the country, of which 176 were Covid-19 positive while 70 were suspected of being infected.

A total of 191 persons were buried in Khilgaon-Taltola graveyard while 51 at Rayerbazar graveyard. Apart from that, two were buried at Azimpur graveyard and two at Mirpur Intellectual graveyard, said Tanzina Sarwar.

As of yesterday, the death toll stands at 214, said Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The total number of infected has reached 13,770 while 5,465 samples were tested in

35 labs across the country since yesterday, Dr Nasima said.

The DNCC official said, "We had a plan to continue burials at the Khilgaon graveyard, which had a burial capacity of around 2,000. But we had to shift due to the waterlogging crisis."

She said the 96-acre Rayerbazar graveyard has a burial capacity of 1.20 lakh. "The graveyard has 16 blocks and we are primarily burying victims in Block-8, she said.

This graveyard was built in a planned way and has a better drainage system. "We will continue the burials here. At the same time, we also pray and hope that we don't need to use other blocks to bury more victims," she said.

#### HOW BURIALS TAKE PLACE

Three organisations -- Hamza Al-Markazul, Quantum Foundation and Rahmat A Elahi - are involved with the burial process. Charity organisation Hamza Al-Markazul has played a key role since the beginning with the help of DNCC.

Till May 7, they have buried 216 victims in the two designated graveyards, of them 148 have been tested positive, said Shahidul Islam, acting chairman of Markazul. "We have also sent bodies of 21 Hindus to the cremation field at Postagola following proper procedures," Shahidul said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

### Fear of DSA taking terrifying form: DUJ STAFF CORRESPONDENT A faction of Dhaka Union of Journalists

yesterday demanded repeal of the Digital Security Act, alleging countrymen's freedom of expression has been curbed through the law's misuse.

Issuing a statement, DUJ leaders said recently a number of journalists and writers were arrested under the DSA while common citizens were not spared either. Besides, people were detained under

the law and sent to jail for criticising the government, they said. DUJ leaders said they repeatedly

opposed the law's enactment and even took to the streets in this regard.

On the other hand, the government in face of agitation had assured that the law will not be misused, they said in the statement.

However, the government has deviated from its previous stance and "awfully misused the law against journalists and voices of dissent", it said.

It added, the fear that had grown among the journalist community earlier regarding the DSA has now taken a "terrifying form".

# Repeal Digital Security Act: BNP

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the Digital Security Act is being misused rampantly during the crisis period of coronavirus outbreak across the country.

"BNP wants to say very clearly that the government is misusing the

He came up with the allegation while addressing a press conference held at the party Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office in Dhaka.

Terming the digital security act "anti-people", Fakhrul called upon the authorities concerned to repeal the act and stop the ongoing harassment including arrests under the law during the coronavirus pandemic.

He also expressed his party's condemnation regarding the recent arrests of some people including journalists, a cartoonist, a writer and others under the digital security act.

Citing the arrests, Fakhrul said the government is engaged in using the act to torture and harass people deliberately.

The government blatantly misused the law by arresting photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol on World Press Freedom Day, the BNP leader said.

#### FAKHRUL ASKS FB TO CLOSE FAKE ACCOUNTS

Meanwhile, Mirza Fakhrul wrote to Facebook authorities yesterday, to take steps for blocking fake accounts and stopping false campaign in his name on the social media platform.

He also said a vested quarter has long been circulating false statements in his name opening fake accounts, adding that he never opened any Facebook account in his name.

# 'Shonge Achi' serving the hungry

Volunteers' group distributes food to the destitute and street animals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Shonge Achi", a voluntary and humanitarian organisation, recently distributed food among 7,000 poor and lower-middle income families in different parts of Dhaka.

Besides, it distributed food to about 5,000 people living on the streets, whose livelihoods have been taken away by the pandemic, said a press release.

The voluntary organisation collected funds from affluent people, then procured food items including rice, lentils, potato, onion and cooking oil, packaged those and distributed among the underprivileged since March 27.

The organisation started the food distribution as part its effort to help people in need during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Also, it fed over 4,000 street dogs around Dhaka, 100 horses who would run carts on the Sadarghat-Gulistan route and over 150 monkeys living in old part of Dhaka.



Volunteers preparing food for the underprivileged.

"The organisation works for dalits, hijras, street children, and low women, elderly, physically challenged profile musicians," Md Jamal Hossain, people, sex workers and their children, Chief Advisor of Shonge Achi said.

# POLYTECHNIC, TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS Livestreamed classes begin today

digital security act to protect itself from people's wrath. Such unjustified act of the state must be stopped right now," Fakhrul said.

# issues of youths: speakers

Address unemployment

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing concerns over the fallout of Covid-19 pandemic on society, speakers at a webinar yesterday called on the government to take necessary steps to address the unemployment problems of youth.

They also called for adopting a holistic approach so that the country could attain the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

The remarks came from the webinar titled "Youth Perspective on Covid-19 Crisis in Bangladesh: Response through National Budget and Planning", jointly organised by South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) and ActionAid Bangladesh.

Research Director and SANEM's Professor of Dhaka University Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha said anti-social activities might increase due to the frustration caused by the pandemic.

She underscored the need for national

preparation and economic diversification to address unemployment problems.

Zubayer Hossen, a research economist at SANEM, said the earning of freelancers in the country has dropped due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Nazmul Ahsan, manager of "Young People" at ActionAid Bangladesh suggested preparing comprehensive data on the youth to identify their specific requirements and areas of assistance.

"Such data can be helpful in providing economic assistance, guidelines, and social safety packages," he said.

Raihan presented the research by SANEM on the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the youth of Bangladesh. The research identified six transmission mechanisms through which the youth of the country are being affected: health, education, employment, income, poverty,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

#### MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) is set to begin holding classes of polytechnic institutes through Facebook live, to minimise academic loss of students as those are closed due to coronavirus pandemic.

Live classes for diploma-in-engineering courses of public and private polytechnic institutes, technical school and colleges, will begin at 8am today, DTE Director (planning and development) Jahangir Alam told The Daily Star vesterday.

"Many students are now out of education due to coronavirus situation and they will fall behind. So, we are starting the online classes," he said.

The Facebook live classes will be available on pages like skills.gov.bd/dte and www.facebook. com/skills.gov.bd, he added.

A total of 3.25 lakh students are enrolled in 50 government and 553 private polytechnic institutes, and 64 technical school and colleges.

Classes of all 34 technologies for first year Directorate of Primary Education started TV and five coveted technologies for second and third years students will be held via Facebook live, Jahangir said.

Five technologies -- civil, mechanical, computer, electrical and electronic -- have covered at least 80 percent of students.

Fifty teachers of polytechnic in eight divisional cities will deliver lecture by rotation and they have already prepared their speech, with the assistance from a2i project of the government.

"We have already sent information and class routine to all polytechnic institutes, technical school and colleges so that students can follow the classes," Jahangir said.

Earlier DTE introduced televised classroom lectures for about some 3.80 lakh SSC (vocational) and Dakhil (vocational) students at some 3,000 institutions, through Sangsad Bangladesh Television since April 19.

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education on March 29 started TV education through Sangsad TV for secondary students,

class on the same channel on April 7 for primary students and Directorate of Madrassa Education began televised classes on April 19.

All educational institutions have been closed since March 17, and the government has now extended the closure till May 30, in a bid to stem further spread of Covid-19.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on April 27 said all educational institutions may remain closed till September if the coronavirus situation does not improve.

Academic activities of about four crore students are being hampered due to coronavirus crisis. Publishing of SSC examination results and holding of HSC exams have been deferred for an indefinite period. First-term exams of primary schools also been cancelled for the crisis.

Public universities and colleges under National University are in fear of session jam. Many private universities cannot complete their ongoing semester and that would delay their next semester.

# World Thalassemia Day observed with call for youth awareness

#### CITY DESK

On World Thalassemia Day (May 8), Bangladesh Thalassemia Foundation, Sandhani, Medicine Club, and Platform observed the day by creating public awareness online, amid the Covid-19 outbreak, said a press release.

This year's theme was "Thalassemia prevention should start from the youth, blood screening before marriage will protect the future generations.

According to World Health Organisation, seven per cent of Bangladesh's population (about 11 million people) are carriers of thalassemia. Every year, 7,000 children are born with the illness.

The keynote was presented by Prof Dr Manzoor Morshed. He said, "Thalassemia is a genetic disease of the blood. Patients with thalassemia do not make enough iron in their bodies. As a result, they get severe anaemia. Thalassemia patients survive through monthly blood infusions. If left untreated, the patients die of anaemia. Human cells have two genes for making blood. A person with a defect in one of the genes that make blood is called a thalassemia carrier, and a person with a defect in both genes is called a thalassemia patient."

Dr Abdur Rahim, secretary general of Bangladesh Thalassemia Foundation, said that Thalassemia Foundation Hospital continues to provide services even during the pandemic. At present, 3,205 registered patients are receiving regular medical services there. From this hospital, free medical aid is provided to the poor and destitute patients. In 2019, 522 patients were provided free medical services throughout the year.

Dr Aminul Islam, joint secretary to the government and adviser to the foundation; Aktari Mumtaz, former secretary to the government and patron of the foundation, and Dr Habibur Rahman, line director, Non-Communicable Diseases Prevention Program (NCDC), Department of Health joined the discussion among many other distinguished persons.



A monkey takes food from a volunteer near Sadarghat area in the capital. Amid the coronavirus outbreak, alumni of Dhaka Collegiate School distributed food and relief aid among people in need last week, and did not forget about the native primates, who have been struggling for food as well. PHOTO: COLLECTED

## 322 Bangladeshis return home from Australia, India

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 322 Bangladeshi citizens stranded in India and Australia returned home yesterday by two separate special flights of US-Bangla Airlines and a Sri Lanka Airlines flight.

Of them, 165 returned from India and 157 returned from Australia. They were stranded in the two countries for over one-and-half-a months after the Covid-19 lockdowns hit.

The US-Bangla Airlines flight carrying the 165 Bangladeshis from Chennai landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) at around 2:45pm. The special Sri Lankan Airlines flight from Australia landed around 1am, after a stop at Colombo, said an official of Aviation Security, HSIA.

Meanwhile, 168 more Indian nationals and one Bhutanese national left Dhaka for their respective countries yesterday, AHM Touhid-ul Ahsan, director, HSIA, said.

A special flight of Air India carrying the Indian citizens left the airport around 1:15pm, while a special flight of Druk Air left the terminals around 9:30am, said Touhid.

# Burial ground

FROM PAGE 3

As there was a fear of infection, initially family members of a deceased would not come to the graveyard during burial of their near and dear ones, but since the last couple of weeks the situation has changed, said Shahidul.

"Presence of family members has started to increase since the announcement of the World Health Organization that a deceased person is unlikely to spread the virus," he said

Still the grim reality remains that the number of deaths due to coronavirus continue to take place in the country and accordingly, volunteers of Hamza Al-Markazul carry on with their social and humane responsibility of performing the last rites of those succumbing to the deadly virus.

Shahidul said they have also handed around 50 bodies (both positive and suspected) to family members who took those to outside the capital.

#### 'A COMBINED EFFORT'

A 17-member group of volunteers are involved in the process. Being informed by the health ministry officials, the team receives the body from a hospital or other places and brings it to the graveyard after disinfecting the body properly.

"We are making sure that the bodies are being disinfected properly at the hospital before bringing those to the burial ground," said the chief social welfare official of DNCC.

She said after being disinfected, a body is put in an airtight bag and then into a coffin. "It is then taken to the graveyard. We are being utmost careful and sincere while performing our duties so that there is no chance of spreading the virus."

They also dig a four feet grave rather than 2.5 feet one. "The germs will get destroyed within a few days after burial," she said.

She said it's a joint effort. "Al Markazul brings the bodies and places those at the grave while our people dig the graves and take care of other procedures to complete the burial."

There are also three imams as well as members of Al Markazul who conduct janazas before the burial.

CITY

# 322 Bangladeshis

FROM PAGE 3 With vesterday's returnees, around 2,327 Bangladeshi nationals stuck in neighbouring country due to suspension of scheduled passenger flights to contain the Covid-19 pandemic have returned, sources at HSIA said.

city

Most of the Bangladeshis stranded in India went there for medical purposes. In two phases, some 2,000 Bangladeshi

citizens stranded in India have returned to the country by 12 special flights of Biman and US-Bangla Airlines, sources at HSIA said

Of the 12, Biman operated 4 and US-Bangla operated 8 special flights.

In the next phase, Biman and US-Bangla are scheduled to operate 10 flights from India, the Bangladesh High Commission in India said on May 5, splitting the duty

by five flights each.

Schedules for the Biman flights are: from Kolkata on May 10, from Mumbai on May 12, from Bengaluru on May 13 and 15, and from Delhi on May 14. All flights are scheduled to take off at 2:30pm Indian

city.

US-Bangla is scheduled to operate three more flights, all from Chennai, on May 10, 13 and 14.

With restrictions easing on businesses amid the coronavirus outbreak, hawkers in Barishal are opening up their roadside stalls after over a month of closure. Customers are also coming in, albeit in small numbers, to shop for their favourite accessories. The photo was taken from Girja Mahalla area of the

PHOTO: TITU DAS

# Waliur

FROM PAGE 3

message, the prime minister said the death of the advisory council member of Gaibandha district AL and former member of parliament Waliur Rahman Reza caused an irreparable loss to the country and the party, reads UNB.

She prayed for the eternal salvation of the departed soul and expressed sympathy to the bereaved family.

AL General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader also expressed profound shock and grief at the death of Waliur Rahman.

visiting from Bogura to Rajshahi today he

found the embankment surrounding the

Rajshahi city in a dilapidated situation. He

made an immediate inquiry and came to

know that the file of the embankment repair

project had been sitting at the government

office collecting dust. Bangabandhu ordered

the local authority to take immediate action

# Still many left out

#### FROM PAGE 12

relief is reaching these villages soon," said Ruhul.

According to Jatiya Adivasi Parishad (JAP), there are around 50,000 indigenous families of 20 different ethnic communities in the district. An overwhelming majority of them require some kind of relief, JAP members said.

The district's largest cluster of around 15,000 indigenous families resides in Godagari upazila, with 9,000 families in Tanore and 5,000 in Puthia. The rest are scattered in other upazilas

After the beginning of relief distribution on March 27, Deputy Commissioner Hamidul Haque said in a press conference that around one lakh people needed relief assistance.

As of May 5, around 2,448 tonnes of food grains and Tk 1.08 crore in cash have been distributed among at least 2.75 lakh impoverished people -- nearly thrice the estimated number of the poor -- according to district administration data. 'NO WORK NOW,

### NO FOOD EITHER'

## At least 40 families of the indigenous

Gorat community live in Doldola village of Godagari upazila.

nothing to sell off. She has no space in which to raise poultry or livestock.

"We work and eat. We have no work now, so no food either. I don't know how long it will take to end this situation. Even if it ends soon, I don't know when our miseries will end after paying off the lenders," she said

Doldola village is also home to at least seven Rabidas families, who make their living as cobblers. They would earn roughly Tk 500 a day.

"I stayed home for the first few weeks of the shutdown. Then, I had to go out to earn for a few hours every morning. My income has come down to Tk 60 a day, this is what I'm living on now," said Dukhu Rabidas.

Kankonhat Municipality Mayor Abdul Majid said some Gorat and Rabidas families might not have received relief yet.

He said Doldola has some 125 families and the local police administration is arranging relief for 100 of them soon.

"It is very difficult to give relief to one and leave the others. We have a shortage of relief supplies," he said.

#### 'IRREGULARITIES'

Niren Chandra Khalku, chairman of the Orao community's organisation Dwighari Raja Parishad, alleged that there were irregularities in relief distribution -- with those needing it the most not receiving aid first.

"Local leaders gave relief materials to the people of their choice -- those who work for them -- first," he said. Out of the 35 people who got relief among 159 families in his village Chhatnipara, at least 12 were well-todo farmers and political activists, he said.

Some 3,500 Orao families in the upazila are deprived of relief, he dded.

Rajkumar Shaw, a member of JAP's central committee, said the situation other ethnic communities for including Munda, Roy, and Rajoar, in the district is no different.

Godagari UNO Nazmul Islam Sarkar, whose upazila has a large number of indigenous families, said these communities should get priority in relief distribution and shouldn't be deprived.

"If they are deprived, there could be two reasons for it -- one is Out of 15,000 extreme poor in unconsciousness, not knowing how the municipal area, he could manage to get relief and from where, and the second is the limitation of government allocations," he said.

#### Another FROM PAGE 12 personnel, inquire about their health, take steps

to solve their problems and ensure treatment for all irrespective of their positions in the force," the Police Headquarters said in a press release yesterday.

Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed has directed the officers concerned to form teams in

every unit. The initiative was taken so that the infected cops and those in isolation

and quarantine did not feel demoralised, police officials said. Meanwhile, the number

of police personnel infected with Covid-19 reached 1,532 till yesterday noon. Among them are 723 members of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, according to PHQ statistics.

Besides, around 4,000 more are in isolation or quarantine.

As the Central Police Hospital in the capital's Rajarbagh is struggling to deal with the huge number of

No perpetrator will go common people. While Bangabandhu was

#### FROM PAGE 12

immediately recognise Bhutto to Bangladesh and release Bangalees stranded in Pakistan.

Bangabandhu further says that the trial of war criminals will be held in Bangladesh at any cost. The brutality committed by the Pakistan army and their collaborators during the Liberation War will not go unpunished, he adds. The prime minister appeals to the civilised countries to support Bangladesh's decision to try the members of Pakistan army who committed crimes against humanity and says that these war criminals are worse than Nazis.

Referring to the post-war crisis, Bangabandhu says that production in agricultural and industrial units must be increased to overcome the current situation. He urges the people to devote themselves to this effort.

CHANGE BUREAUCRATIC MINDSET

In an order issued by Bangabandhu today the government officials are asked to change their bureaucratic mindset, eliminate redtapism and thus reduce hassles faced by

to repair the embankment. MALDIVES RECOGNISES BANGLADESH Maldives today informs Bangladesh's foreign ministry about its decision to accord recognition to the newly-independent Bangladesh. Maldives is the fourth Muslim country to recognise Bangladesh. So far 69 countries have recognised Bangladesh. ABANDONED SHOPS OPENS

Abandoned shops and business organisations in the capital open today. These properties were taken into government custody as the lawful owners had been found absent after the end of the Liberation War.

SOURCE: May 11, 1972 issue of Dianik Bangla.

# DU considering holiday cuts

FROM PAGE 12 "We are thinking of cutting holidays, holding classes on weekends [Friday and science faculty, admitted that the DU might Saturday] and arranging additional classes after the reopening of the university," Prof ASM Maksud Kamal, dean of earth and environmental sciences faculty of DU, told The Daily Star.

if needed.

Prof Sadeka Halim, dean of the social face a session jam if the Covid-19 situation did not improve soon. "To minimise the academic losses, we can give the students handouts and other course materials through their respective Facebook groups which may help them get in touch with their studies. The number of classes will be increased after the university reopens," she told this newspaper. She said the university would not resume academic activities until the Covid-19 situation became normal. Pro-VC (administration) Prof Muhammad Samad said many teachers have no training in taking classes online. "We must think whether our teachers and students have the necessary technical support. Many senior teachers do not have experience on taking classes online. We have to keep the number of financially incapable students in mind. Even if a single student cannot afford online classes, he will be deprived of his rights," he added.

DHAKA SUNDAY MAY 10, 2020, BAISHAKH 27, 1427 BS

### Address

#### FROM PAGE 3 and domestic violence.

Raihan also recommended providing health coverage and engaging the most vulnerable youth groups in the healthcare packages in a bid to meet their basic needs, taking steps to widen access to distance learning tools free of cost for students, extending social safety net to include unemployed youths and motivating and engaging youth in skill development programmes.

He further suggested providing training to police personnel on how to respond and protect victims from social stigma related to Covid-19.

Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh, said the pandemic is a call to action for social justice rather than returning to the pre-pandemic situation where socio-economic exploitation were prevalent.

The society must strive for a better socioeconomic reality, she added.

"When I went to the local leaders, they took a copy of my national identity card, and said they will help. The help did not come in one month so far," said Basona Bala, a local resident.

Basona had a goat which would have sold for at least Tk 7,000 under normal circumstances. Three weeks ago, she was forced to sell it for just Tk 3,000.

After the potato harvest in the area in mid-April, some potatoes were left behind in the fields by farmers who deemed those not fit to be sold.

Basona and her three children gathered these discarded potatoes from a nearby field. She earned Tk 600 by selling two maunds of the potatoes. The rest she kept for the family to eat.

After buying food and paying off loans, Basona has nothing left now.

"There has been no rice these last two weeks. I borrowed rice but neighbours cannot always help. So, I borrowed money again to buy rice."

Unlike Basona, Sukho Bala had

government relief for only 1,500. He, himself, has helped 4,000 others while various organisations have helped an additional 2,500, he added.

Rabindranath Hembrom, president of the Santals' social organisation Pargana Parishadin Godagari, said he heard in the news that relief was being delivered to everyone's homes.

"In reality, we can't get relief even by running after it.'

At least 7,000 Santal families in Godagari are yet to receive any relief; in his own village, Sagrampara, only 20 out of 250 families received relief, he said.

"Everyone thinks we are untouchable and keeps us away. No one listens to our needs."

On April 26, Rabindranath went to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office, which is 12km away, but was unable to see him.

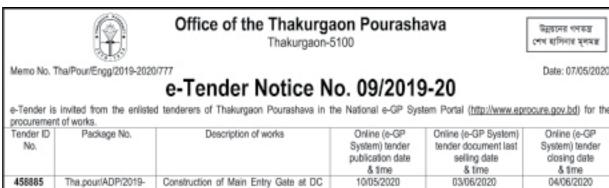
"Someone at the UNO's office asked me to wait. After three hours, he asked me to come later. But I can't go that far every day.

Rajshahi DC Hamidul Haque said many poor families could not be brought under the relief distribution due to incidents of repetition. "Some of the extremely poor people needed relief multiple times as they have been idle for over a month."

He said new allocations of relief materials were being released to cover people who were yet to receive relief.

Three UP chairmen and members told this correspondent that many poor people were deprived because the distribution system is influenced by local politicians.

As per the rules, they said, UP chairmen and members prepare the list of beneficiaries and distribute relief. But local politicians have been choosing their own beneficiaries among people they know and local government representatives were forced to share the relief materials with them.



2020/W-11 Parjotan Park, Ward-06, Thakurgaon 10:00am 5:00pm 1:00pm Pourashava, Thakurgaon 458888 Tha.pour(ADP/2019-Construction of Boundary wall with S.S. 10/05/2020 03/06/2020 04/06/2020 2020/W-12 Railing at DC Parjotan Park, Ward-06, 10:00am 5:00pm 1:00pm Thakurgaon Pourashava, Thakurgaon. Tha.pour/ADP/2019-458890 10/05/2020 03/06/2020 04/06/2020 Construction of Lake Bridge at DC 2020/W-13 Parjotan Park, Ward-06, Thakurgaon 10:00am 5:00pm 1:00pm Pourashava, Thakurgaon. Tha.pout/ADP/2019-458892 Construction of Lake Retaining wall at 10/05/2020 03/06/2020 04/06/2020 2020/W-14 DC Parjotan Park, Ward-06, Thakurgaon 10:00am 5:00pm 1:00pm Pourashava, Thakurgaon.

These are an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tendering documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 03-06-2020 at 5:00pm

The Invitation for Tenders is open to all classes of Regular Enlisted Contractors of Thakurgaon Paurashava who have the legal capacity to enter into such contract.

The tenderer will submit scanned copies of their current VAT, TIN certificate, nationality certificate, liquid asset, valid trade licence and contractor licence of Thakurgaon Pourashava. Failing which the tender document shall summarily be rejected.

Tender will be considered non-responsive if the total quoted amount by bidder is more or less than 5% (five percent) of the Engineering estimated cost.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) Md. Belal Hossain Executive Engineer Thakurgaon Pourashava, Thakurgao GD-810

patients, the police authorities have booked a private hospital to treat its members.

Rock 'n' roll FROM PAGE 12

rock 'n' roll alongside Fats Domino and Chuck Berry. His raunchy 1955 song "Tutti Frutti," even with

its gay sex theme toned down for radio, became a sort of opening salvo of rock 'n' roll's entry into American life, starting with his nonsensical but instantly thrilling first line: "Awop bop a loo mop / Alop bam boom." But if his contemporaries kept

the respectabilities of old time musicians, Richard stunned buttoned-down post-World War II America with an otherworldly look

of blindingly colorful shirts, glass-embedded dinner jackets, a needlethin moustache and a 15-centimeter (six-inch)

high pompadour haircut. Countries

FROM PAGE 12 media briefing. "We need to go back to where we should have been months ago -- finding cases, tracking cases, testing cases, isolating people who are tested positive, doing quarantine for contacts.

About online classes, he said they were currently conducting a survey on whether the students have electronic gazettes, internet access and financial capability to purchase internet data packages.

He said they would be able to know the survey results tomorrow.

"Another big challenge is to connect the teachers with the large number of students online. Besides, some of our teachers are also not used to taking classes online. We will make a decision considering the overall situation and following the university rules," said Prof Kamal.

He said they asked the students in the survey questionnaire about their financial status and mental health so that the university could provide support to anyone

#### Virus inflicts huge FROM PAGE 12

His optimism came even as the virus spread within the White House, with the press secretary of Vice President Mike Pence testing positive.

Neighbouring Canada also shed three million jobs, bringing its unemployment rate up to 13.1 percent, two days after the European Union forecast a massive recession in the bloc. DISINFECTING DRONES

In India, drones sprayed disinfectant on the streets of Ahmedabad yesterday, hours after security forces clashed with residents who flouted a toughened lockdown.

#### Turkish doctors FROM PAGE 12

isolated and treated, the Turkish government says tracing has helped to contain the outbreak and limit the number of deaths.

Even if some observers have questioned the reliability of official figures, Turkey's death toll seems relatively low given the number of infections -- with 3,641 fatalities recorded and more than 133,700 cases, according to data released Thursday.

Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said on Monday he believed tracing was "at the heart of (Turkey's) success" in the fight against the disease.

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### **INTERNATIONAL**

# CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

#### **NEARLY 4 MILLION CASES**

At least 274,617 people have died of the novel coronavirus so far, according to an AFP tally at 1900 GMT yesterday. There have been more than 3,946,130 recorded cases spanning 195 countries and territories. The United States is the worst-hit country, with 77,180 deaths out of 1,283,929 cases. Britain follows with 31,241, then Italy with 30,201 deaths, Spain with 26,478 and France with 26,230.

#### **DEADLY FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

At least six people were killed in Afghanistan's western province of Ghor as clashes broke out between police forces and protesters during a demonstration against alleged mismanagement of aid to alleviate the effects of the pandemic. It was not immediately clear why the gathering turned violent, but officials blamed armed men in the crowd.

#### **CHINA ADMITS 'SHORTCOMINGS'**

The coronavirus outbreak exposed "shortcomings" in China's public healthcare system, a top health official admitted yesterday, saying that reforms are underway to improve the country's disease prevention and control mechanisms. China reported one new coronavirus case at the end of Friday. It also reported 15 new asymptomatic.

#### **BOLSONARO 'BIGGEST THREAT'**

The Lancet, a leading medical journal, has described President Jair Bolsonaro as "perhaps the biggest threat" to Brazil's ability to successfully fight the coronavirus pandemic. On Friday, Brazil's Ministry of Health registered 10,222 new confirmed coronavirus cases and 751 related deaths, a daily high. That brought the total of confirmed cases in the country to 145,328 and deaths to 9,897.

#### PENCE SPOKESWOMAN POSITIVE

The US vice president's spokeswoman Katie Miller became the second White House staffer this week to test positive for coronavirus, officials said Friday. Miller is spokeswoman for Vice President Mike Pence, giving her frequent access to high-level meetings. The news boosted fears that the White House is at risk of becoming a viral hot spot.

#### AMERICANS OPPOSE REOPENING

A large majority of Americans oppose reopening the country now, with Democrats and Republicans sharply divided on the question, according to a poll published on Friday. Sixty-four percent of those polled by ABC News/Ipsos said opening the country now is not worth it because it will mean more lives lost to the coronavirus.

#### **10,000 MORE CASES IN RUSSIA**

Russian authorities yesterday said they had recorded 10,817 new cases of the coronavirus in the last day, pushing the nationwide tally to 198,676. Russia's coronavirus taskforce said that 104 people had died overnight, bringing the national death toll to 1,827. Russian coronavirus cases overtook French and German infections this week to become the fifthhighest in the world.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Eyes key route for virus infection: study

The eyes are a key route by which the novel coronavirus infects humans, a study by the University of Hong Kong has found, in addition to the upper respiratory tract, which includes the nose, mouth and throat.

The study made public on Friday also found that Sars-Cov-2 - the strain of coronavirus that causes the Covid-19 disease - was up to 100 times more infectious than the severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sars) virus, or Sars-Cov, and bird flu viruses such as H5N1, reported newswire agency Xinhua.

The research team led by Dr Michael Chan Chi Wai, an associate professor at the university's School of Public Health, found that the coronavirus is much more efficient in infecting the human conjunctiva - the tissue lining the surface of the eye - and the upper respiratory airways, and its level of infection is comparable to that observed for H1N1, the swine flu virus that caused a pandemic in 2009.

"This explains the higher transmissibility of Covid-19 than that of Sars. This study also highlights the fact that eyes may be an important route of Sars-Cov-2 human infection," Dr Chan said, according to the South China Morning Post.

The research team had previously discovered that the coronavirus remains alive for up to seven days on smooth surfaces such as stainless steel, glass and plastic. It is therefore possible for people to get infected when they touch these surfaces with their hands and then touch their face.

The study was published in the latest issue of The Lancet Respiratory Medicine. According to SCMP, it was assumed in the early stages of the coronavirus crisis that medical personnel would be sufficiently protected by wearing N95 face masks and protective clothing, and did not need specialist glasses. These latest findings by Dr Chan's team, it says, challenge that assumption.

The Covid-19 outbreak first came to light in late December after cases were detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan.



An Ilyushin II-78 air tanker and a Russian Tupolev Tu-160 strategic bomber fly over the Kremlin and Red Square in downtown Moscow to mark the 75th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two, yesterday. President Vladimir Putin told Russians they are "invincible" when they stand together as the country marked occasion amid lockdown due to halt the spread of coronavirus.

# China, Russia coordinating on virus conspiracies

# Accuses US, prevents UNSC vote on pandemic truce

The United States has accused China and Russia of stepping up cooperation to spread false narratives over the coronavirus pandemic, saying Beijing was increasingly adopting techniques honed by Moscow.

"Even before the COVID-19 crisis we assessed a certain level of coordination between Russia and the PRC in the realm of propaganda," said Lea Gabrielle, coordinator of the State Department's Global Engagement Center, which tracks foreign propaganda.

"But with this pandemic the cooperation has accelerated rapidly," she told reporters.

"We see this convergence as a result of what we consider to be pragmatism between the two actors who want to shape public understanding of the COVID pandemic for their own purposes," she said.

The Global Engagement Center earlier said thousands of Russian-linked social media accounts were spreading conspiracies about the pandemic, including charging that the virus first detected last year in the Chinese metropolis of Wuhan was created by the United States.

China outraged the United States when a foreign ministry spokesman tweeted a conspiracy that the US military brought the virus to Wuhan, but the two countries reached an informal rhetorical truce in late March after telephone talks between President Donald Trump and his counterpart Xi Jinping.

Tensions have again soared as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pushes the theory that the virus originated in a Wuhan laboratory, a stance that Beijing in turn calls disinformation.

Both the World Health Organization and the US government's top epidemiologist say there is no evidence the virus came from a lab.

China and Russia often find common cause and clash with the United States on issues from Venezuela to the use of economic sanctions to disarmament.

At United Nations, US on Friday stunned other members of the UN Security Council by preventing a vote on a resolution for a ceasefire in various conflicts around the world to help troubled nations better fight the coronavirus pandemic, diplomats said. Washington's reversal came a day after it agreed to the text, negotiators said under cover of anonymity.

The latest stalemate continues to leave the global peace and security body largely mute in the face of a once-in-a-century pandemic that has killed more than 270,000 people.



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The Daily Star | 5



Police detain demonstrators during a protest against India's newly inaugurated link road to the Chinese border, in Kathmandu, Yesterday. Nepal objected to a newly inaugurated link road to the Chinese border by India that crosses a disputed area with Nepal, as police detained protestors against the move in Kathmandu.

## Indian protesters carry dead bodies into gas leak plant

#### AFP, Vishakhapatnam

Angry protesters carrying dead bodies stormed an Indian chemical plant yesterday to demand the facility's closure after a toxic gas leak that killed 12 people days earlier.

Thursday's pre-dawn accident in the industrial port city of Visakhapatnam injured hundreds and knocked many unconscious as they tried to flee the area.

State government officials had arrived to conduct a safety tour of the plant, owned by South Korea's LG Chem, when a crowd of around 300 people barged past police and security guards.

Some helped cart stretchers bearing three victims of the disaster. They chanted slogans demanding justice for the dead and the shutdown of the plant before they were pushed back by security.

Relatives of the dead stood nearby, many in tears.At least three children were among the dead and dozens remain in hospital.

Authorities have started a manslaughter investigation over the leak and India's environmental tribunal has already fined the company \$6.2 million as a preliminary punishment.

### ALARMING DEFORESTATION IN AMAZON Brazil to deploy troops Reuters, Brasilia

Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest rose sharply in April, government data showed on Friday, as the coronavirus outbreak keeps many environmental enforcers out of the field and the country prepares to deploy troops to fight illegal logging.

Destruction in Brazil's portion of the Amazon increased 64% in April, compared with the same month a year ago, according to preliminary satellite data from space research agency INPE.

In the first four months of the year, Amazon deforestation was up 55% from a year ago to 1,202 square kilometers (464 square miles), according to the INPE data.

The Amazon is the world's largest tropical rainforest, and scientists say its preservation is vital to curb global warming because of the vast amount of greenhouse gas that it absorbs.

Destruction of the Amazon surged to an 11-year high last year and continues to climb in 2020, which environmentalists blame on the policies of right-wing President

Jair Bolsonaro who has emboldened illegal loggers, miners and ranchers.

Bolsonaro has called for more farming and mining in protected areas of the forest, saying it is the only way to lift the region out of poverty.

The new coronavirus outbreak has complicated efforts to combat deforestation, with environmental enforcement agency Ibama sending fewer agents into the field due to health risks. The agency has said it will scale back field agents in other at-risk areas but not the Amazon.

President Donald Trump and Saudi Arabia's King Salman spoke by phone on Friday and "reaffirmed the strong United States-Saudi defense partnership," the White House said, amid tensions over Saudi's oil output.

The two men spoke after news the United States planned to withdraw two Patriot anti-missile batteries from Saudi Arabia that have been a defense against Iran. Trump had worked

last month to persuade Saudi Arabia to cut its oil output after an increase in production during the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic put heavy pressure on U.S. oil producers.

"The two leaders agreed on the importance of stability in global energy markets, and reaffirmed the strong United States-Saudi defense partnership,' White House spokesman Judd Deere said. "The president and King Salman also discussed other critical regional and bilateral issues and their cooperation as leaders of the G7 and G20, respectively. The statement did not mention the Patriot

not mention the Patriot missiles and the White House declined further comment. US Secretary of State

Mike Pompeo confirmed on Friday media reports that the missiles would be withdrawn, but he said it did not signal a decrease in US support for Saudi Arabia and was not an effort to pressure Riyadh on oil issues. He also said it did not mean Washington thought Iran was no longer a threat.

"Those Patriot batteries had been in place for some time. Those troops needed to get back," Pompeo told the Ben Shapiro radio show. "This was a normal rotation of forces."

### উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)

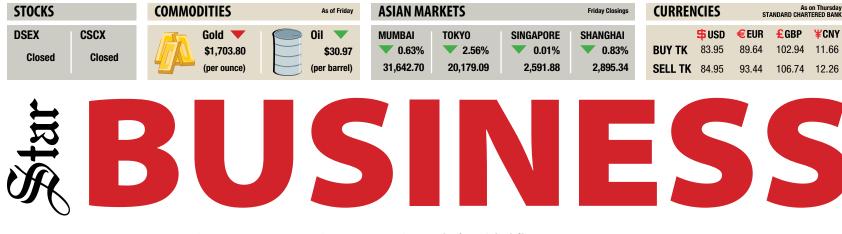
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অধিনায়কের কার্যালয় ১৪ আর্মত পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন

The Public Procurement Act-2006 & The Public Procurement Rules-2008 ও তণীয় সংশোধনী বিধি মোতাবেক ২০২০-২০২১ কৰ্ষ কলেৱে ১৪ আৰ্মত পুনিশ বাটে দিয়ন, কল্পবাজাৰ লোগেঁৰ লট নং-০১ঃ ব্যবহাৰ্য সামট, লট নং-০২ঃ কন্যানা মণিয়াৰি, লট নং-০৩ঃ খাছ্য বিধান সামট, লট নং-০৪ঃ জোনেঁর টিনি কমবাট নরজারি পোষাক দেলাই এবং লট নং-০২ঃ ক্রণানো মণিয়াৰি, লট নং-০৭ঃ ব্যবহারের জন্ম মাইজেন্যান, পিকজাপ, বাস ও ট্রাক তাড়া, লট নং-০৪ঃ মোটবর্যান শাখার কাঁচামাল ও বুঁচারা যেরাগেন জন, লট নং-০৭ঃ মেটবেন্দা (মেরামত) এবং লট নং-০৮ঃ আউনিগেনিং পছাতিকে জনবল সরকায়েরে টিকানর নিয়োগের নিমিত্রে নিয়ুবর্ণিত পর্বসাপেকে অভিজ্ঞানসম্পদ্র টিকানার/সরবাহকারীর নিকট হতে নীলমোহরকৃত থামে পৃথক পৃথকভাবে দরণের আজান করা যায়ে।

নংছা দৱগর বি কার দবগর হারিশ বিবরশ। দবগর হ দবগর দবগর দবগর দবগর দবগর দবগর মায়।	র পছতি ও অর্থনৈডিক খাড বিজর্ত্তি পরিকায় প্রকাশের তারিখ তহুদিন বিরুয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও রাম প্রথাদের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও । থেলার তারিখ ও সময়	्य 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	১৬ নং ক্রমিকে বাঁ এপিথি(১৪)/প্রশা- হারিম্বঃ ০৭-০৫-২ উন্মুক্ত দরপর পছ রায়ন্দ্র নারু। ১৩-০৫-২০২০খ্রি	শূপার), ১৪ পিঁত কাজের য ৮৪/১৮৬৪ ২০২০স্টিয়।	এপিবিএন, কন্মবায়	RI								
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ট দরগর দরগর দরগর দরগর দরগর দরগর	বিজঙি পরিকায় প্রকাশের ভারিখ কমনিল বিরুয়ের পেয় ভারিখ ও জয়া প্রধানের সর্বপেষ ভারিখ ও : খোলার ভারিখ ও সময়	সময় ৫	20-02-20208											
দরগর দরগর দরগর দরগর দরগর দরগর	তক্ষমিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ ভারিখ ও জয় প্রথানের সর্বশেষ ভারিখ ও য থোলার ভারিখ ও সময়	সময় ৫												
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দরগর দরগর র নাম 1	থোলার তারিথ ও সময়	TATA A CARD	০৩-০৬-২০২০খ্রিঃ ১৪:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ।											
দরণর র নাম ।			08-05-2020월											
র নাম ৷			08-06-2020B											
	মূল্যায়নের ভারিশ ও সময়	0	০৭-০৮-২০২০খ্রি	ঃ কারিশ ১১.	০০ ঘটকা।									
	৫ টিকানাঃ				00									
	র নাম ও ঠিকানা	3	ধাৰণায়ক (পুলিশ	মূপার), <b>১</b> ৪	এপিবিএন, কক্সবাজ	R I								
নৱপত্ৰ	ভকুমেন্ট/দিভিউল বিক্রমবারী অ	ৰুস ৫	021 IGAISIO	ধাপবিঞ্জন, ব	াংলাদেশ পুনিশ, চা	কা, ০২। অধি	নায়ক (পুশি							
		2	শূপাৰ), ১৪ এপি	ধ্বন, কল্পৰা	জাৰ।									
1.1.1.1.1		4	মাগনায়ক (পুলিপ	বুপাৰ), \$8	রাপাধরন, কক্সনাজ	NE I								
		4	মাগনয়ক (পুলিপ	সুপাৰ), ১৪	এপেধিরন, কল্পনাজ	R I								
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- C/	er romins	4	२०२०खा, मध्य	১২:০০ খাটৰ	4									
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को क	a कांग्राज विकास'		a Town Aluza and	FG-2) 4 9	NB A MINE I									
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60	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ সমানে বাব	হাৰ্য ভৰ্মাদি :	য়াহদহাদ	চাইদা	3000/-									
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	সেলাই													
98				-2-	3000/-	80,000/-	05							
· · ·	কাছে ব্যবহারের জন্য মাইক্রোন	ধাস, পিকলা	ল, ৰাস ত ট্ৰাক				জুলাই/২০ ০ হাত ৩ জুল/২০২ পর্যন্ত							
	অভ্য													
08		ট্ৰিয়ান শাখ	ার কাঁচামাল ও	-3-	600/-	2,0,000/-								
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09	২০২০-২০২১ কৰ্ণ ৰথসায় মো			- <i>i</i> t-	eoo/-	30,000/-								
		গদের নাম		সংখ্য	200/- \$2,000/-	\$2,000/-								
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জনবল নিয়োগ				০২ জন										
		তাইনিং স	100710	০২ জন										
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	আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম			কুর রহমান।										
দরপর আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার গলবী			অধিনায়ক (গুলিশ সুপার)।											
	দরপর আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা অধিনায়ন			ছক (পুনিশ সুপার), ১৪ এশিবিধান, কক্সবাজার।										
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मतश्रद मतश्रद	মাহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোয়	গা মাধ্যম	00001 04	বিশেষ শর্ভাবলীঃ										
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নরপর । নরপর । বিশেষ । ব) বাবি গ) নিবি গ) নরণ য) কো ৪) অনি	আহানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোত শর্চাকলীয় 5 বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের বস্তাদিকারীয় অক্ষ টি সময়ের পর আর কোন দরশার গরে উচ্ফেশিত যে কোন আইটেয়ে ন কারণ দর্শালে। ব্যক্তিরেক কর্তৃণ	ন্মুক প্যাচে য থেহপ করা হ রে পরিমাগ বৃ ক্ষে যে কোন দরপর খোলা	আকেনপূর্বক অধি হবে না। বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানে। দেৱপত্র গ্রহণ বা থ না বয় ভাহলে প	ার বিষয়ে কর বাঙিল করার ন্নবঙী কার্বনি	(পক্ষের ক্ষমতা রয়ে ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে বসে একই স্থান ও স	ছে। লে। মেয়ে দরপর বর	ল গোলা মহন							
নরপর । নরপর । বিশেষ । ব) বাবি গ) নিবি গ) নরণ য) কো ৪) অনি	আহানকারী কর্মকর্তার দেশায়ের পর্তাবলীয় ৮ বা রতিরাঁদের স্বরাধিকারীয় অক্ষ টি সময়ের পর আর কোন দবশর শব্রে উল্লেখিক যে কোন আইটেমে ন কারণ দর্শাদেশ বার্দি বিরেকে কর্তৃণ বার্থ কারণে বানি নির্দিষ্ট ভারিখে দ	ন্মুক প্যাচে য থেহপ করা হ রে পরিমাগ বৃ ক্ষে যে কোন দরপর খোলা	আকেনপূর্বক অধি হবে না। বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানে। দেৱপত্র গ্রহণ বা থ না বয় ভাহলে প	ার বিষয়ে কর বাঙিল করার ন্নবঙী কার্বনি	(পক্ষের ক্ষমান্ত রয়ে ক্ষমান্তা সংরক্ষণ করে বলে একই ছান ও স ধনী বিধি মোরাবেক মোয়	হা। নে। মেয়ে দরপর বর সকল শর্চাকলী ব অন্তিকুর রহমান	। গোলা মনে মৰ্যকর মনে। r							
নরপর । নরপর । বিশেষ । ব) বাবি গ) নিবি গ) নরণ য) কো ৪) অনি	আহানকারী কর্মকর্তার দেশায়ের পর্তাবলীয় ৮ বা রতিরাঁদের স্বরাধিকারীয় অক্ষ টি সময়ের পর আর কোন দবশর শব্রে উল্লেখিক যে কোন আইটেমে ন কারণ দর্শাদেশ বার্দি বিরেকে কর্তৃণ বার্থ কারণে বানি নির্দিষ্ট ভারিখে দ	ন্মুক প্যাচে য থেহপ করা হ রে পরিমাগ বৃ ক্ষে যে কোন দরপর খোলা	আকেনপূর্বক অধি হবে না। বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানে। দেৱপত্র গ্রহণ বা থ না বয় ভাহলে প	ার বিষয়ে কর বাঙিল করার ন্নবঙী কার্বনি	পিছের ক্ষমতা রয়ে ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে বলে একই ছান ও স ধনী বিধি মোতাবেক স মেয়া মিলি- বিলি-	হে। লে। মেয়ে দরপর বর সকল শর্জাবলী ব	র খোলা মনে মার্থকর মনে। গ							
	स्वनंद्र 2 ही-टीस सम्बद्धिः संदन्द्र म महे मर गरे ०३ ०३ ०३ ०३ ०३ ०३	মা, কাজেন ট ০১ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে বান ০২ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে আন ০৩ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে আ ০৩ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে ম কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য মাইকো আয় ০৬ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মে ব্যুচরা মন্নাংশ তল ০৭ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মে ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মে ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মে হ০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসেরে মে হ০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসেরে মে হ০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসেরে মে হ০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসেরে আইটন্সেসিং পদ্ধবিতে ভানবন নিয়োগ	নহাপত্র গ্রহণকারী ক্ষমিত ব নহাপত্র যোগার স্থান, তারিশ ও সময় হা-টেজার সভার স্থান, তারিশ ও সময় ব্যক্তিক তথ্যায় নরশক্ষিক তথ্যায় নর্গ কাজেন বিবরণ হা ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বধ্যসরে অন্যার্গে সাম ব্যক্তা ব্যয়ানের জন্য মইফোনাস, লিকমা আন্ত্রা ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বধ্যসরে অন্যার্গেন্সাল গ্রেল্ ব্যক্তা ব্যয়ান্দে তথ্য ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বধ্যসরে অন্যার্গেন্সান্দা ব্যক্তে ব্যবহারের জন্য মইফোনাস, লিকমা আন্ত্রা ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বধ্যসরে আটারযান পাথ পুরুরা ব্যয়ান্দে তথ্য ০৭ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বধ্যসরে মেটিরযান পাথ পুর্বিয় স্লে ব্যাইটলের্সিন্দ পদ্ধরিচের মন্দেন্দ নিরোগ আইনিং স্থ	মন্দর গ্রহণকারী অভিগ করিবি করিয়াক (পুলিশ মন্দর যোগার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময় অধিনয়ক (পুলিশ হা-টেডার সভার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময় অধিনয়ক (পুলিশ হা-টেডার সভার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময় অধিনয়ক (পুলিশ হা-টেডার সভার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময় মন্দর্কিত তথ্যাঃ মন্দর্শকিত তথ্যাঃ মন্দর্শকিত তথ্যায় ক্রান্দের যোগ্য হা কাজের বিবরণ মন্দ্র আজের বিবরণ হা হা হা হা হা হা হ	মানত গ্রহণকারী ক্ষমিস কনিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ১৪ মনপত্র যোগার স্থান মনপত্র যোগার স্থান মনপত্র যোগার স্থান মনস্য আনিম ও সময় ক্ষিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ১৪ মনস্য কিন্দ্র হান, তারিম ও সময় ক্ষিনায়ক (পুলিশ সুপার), ১৪ মনস্যকি তথ্যায় মনস্যকি তথ্যায় মন্য ক্লিয়ের বিষয়ের ব্যনহার্য হার্বাদি সরবরায় করিমান মন্য ক্রিয়েন্দ্র বিষয়ের অধ্যান্তে মন্যায়ী সরবরায় -জ্রী- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে অধ্যান্ত মন্দ্রিয়ি সরবরায় -জ্রী- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে জন্যান্য মন্দ্রিয়ি সরবরায় -জ্রী- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে অধ্যান্তেশনাল বা প্রধানি সরবরায় -জ্রী- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে অধ্যান্তেশনাল বা প্রধানি সরবরায় -জ্রী- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে অধ্যান্তেশনাল বা প্রধান্য সিন্দ্রবায় -জ্রী- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে অধ্যান্তেশনাল বা প্রধান্য স্বব্যার্য মন্দ্রা মন্ত্রাংলের জন্য মন্ট্রেন্নাল্য ন্যান্ট সরবরায় -জ্রী- কাছে ব্যবহারের জন্য মন্ট্রেন্নালাগে, পিকমাণ, বাস ও ট্রাক বান্তা ০৭ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে মেটির্যান পাধার কাম্যাল ও -জ্রী- বান্তার মন্ত্রে ব্যবিদ্যান্য ফ্রার্য ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ কর্ষ বথসরে মেটির্যান (ব্যেমস্ত) -জ্বী- বান্তার বান্তারে জন্য ন্যান্ট্রেয়াল (ব্যেমস্ত) -জন বান্যান পর্ট্রিয়ার্য ০০ জন বান্যান পর্ট্রিয়ার্য ০০ জন বান্যান পর্ট্রিয়া ত০ জন বান্যান পরিয়ার্য ০০ জন	মনপত্র থোগার ছান আমি ও সমা অধিনায়ক (পুন্দিশ সুপার), ১৪ এপিনিএন, কর্মরাজ রি-টেডার সভার ছান, ডারিখ ও সমা অমিনায়ক (পুন্দিশ সুপার), ১৪ এপিনিএন, কর্মরাজ রি-টেডার সভার ছান, ডারিখ ও সমা অমিনায়ক (পুন্দিশ সুপার), ১৪ এপিনিএন, ক ২০২০ব্রিঃ, নমর ১২০০০ ঘটিনা। কা হারদায়ের যোগ্যতা তি হারদেনাগন ট্রিড লাইনেস্ব থ) হারদনাগান আয়ে রেজিট্রেশন সন্দ খ) থাকে সলচেলী সন্দর এ অ রন্ধুমেন্ট/সিরিউল PG-2) এ উল্লেখ আছে। লট নং ও কাজের বিষরণঃ কাজের বিষরণ বিরবণ হার্য দেনার যাবহার্য দ্রেগানি নির্ভাগ PG-2) এ উল্লেখ আছে। লট নং ও কাজের বিষরণ বিরবণ হার্য দ্রগানি সরবরাহ সিমি দের্গান্ত (জন্মেন্যার মৃদ্দ বায় বিরবন্ধ পরিমাপ/ দরপরের মৃদ্দ বায়ে বিরবন্ধ পরিমাপ/ দরপরের মৃদ্দ কাজের বিষরণ বিরবন্ধ বিরবন্ধ হার্য দেরান্দ মন্দি সরবরাহ নেট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলানেয় মন্দিরি সরবরায় -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলারেম্রান্দ বার্যার সরবরায় -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলারেমন্দার ও প্রশাসন্দিক -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলারেমন্দার ও প্রশাসন্দিক -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলারেমন্দার বার্যায় সারব্যায় -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলারেম্নান্দ বির্যায় পরিয়াল ও -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে অলারেম্নান্দ বার প্রশাসন্দিক -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মেন্টরেয়ান শাখার কার্যায়াল ও -ট- ৫০০/- বায়া ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মেন্টরেয়ান শোরান্ধ) -ট- ৫০০/- ০০ ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বন্ধসরে মেন্টরেয়ান শোরার্যা কার্যায়াল ও -ট- ৫০০/- তার্যা ব্যান্দ কের্য আর্টরেরায় দের্যার্যায় প্রিয়ায়া তের জ্বন্থা ব্যান্ধা ব্যার্যায় বের্যার্ট্রারা (মেরামন্্র) -ট- ৫০০/- হেন্টারের্যার্সি পার্রিযে ব্যার্টরেয়ান ব্যার্যার্যা ০৪ জন্দ বার্যার পরিসের্য বার্যার্যা ব্যার্টার্যা ০৪ জন বার্টান্দ সির্য গ্রার্ট্রার্যা (ব্যাযান্ত) -ট- ৫০০/- তর্যারার্টের্যার্যা বার্যার্যা ব্যার্টার্যা ০২ জন বার্যান্দ পরির্যায্রা তা জন বার্যান্দ সের্ডান্ড ০২ জন বার্যান্দ সের্ডান্্র বার্যায় ব্যারান্্র ব্যার্যার্যা ০২ জন বার্যান্দ ব্যের্টার্যা ০২ জন বা বার্যান্দ গ্রের্যান্্র বার্যায় ব্যার্টান্য ব্যার্ট্রান্তা ব্যা ব্যান্দ ব্যান্টান্ড ব্যার্যান্দ ব্যান্ট ব্যান্টান্য ব্যান্টান্টা ব্যা ব্যান্টান্টা ব্যান্টা ব্য	মানত গ্ৰহণকাৰী ক্ষমিস অনিনয়ক (পুলিশ সুপাৱ), ১৪ এপিছিএন, কল্পৰাছাৱ : নৱপত্ৰ থোষাৰ স্থান হা-টেছাৰ সহাৰ স্থান, তাৰিখ ও সময় অমিনয়ক (পুলিশ সুপাৱ), ১৪ এপিছিএন, কল্পৰাছাৱ : হা-টেছাৰ সহাৰ স্থান, তাৰিখ ও সময় অমিনয়ক (পুলিশ সুপাৱ), ১৪ এপিছিএন, কল্পৰাছাৱ : হা-টেছাৰ সহাৰ স্থান, তাৰিখ ও সময় অমিনয়ক (পুলিশ সুপাৱ), ১৪ এপিছিএন, কল্পৰাছাৱ ; 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DHAKA SUNDAY MAY 10, 2020, BAISHAKH 27, 1427 BS 🔶 starbusiness@thedailystar.net 📰

# **TAMING CORONAVIRUS RAMPAGE**

# Health is wealth. Give it the due attention.

Says CPD in its budget recommendation for fiscal 2020-21



#### SOHEL PARVEZ

It is about time that the health sector takes centre stage in a national budget -- is the overarching missive of the Centre for Policy Dialogue as the finance division gets down to thrashing the budget for fiscal 2020-21.

"COVID-19 is a lesson for us," said CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun in a virtual media briefing yesterday to share the independent think-tank's recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year's budget, due to be unveiled on June 11.

The global pandemic has exposed the historically low level of public investment in the health sector. At present, it is a mere 0.9 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.

"Unfortunately, the health sector in Bangladesh has always been neglected," the CPD said.

Apart from the lack of infrastructure and equipment, the healthcare facilities in Bangladesh are also not staffed with adequate numbers of healthcare service providers.

"The total health system should be overhauled," Khatun said, adding that the out-of-pocket expenditure was the highest in Bangladesh amongst the South Asian nations.

The sixth five-year plan had a target of increasing investment in health to 1.1 per cent of GDP.

"It is yet achieved," she said.

The think-tank also recommended the government give priority to social protection and the agricultural and small, medium enterprises (SMEs) sectors in the budget to tackle the economic fallout from the pandemic and send the \$274

billion Bangladesh economy on to a path of V-shaped recovery.

Because of the lockdown, production and supply chains were disrupted, income opportunities were lost and poverty situation worsened, with new poor population joining the ranks of the old ones.

All these adverse implications will have an immediate short-term and mediumterm impact on the economy, which will need to be tackled through immediate policy response and by keeping the needs of the recovery phase in consideration, the think-tank said.

The economy had been facing various challenges such as the weak financial sector and falling exports before the outbreak of coronavirus and the rogue virus has only exacerbated the situation.

Besides, special focus should be paid on social safety net programmes (SSNPs) related activities given COVID-19 as the shutdown has wiped out income opportunities of the poor and vulnerable people.

The government should allocate at least 3 per cent of the GDP for SSNPs as outlined in the National Social Security Strategy, the CPD said, citing its previous proposals of providing cash to up to 1.90 crore families for two months at Tk 8,000 per month.

importance of food production and increased public food stocks for food security, it said.

"Fiscal 2020-21 will be a crucial period from the perspective of ensuring food security both in COVID and post-COVID periods.

The agriculture sector accounts for more than 40 per cent of employment and hence farming and rural economy should be given priority, said CPD Distinguished Fellow Mustafizur Rahman.

"This sector should get an adequate allocation," said CPD Senior Research Fellow Towfiqul Islam Khan.

BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Give priority to health, agricultural  $\rightarrow$ and SMEs

- Cut unnecessary expenditure Raise tax-free income limit to >>
- >Restructure first three slabs of income tax to 5, 10, and 15pc from 10, 15 and 20pc
- >>Raise tax-free turnover limit for SMEs to Tk 1 cr
- Curb tax evasion, illicit fund flow abroad >>with strong hand
- Don't give tax incentives on ad-hoc basis >
- Keep corporate tax unchanged >>
- Initiate wealth tax and inheritance tax >>
- Don't allow black money whitening >>

enterprises to Tk 1 crore from Tk 50 lakh for fiscal 2020-21.

Furthermore, the companies that are The pandemic has reemphasised the incurring losses in fiscal 2019-20 can be allowed to carry back losses against taxable profits for the two previous years.

The CPD said the government will require additional resources to revive the depressed economy and an expansionary macroeconomic policy should be pursued in fiscal 2020-21.

"Pursuing such an approach will likely increase the fiscal deficit in the next budget. However, given the emerging scenario such a stance is conceivably the ight one," Khan said.

exports earnings will reduce pressure government should cut revenue expenses

inheritance tax.

The CPD suggested the National Board of Revenue refrain from all ad-hoc provisions of tax incentives.

"NBR needs to be selective and careful in the next fiscal year as more demand for incentives will be lined up in the wake of COVID-19.

The think-tank said the corporate tax rate should be unchanged as some measures have already been taken in support of large entrepreneurs.

It also opposed giving any opportunity to whiten the black money.

"There may be increased pressure for this on the ground of mobilising additional money in the backdrop of likely difficulties in resource generation in fiscal 2020-21. As is well known, this measure has failed to register any notable response in the past."

To ease pressure on individual taxpayers, the CPD said the first three slabs of income tax - 10 per cent, 15 per cent, and 20 per cent should be changed to 5, 10, and 15 per cent respectively, at least for the next two years.

It also recommended increasing the threshold for tax-free income for individuals from Tk 2.5 lakh to Tk 3.5 lakh

The twin moves would increase taxpayers' disposable income, which, in turn, would boost domestic demand and defibrillate the economy that has been on an induced coma since March 26 to slow the spread of coronavirus.

The think-tank also demanded expedition of installation of e-cash register -- the Electronic Fiscal Device -for effective implementation of the new VAT law and increase revenue

The CPD was also critical about the relaxation of lockdown at a time when the The low oil prices and falling risk of community spread remains high.

The other countries have reopened on public expenditure. At the same, the their economies by following the scientific

# Post office comes to bereft farmers' rescue

Will carry produce in their Dhaka-bound vans

#### STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The postal division has come forward to stand by farmers who are facing insurmountable losses for their failure to market their produce in cities like Dhaka in the absence of transport amid the countrywide shutdown since March 26.

The post office said it will carry vegetables and other perishables in its vans on their way back to Dhaka to help farmers sell their produce, in a development that can be viewed as the perfect example of harnessing the power of technology for the greater good.

The transport will be provided without any delivery fee, it said, after the inauguration of the service between Dhaka and Manikganj yesterday.

Termed as 'Krishok Bondhu Dak Seba,' the post office transported nearly two tonnes of vegetables from Manikganj's Jithka Bazar to Dhaka Gabtoli agricultural market yesterday.

The initiative comes at a time when the cry for prices by growers continue to get louder as buyers from cities, such as Dhaka, cannot visit producing regions to buy vegetables in the absence of public transport.

An inadequate number of trucks are plying on the highways owing to the strict shutdown enforced to flatten the curve on coronavirus.

From watermelon producers to banana orchard owners, from pumpkin producers to fish farmers, the rogue virus has put tens of thousands of farmers in despair.

Even if the trucks are available, the fares are too high, said some vegetable wholesalers.

"This initiative will help get farming products easily even during the lockdown," said Posts and Telecom Minister Mustafa Jabbar after inaugurating the service.

Of the vegetables carried by the post office to Dhaka yesterday, 1,200 kilograms was onion. The rest were green chilli, brinjal, bitter gourd, snake gourd, luffa, okra, cucumber and crookneck pumpkin.

A portion of the vegetables was also sent to the Dhanmondi branch of the supermarket chain Meena Bazar, Jabbar said. The post office will also carry products from farmers to companies such as online shop Chaldal.

Under the initiative, farmers will receive the sales proceeds of their produce by sitting at their homes and without the involvement of middleman.

Mobile financial service provider Nagad will help farmers get their money without any hassle, he said. "Vehicles of the postal division will carry these farm

produce when they will return after delivering their regular parcels in the districts. So, it will not add any cost to us. The postal division is doing this as a service to farmers."

The farmers will have to take all their produce to the local post office through the local agricultural officials to get their vegetables on board the Dhaka-bound vehicles.

The postal division never carried perishables but it took the initiative considering the COVID-19 crisis to

# Tk 3.5 lakh

To protect jobs and income, the



CPD also suggested and reprioritise annual development supporting domestic programmes to reduce the pressure, SMEs, which accounts Moazzem said.

The main focus should be curbing tax for the majority of evasion and illegal fund transfer abroad, economic enterprises. The SMEs were said Rahman, while citing that Tk 5 lakh

particularly hit hard crore had been siphoned off abroad in for the lockdown, the last 10 years illicitly through various the CPD said, while channels.

"If we could curb the transfer, the suggesting raising the tax exempted yearly money would have been useful," he said they would not go shopping even if turnover limit for the said, while also suggesting wealth and the shopping centres are open.

procedure, Knatun said.

"This is also necessary in case of reopening here. What is the necessity of livelihoods when life is at stake? Risk of spread of coronavirus is high in shopping malls, transport and markets.

The CPD carried out an opinion poll on whether shopping centres need to reopen and found 93 per cent of the participants opposed the move.

Some 96 per cent of the respondents

help growers, said Khandker Shahnur Sabbir, the deputy postmaster general of Dhaka GPO, who designed the project.

ekshop, an online commerce channel of access to information programme (a2i) under the ICT division, is the coordinator of the postal division's owned designed project, said Rezwanul Haque Jami, head of e-commerce of a2i.

Manikganj's Jhitka was the piloting phase and this project will be launched in 12 districts of Dhaka division within next week. After that, it will expand across the country, Jami said

"It's not certain which shop and market the farmers' products will go to. It all depends on price and demand. Even it can go other districts bypassing Dhaka city," he added.

# Grameenphone whips up a price war Carrier offers 10cr free voice call minutes, bonus data; Robi to follow suit

#### MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Mobile carriers are bracing for a price war and this time it is centring on the coronavirus pandemic as they are offering free voice call minutes and bonus data packs through publicity gimmicks that are being overlooked by the regulator on humanitarian grounds.

Grameenphone, the market's leading operator, on Friday announced a series of initiatives, and one of them is 10 crore free minutes to 1 crore customers (10 minutes per user) who could not recharge in April and have a mere balance.

Some carriers complain that in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic in Bangladesh, they had approached the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) seeking permission to give away free minutes.

But their requests were not entertained citing voice call regulation.

Now, the move to allow Grameenphone to come up with similar offers has raised the eyebrows from the other operators and prompted them to contact the telecom minister about the issue.

"We have already distributed the free minutes to more than one crore users. which will keep them connected to their near and dear ones," said Yasir Azman, chief executive officer of Grameenphone, during a virtual media briefing on Friday.

Also, Grameenphone has introduced a Tk 0.48 per minute call rate from 8 am to 12 pm for its 7.5 crore customers. According to the voice call regulation, no operator can charge less than Tk 0.45 per minute.

The government, however, would not look into the rules right now, said Telecom Minister Mustafa Jabbar.

and rules and regulations will be the second priority. If any other operator is interested in giving away free minutes to their customers, they are welcome," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

acknowledged The minister that Grameenphone is an operator with significant market power (SMP) and this pricing gimmick might help the carrier.

"At the same time, you will also need to consider that Grameenphone has come forward to stand by the people.

Jabbar, however, said he did not know why the BTRC did not allow others to roll out similar initiatives.

Contacted, Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of the commission, said: "I need to check the regulations and what our officers did. We want customers to get cheap service, but at the same time rules need to be followed.'

Price is a huge issue and it might adversely affect other carriers, he said. "So, we need to look into it."

Grameenphone said it had approvals from the regulator about the offers and would bear all the charges applicable to revenue sharing, interconnection and the National Board of Revenue

"Now is the time for all of us to come forward and help the government in fighting the crisis," the country's leading mobile operator said in a statement.

Grameenphone's partnership with the government in the fight against coronavirus started with the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) hotlines 333 and 16236.

Robi said it is sad to see that an operator is disguising its market-driven initiatives under the guise of corporate social responsibility.

"As a socially responsible company, we took "Humanitarian service is our priority a conscious call not to promote our market-



could get the approval for a campaign that can destabilise the market.

"We had designed a special package to mark the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation, but the regulator refused to give the permission saying it is not permitted under the price regulation," he said, requesting anonymity.

The disagreement between Grameenphone and other operators is not new.

A few days ago, three operators requested the BTRC to allocate free spectrum for three months to serve the customers. The Telenor subsidiary opposed the move.

"Grameenphone has financial power and it is trying to create a situation that will corner other operators," the executive said.

Its commitment to the COVID-19 response carries a total value of Tk 100 crore, said the operator on Friday.

The Grameenphone CEO also declared the carrier's continued support to the frontline medical workers and offered monthly 30GB data to the registered doctors of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) with a token Tk 1 per month for the next six months.

Currently, there are 25,000 doctors certified by the DGHS.

Grameenphone internet users will get 100 per cent bonus every week on all data packs if they purchase it using the app. The operator has announced a Tk 10-crore safety net credit scheme for the affected retailers.

"This is a test for all of the citizens to be united to tackle the ongoing challenges. Our role has never been this critical before in serving this nation. No one has ever predicted this crisis and how it may take a toll on our lives. It is high time to come together, with patience, understanding and compassion," Azman said.

Grameenphone headquarters in the capital's Bashundhara area. The operator announced a package worth a staggering Tk 100 crore in its fight against COVID-19.

driven initiatives as corporate responsibility initiative, as that would not be an honest portrayal of our commitment to our society in crisis," said Shahed Alam, the chief corporate and regulatory officer at Robi.

"In this backdrop, we are very sad to see that an operator is choosing to exploit the prevailing sentiment in the society around the crisis by dressing up their market-driven initiatives into corporate responsibility ones," he said.

Since the telecom minister has asked the other players to come up with similar offers,

carriers like Robi are now getting their package ready, said an industry insider requesting anonymity.

COLLECTED

Robi, the country's second-largest market operator, has been introducing offers at a significantly reduced price from the very early days of the pandemic to help customers stay connected during the crisis, it said.

"With regards to other offers in the market, our offer is unmatchable in terms of cost-value proposition," Alam added.

Another senior executive of an operator expressed his shock that an SMP operator

# BUSINESS

# **TAMING CORONAVIRUS RAMPAGE**

# Our sudden and decentralised restart is hard to fathom



ZAHID HUSSAIN

Bangladesh's restart is happening, whether science supports it or not.

Justification for the hurry is sought by referring to reopening in other countries, especially China, Germany, Spain, Italy, Denmark, India and several Arab states.

A quick web-search of what these countries have done suggests we may be missing the key lessons -- health system preparedness, gradualism, selectivity, hygiene and social distancing compliance -- from how they are reopening.

Wuhan -- the birth city of the pandemic -reopened after 76 days of lockdown.

Residents with a government-assigned green Quick Response (QR) code on their mobile phones -- certifying they are safe -- are allowed to go back to work.

In residential communities where no new cases have been reported for 14 days, one person per household with a green QR code can leave the compound two hours per day.

On March 25, public buses started to resume service; three days later, underground trains began running. Businesses and shops have gradually reopened.

Germany acted early and aggressively to roll out comprehensive testing. A lot more people with no or mild symptoms got tested, helping to slow the spread.

The government coordinated all lockdown measures, straightforwardly communicated information to citizens and officials, consulted with experts and used data to guide decisions.

Spain lifted some of the restrictions, allowing businesses whose employees cannot work remotely to reopen.

Manufacturing, construction, and some service workers have been allowed to return subject to strict safety guidelines. Their rate of new infections has been falling.

Italy allowed a narrow range of firms to resume operations at the end of April. In Denmark, schools and daycare centres reopened on April 15. Other restrictions, including a ban on gatherings of more than 10 people, remain in place.

India's nationwide lockdown was one

not produced the desired results.

Small retail shops could reopen with half their staff, and with the expectation exponentially. that people physically and socially distance

People find ways to follow their normal routines to engage in activities that provide daily sustenance and togetherness.

Individuals estimate they can go out, meet friends and enjoy the contained virus spread if everyone else is staying home, avoiding social contact.

The problem is when everyone makes the same estimate, all end up going out. Seeing all going out breaks the last straw for those still hanging in, completing the vicious circle.

Compliance with public health orders happens when people share a widespread belief that everyone is complying, as pointed out by the former World Bank Chief Economist Kaushik Basu a few years ago.

Bangladesh has, for all practical purpose, left it to the market to decide when and how

Workers are exposed to health risks in The number of infected cases is rising factories with inadequate occupational safety and health measures.

Their health risk is exacerbated by their often extremely crowded and unhygienic housing conditions.

Workers have been stigmatised by the people in their local communities as well as in their home districts.

Economics is supposedly driving the defacto surrender of the most potent weapon, in the absence of vaccines and therapeutics, against the spread of the virus: social distancing. Have business leaders done their calculus right?

The latest evidence casts doubt.

A Consumer Pulse Survey by the Centre for Enterprise and Society has just assessed consumer sentiments in the context of the pandemic, upcoming Eid, and beyond.

They find consumers most concerned

Individuals estimate they can go out, meet friends and enjoy the contained virus spread if everyone else is staying home, avoiding social contact. The problem is when everyone makes the same estimate, all end up going out.

Another at least half as much in extra spending is needed to equip those at the frontline of battling the pandemic.

Implementation of the announced package is at best ambling forward through the cobweb of bureaucratic red tape. Time is running out.

We must not be oblivious to the risk of facing international isolation, de jure or de facto if we fail to keep up with global progress in containing the virus.

The current crisis has made clear how vulnerable people are to what happens on the other side of the planet.

The cliché that "we are all in this together" can easily turn into national public health interest-driven push to isolate the laggards.

This may well be justified by the fact that safeguarding the welfare of their own is ultimately a contribution towards the welfare of those locked behind.

The globe's interconnectivity in the 21st century has made virus mobility potentially much more devastating.

While serious flaws are apparent in marshalling international cooperation to fight the virus, it may not take much for global investors and buyers to withdraw from countries that remain branded as high transmission risk. The International Labour Organisation has already raised flags, urging the concerned stakeholders to prevent and control the spread of the virus in workplaces in Bangladesh.

Making decisions based on science and evidence, not on populist or bureaucratic perceptions, is a no-brainer when facing a dandemic. The first lesson learnt in this pandemic is that the weakest link in the chain, the failure to act and disclose in time as the virus spread in Wuhan, can bring down the whole edifice. The international community may socially distance itself from countries failing to contain the virus. This could mean severe consequences for Bangladesh's economy for many years to come. A new World Bank Research & Policy Brief, titled "An Opportunity to Build Legitimacy and Trust in Public Institutions in the Time of COVID-19", observes that as the first line of defence against a life-threatening disease, the governments have received a windfall of legitimacy.



Cars are slowly taking over the streets again after staying off for a good five weeks for the ongoing countrywide shutdown, enforced on March 26 to flatten the curve on coronavirus that has so far infected 13,770 and claimed 214 lives since the first confirmed cases were announced on March 8. The photo was taken from the Mohakhali flyover on Thursday.

of its strictest. It started reopening with manufacturing and farming in rural areas and neighbourhood convenience stores to provide

In Bangladesh, the basic preconditions for reopening are missing.

Many business owners in Lebanon have not reopened because they thought they will be losing more money if they operate under restrictions in a faltering economy.

relief for small, cash-strapped businesses.

Quarantined towns and hotspots across the

Iran reopened mosques in areas consistently

Jordan lifted all restrictions on economic

activity, allowing businesses, industries, public

transport to resume operation with safety

guidelines. Universities and schools remain

Malls in Abu Dhabi have reopened at

Saudi authorities have allowed wholesale

30 per cent capacity after installing thermal

inspection devices. Shoppers are required to

and retail trade to resume for just two weeks

closed and a night curfew continues.

wear face masks and gloves at all times.

wearing masks.

country remain locked.

free of the coronavirus.

(from April 29 to May 13).

Authorities everywhere have reopened selectively after the infection cases started declining (except India) and with a nononsense caution that the threat of further infections is far from over.

Staying home is highly encouraged while physical distancing and hygienic practices complied. An adequate network of hospitals and primary health care facilities exist in all these countries.

In Bangladesh, the basic pre-conditions are missing.

Public health professionals say the official figures do not capture the virus spread reality

on the ground. Testing rates remain low. There are concerns about significant "false negatives".

The capacity to test, isolate and treat patients is restricted by fragile public health infrastructure and vastly inadequate personnel. Enforcement of social distancing through official holidays, restriction on movements, local lockdowns and public advisories have to open, unlike any other country.

In fairness, the restriction on activities came under increasing strain as millions struggled to make ends meet.

Macro-level collective action problems can quickly surface when a public good is left upon the market to provide without effective central guidance and regulation.

Chaotic return to an elusive normal is a natural outcome.

Garment factories started production, allegedly to avert loss of business to competitors such as Vietnam and China, flouting social distancing and hygiene.

Shop owners have the discretion to open for Eid sales.

Informal sector small operators are naturally responding.

The millions rushing to Dhaka and other virus hotspots could emerge as new vectors of the pandemic. The workers are travelling between home and the workplace. Labour unrest for wage payments is adding fuel to fire. According to a report by the Brac Institute

of Governance and Development, the trade union leaders report a lack of awareness among workers and owners.

about personal and family safety, income and business. A large majority are unsure about the country's ability to recover from the economic shock. At least 84 per cent are cutting back spending.

Eid spending is likely to be deeply depressed, with restaurants and hotels hardest hit.

Except for spending on pharmaceuticals and online learning, all other spending is likely to decrease, the least for groceries, beyond Eid. Consumer confidence is ebbing.

The fear of contracting the virus underpins the erosion of confidence. This fear, in turn, is rooted in a lack of confidence in the health system. With COVID-19 cases doubling every 5 days, the country is experiencing steepening of the curve. Nobody can predict the health and economic consequences of such a rapid and

uncoordinated reopening of the economy. Faith in herd immunity does not help much in alleviating this radical uncertainty.

A lack of coordinated effort to mitigate the health and economic risks has deepened anxieties

The 3.5 per cent of GDP stimulus package is inadequate when the economy requires at least 5-6 per cent to support families and firms.

This can be wasted if used to intensify divisive politics.

It could enable reform-minded leaders to change "a vicious cycle of high levels of corruption/low levels of trust to a virtuous one of high trust/low corruption".

This dynamic requires change, among others, in how well leaders in countries "communicate credible, nonideological and nonpartisan knowledge to their population".

Date:

The azuthor is an economist



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ministry of Education Secondary and Higher Education Division Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Secondary Education Sector Investment Program www.sesip.gov.bd

Date:

09 May, 2020

Memo: DSHE/SESIP/SPSU/1-438/PVIP(GD-50/a)/2019/967

#### **CORRIGENDUM No. 3**

This is being notified to all concerned that the following amendments are made to the Invitation for Bids and Bidding Documents of Tender Package: GD-50a for procurement of equipment for Pre-vocational and Vocational Program (PVIP) (Lot 2: General Electrical Works; Lot 3: General Electronics; Lot 4: General Mechanics) (Invitation ref. no. DSHE/SESIP/SPSU/1- 438/PVIP(GD-50/a)/2019/910; Dated:12 March 2020)

This Addendum is being issued pursuant to ITB Clause-8 of the Bidding Documents:

SL	Subject to be Amended	Current Contents (Including corrigendum no.2)	Amended Contents (Contents to be read as)		
1	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	12.05.2020 up to 17 Hrs. BST	09.06.2020 up to 17 Hrs. BST		
2	Tender Submission Date and Time (ITB 24.1)	13.05.2020, at or before 14:00 Hrs. BST	10.06.2020, at or before 12:00 Hrs. BST		
3	Tender Opening Date and Time (ITB 27.1)	13.05.2020, at 14:30 Hrs. BST	10.06.2020, at 12:30 Hrs. BST		

NOTE: All other Terms and Conditions shall remain unchanged. This CORRIGENDUM No. 3 shall form an integral part of the Bidding Document.

war

Professor Dr. Shamsun Naher Joint Program Director (R.C.) Secondary Education Sector Investment Program Tel. 01816316842



GD-812

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ministry of Education Secondary and Higher Education Division Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Secondary Education Sector Investment Program www.sesip.gov.bd



09 May, 2020

Memo: DSHE/SESIP/SPSU/1-439/PVIP(GD-50/b)/2019/968

#### CORRIGENDUM No. 3

This is being notified to all concerned that the following amendments are made to the Invitation for Bids and Bidding Documents of Tender Package: GD-50b for procurement of equipment for Pre-vocational and Vocational Program (PVIP) (Lot 1: Civil Construction; Lot 4: Refrigeration and Air Conditioning; Lot 5: Plumbing and Pipe Fittings) (Invitation ref. no. DSHE/ SESIP/SPSU/1-439/PVIP(GD-50/b)/2019/911; Dated:12 March 2020).

This Addendum is being issued pursuant to ITB Clause-8 of the Bidding Documents:

SL	Subject to be Amended	Current Contents (Including corrigendum no.2)	Amended Contents (Contents to be read as)	
1 Tender Last Selling Date and Time		13.05.2020 up to 17 Hrs. BST	09.06.2020 up to 17 Hrs. BST	
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3	Tender Opening Date and Time (ITB 27.1)	14.05.2020, at 14:30 Hrs. BST	10.06.2020, at 15:00 Hrs. BST	

NOTE: All other Terms and Conditions shall remain unchanged. This CORRIGENDUM No. 3 shall form /+an integral part of the Bidding Document.

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Professor Dr. Shamsun Naher Joint Program Director (R.C.) Secondary Education Sector Investment Program Tel. 01816316842



### EDITORIAL



DHAKA SUNDAY MAY 10, 2020, BAISHAKH 27, 1427 BS

# The world at risk of mega-famines

### Bangladesh cannot afford to be complacent

HE United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP)

has warned that the world is at risk of "megafamines" as COVID-19 cases are expected to peak in the world's most fragile countries in the next three to six months. Even before COVID-19, there was already 135 million acutely hungry people in the world, in addition to the 821 million people who were chronically hungry, highlighted the UN organisation. The pandemic will likely double the number of acutely hungry people.

The UN's warning should be taken seriously by policymakers, particularly in countries like ours. While we are fortunate to have adequate food stocks in case of an immediate crisis, the current and imminent implications of COVID-19 on the food supply chain cannot be ignored, particularly as we are a part of the global economy. The government has taken some timely steps, such as mobilising workers from parts of the country and sending them to the haor areas, which were facing acute labour shortages, to harvest the paddy, and taking measures to save crops before impending flashfloods and cyclones in the north-eastern and southern regions, respectively. However, concerns remain whether farmers will be able to sell their crops at a fair price. Already smallholders and women farmers are having to sell their produce at one-fourth or one-fifth the usual pricehow will they make up for this loss to their livelihoods and what disastrous impact will it have on the next production cycle?

The government cannot afford to be complacent at this critical stage of intervention as it strategises how to ease the lockdown and distribute and redistribute food products, without jeopardising the safety of communities. Additionally, with millions of people in extreme poverty and temporary unemployment due to the ongoing crisis, the government needs to expand its social safety net programmes to ensure access to food for all. Having adequate food supplies in stocks will mean nothing if it is not properly and fairly distributed.

## Celebrating Mother's Day

Let's ensure our mothers get their rightful place in family and society

S we celebrate International Mother's Day today, remaining confined to our homes, we, in fact, **1 L** get a better chance to see the hard work our mothers have to do every single day only to make our lives comfortable. During this lockdown, it's our mothers who are sacrificing the most just to ensure that we can go about our regular life without facing much hassle. This is what mothers do in any given situation-they make sure that their children are fed, clothed and educated with whatever resources they have. They keep the family together and allow other members to work and pursue their dreams. But do we even find the time to pause for a minute and think about what they get in return for their endless love and care for their children and family? How many amongst us recognise their role in the family and society? How many amongst us make sure that our



synonymous with curtailment of freedom of expression and repression. The recent developments of involuntary disappearance, re-appearance and subsequent detention of several commentators and social activists have raised the alarm if indeed we as a nation are shying away from upholding one of the cardinal principles of the Muktijuddher *Chetona* (the spirit of the Liberation War) to freely express our views.

spectre is

haunting

A few recent cases will corroborate the above statement. On May 6, businessman Mushtaq Ahmed and cartoonist Ahammed Kabir Kishore were sent to jail and Dhaka Stock Exchange director Minhaz Mannan Emon and Rastra Chinta organiser Didarul Islam Bhuiyan were shown arrested a day after they had reportedly been picked up in a case filed under the DSA allegedly for spreading "rumours". Five persons based in Sweden and Germany and six more unnamed persons have been named for "tarnishing'" the image of the father

> The recent developments of involuntary disappearance, reappearance and subsequent detention of several commentators and social activists have raised the alarm if indeed we as a nation are shying away from upholding one of the cardinal principles of the Muktijuddher Chetona (the spirit of the Liberation War) to freely express our views.

of the nation, "hurting" the spirit of the Liberation War, and "spreading rumours" about COVID-19, army and other security forces among others, on social media.

Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore, began profiling "life in the time of corona" while Mushtaq started spreading antistate propaganda, the complaint noted. It was further claimed that authorities had detected "anti-state chatting" in the WhatsApp and Messenger exchanges of Mushtaq, Minhaz and Didarul. The



**COVID-19** and the assault

on fundamental rights

Involuntary disappearance, re-appearance and detention

original complaint was annexed with 60 pages of screenshots and a compact disc as evidence, and a 2-page list of articles seized and details of their Facebook profiles, including the URLs.

The government move came at a time when citizens were reeling from the bizarre developments centring the involuntary disappearance of journalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol (March 10), his re-appearance in the border town of Benapole (after 53 days) and subsequent placement in detention. The authorities' attempt to present Kajol as an absconder from justice failed to gain traction. The CCIV footage of some people surrounding his motorbike just prior to his disappearance, the initial refusal of two police stations to register the family's attempt to file a case, the lack of progress in investigation, improperly detaining him under Section 54 of Criminal Procedure Code to secure time to frame other, publicly humiliating him by handcuffing his hands behind his back (a practice reserved for those accused of violent crimes such as rape, murder, terrorism and the like) and "law enforcement agencies' overdrive to keep him in prison" at a time when courts are dysfunctional, all point

the guidelines framed by the High Court and upheld by the Appellate Division. As the hearing of the government's review petition is still pending those guidelines continue to remain in force. Therefore continued detention of Kajol under Section 54 appears to be in breach of the law.

to the fact that Kajol has been deprived of

due process of law and may perhaps be a

victim for freely expressing his views on

Detaining individuals on charges of

"spreading rumours", "tarnishing image"

and "hurting spirit of Liberation War" for

an unstipulated period in a situation when

they cannot seek protection of higher

judiciary amounts to arbitrary action. It

may be recalled that initially Kajol had

matters of public interest.

It is a matter of the courts to decide whether charges brought against the above accused for "spreading rumour", "tarnishing image" and "hurting" a sentiment are tenable or not. In most instances of involuntary disappearances, including the ones above, does not the denial of law enforcement agencies of any knowledge of whereabouts of victims amount to making a false statement? Evidence is replete that in a number of cases victims are shown as under arrest if and when they are produced before the court, some weeks and even months after they were reportedly disappeared. Should not the errant members of law enforcement agencies be held accountable for such gross misconduct?

These recent actions of law enforcement agencies have triggered widespread protests. Rights groups documenting the excesses committed by state agencies

have noted that following the outbreak of COVID-19, there has been an increase in instances of involuntary disappearance, extra-judicial killing and human rights violations. In most cases the actions were justified on ground of tackling rumours. The feeling is pervasive among rights activists that COVID-19 may have come as a boon to that section in the administration that is disposed to remain unaccountable and non-transparent, and thus quash dissent and public scrutiny.

The country is going through a testing time. It is the need of the hour to face the COVID-19 challenge in unison. The gradual rise in the infection curve with no sign of receding and the worsening conditions of the masses reinforce the fear that we are yet to chart out appropriate course of action. Framing a suitable response necessitates discussion and debate among all stakeholders and that entails tolerance of diverse views and free flow of information. The watchdog role of civil society only ensures transparency and accountability of the public functionaries and also of non-government initiatives engaged in humanitarian assistance. Those in the administration should not only welcome citizens' engagement but create enabling conditions to facilitate the process. At the very least, it entails state's unfettered pledge to uphold the fundamental rights of the citizens guaranteed by the constitution. All responses to COVID-19 must therefore be "evidence-based, legal, necessary to protect public health, non-discriminatory, timebound and proportionate".

In order to do away with the prevailing dreary and fatalist frame of mind of the people it is incumbent on the authorities to immediately release those detained under the DSA, make every effort to recover those who became victims of involuntary disappearance, and not proceed any further with the frivolous cases of defamation. Scrapping the DSA and instituting a credible commission of enquiry with adequate authority to look into the cases of involuntary disappearance and extrajudicial killings will go a long way to reestablishing citizens' trust in the state.

As the custodian of the constitution, the Supreme Court may consider taking immediate measures to ensure people can seek its protection without any hindrance and (in the interim, until such a system is put in place) advise the executive branch to strictly uphold fundamental rights of the people guaranteed by the constitution and act in accordance with the law, and only in accordance with the law. 

CR Abrar is an academic.

mothers are in good health, both mental and physical?

We are saddened to learn from reports that during the ongoing lockdown violence against women has increased around the world. Manusher Jonno Foundation has recently conducted a telesurvey which found that 4,249 women out of 17,203 they have interviewed faced different forms of domestic violence in April this year during the shutdown. We often come across reports in the media about how elderly parents are mistreated and abandoned by their children. Women's unpaid household and care work have not yet been formally recognised by our state. And as we all praise the role of our mothers today, an overwhelming number of expectant mothers are dying in the remote corners of the country every day due to their lack of access to proper healthcare services.

On this Mother's Day, let us take a vow to end the violence and discrimination our mothers as well as women in general face at home and ensure that their hard work is recognised in the family and society.

### **LETTERS** TO THE EDITOR letters@thedailystar.net Turkey's response to AFP report

I am writing to you regarding the AFP news piece titled "Armenia decries crimes against 'civilisation' on genocide anniv" published on April 25, 2020 edition of The Daily Star. As this news reflect a subjective narrative based on the unfounded claims by the Armenian side, I would like to bring to your attention the following so that you can inform your readers with the counter arguments:

Turkey, having solidarity among its citizens regardless of their backgrounds of faith or identity, commemorates with respect Muslim, Christian and Jewish civilians of Ottoman communities who lost their lives during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

More than 500 thousand Muslims have been massacred by Armenian rebels in the same period. We would like to remind that Turkey's proposal to establish a Joint Historical Commission on the event of 1915 is still on the table. We believe the truth will be unveiled if this Commission is established. Those who try to take this proposal off the agenda are radical Armenians who want to make their responsibilities during the events of 1915 forgotten.

President Recap Tayyip Erdogan's message to Armenian Patriarch of Tukey, Reverend Sahak Masalyan on April 24, 2020 clearly demonstrates Turkey's approach on this matter.

Mustafa Osman Turan, Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh

# The heroicness of children

#### HUMAIRA SULTANA

HINK of a child in lockdown! I can only imagine a caged bird, trying so hard to be freed. I can imagine, I can see, because I have three of them!

A child is always like a little scientist, always exploring, trying new experiments and new things, making new friends, finding new places, flying like birds in an open meadow, following the butterfly or simply roaming around the community from dawn till dusk! And now, their childhood is being lost because of a thousand instructions and set of rules of social distancing due to the pandemic.

COVID-19 holiday (lockdown) was fun for the first few days for the children. No school, relaxed study hours, comfortable sleeping times, waking up and going to bed late, movie time (for the privileged ones), or longer playtime. Some even travelled with their parents during the first few days of the government declared holiday. Children of working parents were extremely happy as they got to enjoy the company of both their parents, perhaps for the very first time of their lives, or at least after a very long time!

But as the duration of the lockdown and the number of people infected increases, so does the burden on children. They are locked up within the confines of the four walls. Online classes, continuous dos and don'ts and no friends. These are seriously impacting their mental state.

Think of the children who are not privileged, living in urban slums or under the open sky. Most of the parents of these slum children are now jobless due to social distancing and lockdown. For these working families mostly comprising of domestic helpers, day labourers and garments workers, the miseries cannot be solved just with immediate relief. They have no work, no income, and very depressingly, no savings! These families are already starving, including the children. To them roaming around is no longer fun. And to those sleeping on the roadside, starving may be a bigger threat than the virus!

A couple of days ago, I was reading an article which said that children with disabilities are having a tough time and becoming increasingly restless during this lockdown. On top of that, the medical facilities available to them are very limited.

Violence against children is on the rise, whereas the scope to report them has declined. Apart from this, children are also exposed to increased family violence, mostly violence against women. In both cases, children are directly and indirectly affected.

In rural areas, where agriculture is the main source of income and nutrition of the family, children are also being severely affected. Farmers are not getting the appropriate price for their crops or other products. People are predicting that there could be a severe food crisis in the upcoming days, which these families are already struggling with—as on the hand they are not receiving fair payment for their produce, while on the other, crops are getting wasted due to their inability to deliver them to the appropriate market. Families are selling off their cattle for cheap to support their basic needs, leaving them even more vulnerable. Children's food and nutrition and other basic rights

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

A child is always like a little scientist, always exploring, trying new experiments and new things, making new friends, finding new places, flying like birds in an open meadow, following the butterfly or simply roaming around the community from dawn till dusk!

are being hampered. In early April, a destitute mother threw five children into the river Ganges in Uttar Pradesh as there was no food due to the lockdown! I couldn't even read the news; I didn't even dare to.

Whenever I see Facebook statuses of how bored people are getting due to the lockdown, or of mouth-watering food they are making and enjoying (I am not against people posting food photos), I think about the children who are starving and going to bed hungry or the mother who threw her children into the river. Whenever I see posts mentioning how tough life has becometo manage work and household with kids as the kids are restless—I think about the children who are running pillar to post with their parents to get some relief!

Children are wonders! If they are happily causing mischief at home, be happy for that, be happy that they are healthy, that they are having a meal, that they are at home, complying with tons of different instructions.

All the children out there or at home, they are the real heroes and fighters of COVID-19. Because they are compromising their childhood and the memories they get to make because of this pandemic.

Humaira Sultana is a development communication expert.

Children at an orphanage at the capital's Azimpur watch TV.



**OPINION** 

# Paradox of analogue life in a digital age



AST Christmas break, I took my daughter out to dinner when she flew in to see me in Vancouver. We decided to go to a Vietnamese

restaurant to

get the traditional pho, a warm bone broth soup with savoury beef chunks and hearty noodles. As I sipped my delicious pho and caught up with my daughter about her work and life as a recent graduate mining engineer, I glanced around the restaurant to observe my fellow patrons. Dozens of people were sitting at their tables, and a good number of them had their heads down, fiddling their smartphones while waiting for their food to be served. Their eyes darted up and down the screen, and they would only look up briefly when answering or asking a question. The endless screen watching, even in social settings always made me wonder "what is the point?" A few questions also swirl around in my head. How did the world wide web take over our analogue lives? What is so mesmerising about our handheld devices that amounts to this level of addiction?

I have been self-quarantined in my home for over a month now in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where I moved back recently from Vancouver, Canada. In this lockdown state, I continue to work from home and connect with my colleagues all over the country including some from our company headquarters in Kuala Lumpur and my boss, who is stuck in Yangon due to the travel restrictions. We participate in many team meetings throughout the day using online audio-visual aids. Our company also conducted several virtual townhalls with hundreds of employees in virtual attendance. However, in most cases, we try to avoid video calls due to the bandwidth limitations.

I also converse with a few of my

few initiatives that we started much before I left. The time difference works to my benefit since I can arrange my interactions before going to bed. Over the last few days, I have done several transactions through a mobile financial app called *bKash*. My wife was able to get groceries delivered at home by placing orders on a website, while I paid for cable TV, internet, electricity and phone bills using my smartphone. My teenage daughter who goes to an English medium school, becomes preoccupied during the school hours as she attends online classes from the comfort of her room. Some weeknights are spent having family time, watching YouTube or Netflix.

colleagues in Vancouver to discuss a

Seemingly, the internet has become the answer to a myriad of challenges ensuing from the strict nationwide measures to halt the transmission of the COVID-19. Many of the activities that are being conducted digitally today would have been performed through analogue means otherwise. Bridging our analogue lives to the digital world make us happily relieved during the lockdown and facilitate social distancing. That said, I still miss going to the office, meeting my colleagues, or going out for a walk to have some fresh air.

The unanswered paradox is that many of us are too immersed in our digital world while living analogue lives in normal times; we are able to do everything and anything without ever needing physical human interaction today.

From shopping groceries, virtual classrooms, online consultation with a physician or working from home to enjoy digital contents could have been the way of life today if the majority of the population were able to use most of these modalities. However, the reality is different with almost half of the world population without access to the internet. The so-called *digital* divide becomes worse when the least developed countries are considered. It also has a gender bias impacting women more than men.

Since its inception, *digital divide* is just not only a local phenomenon but also a global one. More than one billion children across the globe are unable to attend remote learning while locked at home due to COVID-19 restrictions now. Even in developed countries, internet access is often lower than perceived. Paradoxically, amidst the technological prowess of the United States of America, 12



As of February 2020, the number of mobile connections per capita in Bangladesh was equivalent to 99 percent of the total population, less than 20 percent of them had a smartphone.

million children in middle class homes are growing up without internet connection. In rural America, 19 million households still lack internet connectivity. Globally, 87 percent of the population in developed countries are connected to the Internet, compared to 47 percent in developing nations, and a mere 19 percent in impoverished countries

In the context of Bangladesh, the nation has made impressive progress and was on track to become a middleincome economy by 2021, until the arrival of COVID-19. Governments have coined the Sustainable Development Goals to achieve their "Vision 2021". A major impetus was on information

and communication technology (ICT) to bridge the digital divide by adopting technologies and improving knowledge base. Some indicators suggest that reasonable progresses have been made; for example, last year Bangladesh advanced to the rank of 115 out of 193 counties in the UN E-Governance Index climbing 35 steps since 2012. Government policies and initiatives have offered a positive atmosphere in

PHOTO: STAR implementing the roadmap toward a Digital Bangladesh. Today, many of us are enjoying the fruits of digitisation

while being locked down at home. However, there is a growing concern about the majority of the population continuing to live on the wrong side of the digital divide. They do not have reliable tools or means to connect to the Internet. This is not only limiting working from home or attending classes online but also defeating the greater purpose of a Digital Bangladesh. Except for a few private institutions, the online classroom is almost nonexistent during this lockdown. The same applies to the work from home modality as only a handful of private

sector offices are using the benefits of the large-scale *digitalisation* that the government has strived for over the years. As of February 2020, the number of mobile connections per capita in Bangladesh was equivalent to 99 percent of the total population, less than 20 percent of them had a smartphone. These numbers are 65 percent and 45 percent, respectively when the whole world is considered. Although Internet subscription in Bangladesh stood at almost 100 million, the broadband connectivity stayed at less than 6 million according to the data from the nation's regulatory body BTRC. The household computer ownership in 2019 was less than 6 percent, as per ITU.

The key focus of the digitalisation efforts either in local or global scenarios has mostly been on technology. This approach has offered a significant thrust for Bangladesh to address aspects of the digital divide in terms of ICT capabilities. Yet, the root cause of this divide is not just limited to technology, there are a number of other factors, such as income disparity, education level, geography and infrastructure playing a critical role in widening or closing the chasm.

With the small percentage of computers in households, limited broadband internet and the relatively low penetration of smartphones in Bangladesh, the paradox of digital divide may continue even when there might be a call for adopting many of the digital avenues explored today to become our way of life. We would have to relentlessly pursue our aspirations to become a true digital Bangladesh in a post COVID-19 world that may ultimately save us from our overcrowded capital city, its infamous traffic jams, pollution and enhanced public safety in the coming days. It finally started to dawn on me what was so magical about our handheld devices and why we needed to stay virtually connected more now than ever before.

Sabbir Ahmad, Director, Engineering at edotco Group. Email: sabbir@ieee.org.

# A choice between death by COVID-19 or famine

#### MOHAMMAD TARIQUR RAHMAN

T has been more than a month since the world has been under lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of deaths will soar if the predicted second and third waves and the "biblical" famine-as UN warns—come true.

Are we then racing for a massive humanitarian catastrophe? If so,



they wanted to with the lockdownflattening the death curve. Ironically, that also perpetuated global starvation towards a larger famine—the biblical one!

Now after a month of lockdown, we are facing a different choice—a choice between death by COVID-19 and/ or death by the biblical famine. Our rationale to justify our measures at the beginning of the pandemic to save our

Once we are born, death is inevitable. Obviously, whether we will continue living or leave this world, is not in our control. But what we can do while we are alive, is in our control. And before we embrace death, we should want to fulfil the purpose of life as a human-serving humanity.

It is the coronavirus that perhaps helped us realise the value of our own life—let's not limit that realisation for

perhaps future generations will remember the COVID-19 pandemic as the biggest humanitarian catastrophe in human history!

At the beginning of this pandemic, the majority of the victims were elderly. Later the number of younger victims started to mount. Then the "rationing" of the healthcare system was chosen to save healthier and/or younger people who had more chances of recovery.

Healthcare rationing is arguably a painful paradox because of the differences in the boundary of "egalitarian" ethos, and the availability of resources. These are based on fostering the dilemma-if death should/could be delayed. Nonetheless, moral apriority in that "cruel" choice of rationing—a choice between life and death-remains a concern.

In fact, the pandemic has given us a pounding realisation to fathom the depth between life and death. We realised that the COVID-19 death sentence could fall upon any of us at any time. The reality is, we can die at any time with or without COVID-19. Yet we never thought of death as much as we are thinking about it during this pandemic!

By all means, we want to escape

#### United Nations' food relief agency has warned that the world is at risk of widespread famines 'of biblical proportions' caused by the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

an early death sentence from the coronavirus

Because of the lack of an effective vaccine/drug, lockdown became the best option to escape any unexpected death. To avoid any chances of getting in touch with the deadly virus, suspected COVID-19 patients were found abandoned; ousted COVID-19 patients wandered helplessly; and dead COVID-19 patients were left unattended in old homes, on the street, or even inside their house for hours to days.

We wanted to complete the full course of a nice life ourselves. We have chosen life over death.

However, given the lockdown's

success to curb the virus's claim of human lives, to ease our frustration for being locked down for so long, or to restore economic growth, many countries are slowly withdrawing or relaxing the lockdown. The hard fact is, everyone knows that both silent and actively infected coronavirus carriers are out there. And neither do we have an effective vaccine, nor a drug, yet.

In effect, what is happening now is what the "herd immunity" advocates have been endorsing from the beginning. Looks like we are going back to square one-creating the breeding ground for the next waves of the pandemic!

No doubt some have achieved what

own lives in lieu of the "less valuable" old folks, or by preventing the spread of deadly infections to save millions of lives may sound hypocritical if we ignore the millions of people in many parts of the world whose dream of living is about to end.

In fact, thousands of men, women, and children of all ages are already dying in imposed wars, famine, or ethnic cleansing. Our deplorable ignorance to that death toll has made the slaughter of humans a norm of modern civilisation! Similarly, we might ignore the death toll due in the upcoming global famine.

In a recent virtual session of the UN Security Council, David Beasley, UN World Food Programme Executive Director, cautioned "an additional 130 million people could be pushed to the brink of starvation by the end of 2020". Ironically, the amount of food that goes to waste in Europe and in the USA alone could feed the world population three times over, yet more than 20,000 people starve to death every day. And this number will increase to 300,000 per day, as David Beasley cautioned! The reality is, every human life is equally important. Everyone deserves to live a full life.

ourselves only. There are "others" who helplessly become a victim of national or global political plays.

The global leaders have proven themselves to be resolute in the fight against COVID-19. In the same vein, the world can stand united to protect the lives of those who are becoming the victims of famine, ethnic cleansing, or imposed wars.

With the technology that is available, it is not impossible to share millions of gallons of milk instead of dumping it into the drain, thousands of tons of vegetables instead of smashing them into the ground, millions of tons of packed food before throwing those away, or millions of eggs instead of letting them spoil. These "compelled" acts of wasting food are not new-it is a part of the mechanism to maintain the balance in the demand-supply chain and run the economy. And it could be stopped. Unlike our "cruel" choice in the beginning of the lockdown, we can be a bit more "generous" to prevent unexpected deaths due to the forthcoming famine or wars.

Mohammad Tariqur Rahman is professor, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Malaya.

ON THIS DAY	CROSSWORD BY THOM	S JOSEPH	1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8     9     10       11     12     12     12     12     BEETLE BAILEY     BY	Y MORT WALKER
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Peace Prize, became president of South Africa this day in 1994.	WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPIN dsopinion@gmail.co	much, briefly ION PIECES TO <b>m.</b>	R       A       M       N       E       A       T         A       L       I       B       I       S       A       L       S         V       E       N       U       E       K       N       E       S         E       X       I       T       S       S       K       I       T       S	Turese & febri

# starhealth@thedailystar.net COVID-19: money, mind and beyond

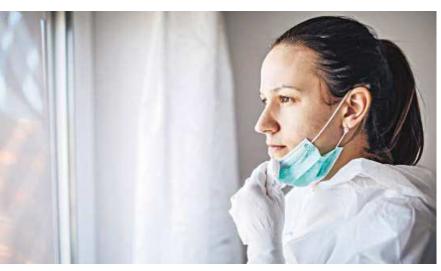
MOHAMMED MONZUR MORSHED

While having no promising success so far against the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), social distancing and quarantine are the only preventive measures advised by experts around the world. The idea is simple as you are not carrying the baton for letting the virus spread in your community. The devastating Coronavirus-show is already long enough that put everyone in critical thinking and wonder what now?

By far you have heard a lot about vaccines or drugs against COVID-19, how much have you grasped for your mental health? It is not just some sort of chemical imbalance that causes stress or depression. Stressful life events, dysregulation of mood by the brain and genetic vulnerability are also major sources of impaired mental health that exist in this pandemic.

Unfortunately for some during this pandemic, it is either Coronavirus or hunger to choose from. Some experts made a daunting speculation that this pandemic driven economic recession will be worse than ever as countries covering more than fifty percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are under lockdown. Unprecedented distortion in the circular flow of economic activities is plummeting people's positive energy.

Hence, this is not the best time for worshipping any economic theory, either be it neoclassical (naturally driven economic rehabilitation with minimum



government influence) or Keynesian (government-backed and fast-paced). Experts rather emphasise on the mobility of money where it should reach all the catalysts of the economy especially the struggling and deprived ones. Although coronavirus itself may move around traceless, the havoc of diminished financial stability is now evident and imprinting its effect on people's psyche. Any decisionmaking fiasco either for prolonged lockdown or getting back to work will just worsen the burden.

Our lifestyle needs a bit of tuning so that we move along with an apparent healthy living. Quarantine takes a deep toll on our mood presenting a weird kind of boredom. Boredom and stress provoke people towards overeating, for many the sugary "comfort foods".

Imbalance in dietary choice driven by the craving for any specific food includes emotional, behavioural, cognitive or psychological process. Although carbohydrate-rich foods promote the 'happy hormone' serotonin production which stimulates our mood, it also triggers a higher glycaemic index with consequent obesity and diabetes down the line.

Sleep disturbance or change in circadian rhythm adds another level of stress. Foods rich in serotonin and sleep-promoting amino acid melatonin for dinner may

help. Having a considerable portion of veggies, fruits and leafy greens are good options. This also provides tryptophan, the precursor of serotonin and melatonin. Just maintaining the basics ensuring good sources of immuno-supportive nutrients with vitamins, antioxidants, balance of macro and micronutrients may help you fight the impaired immune response and activate your natural mechanism against any infection or altered mental health.

In addition, not going out means less exposure to the sun, leading to reduced vitamin D levels. Replenishing vitamin D may be available from a brief walk around when the sun is up or from vitamin D rich foods like commonly found poultry options.

The positive association of a balanced diet and exercise with good mental health are plenty. The last option for improved mental health is going through medication under expert hands. Again, this is nothing new as many people already went through a similar situation. In the end, mental health matters big time.

The trauma from the invisible virus haunting us everyday demands extra empathy for our own. It may sound cliché but empathy, compassion and self-care should now be the most talked and practiced life events to go the extra mile in this pandemic.

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### HERPES



## Billions worldwide living with herpes

About half a billion people worldwide are living with genital herpes, and several billion have an oral herpes infection, new estimates show, highlighting the need to improve awareness and scale up services to prevent and treat herpes.

About 13% of the world's population aged 15 to 49 years were living with herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2) infection in 2016, the latest year for which data is available. HSV-2 is almost exclusively sexually transmitted, causing genital herpes. Infection can lead to recurring, often painful, genital sores in up to a third of people infected.

Herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1) is mainly transmitted by oral to oral contact to cause oral herpes infection - sometimes leading to painful sores in or around the mouth ("cold sores"). However, HSV-1 can also be transmitted to the genital area through oral sex, causing genital herpes.

Around 67% of the world's population aged 0 to 49 had HSV-1 infection in 2016 - an estimated 3.7 billion people. Most of these infections were oral; however, between 122 million to 192 million people were estimated to have genital HSV-1 infection.

Genital herpes is a substantial health concern worldwide - beyond the potential pain and discomfort suffered by people living with the infection, the associated social consequences can have a profound effect on sexual and reproductive health. There is no cure for herpes. Antiviral medications, such as acyclovir, famciclovir, and valacyclovir, can help to reduce the severity and frequency of symptoms but cannot cure the infection.

## Convalescent plasma therapy available in Dhaka to combat COVID-19

Evercare Hospital Dhaka has conducted the first ever convalescent plasma (CP) therapy in Bangladesh recently, says a press release. Successfully conducted in many developed countries recently, this therapy is a promising research treatment to combat the global pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

"COVID-19 infected patients in serious condition require Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and ventilator support. In addition to their regular treatment, research is being conducted worldwide to combat COVID-19, where one of the most promising treatments is convalescent plasma therapy", said Dr Abu Jafar Mohammed Saleh, Coordinator and Senior Consultant

# H E A L T H bulletin



### **Vigorous activity or sedentary** behaviour is not associated with risk for knee osteoarthritis

Patients and some clinicians still are concerned that physical activity, particularly vigorous physical activity, might be associated with excess risk for knee osteoarthritis (OA), despite considerable evidence to the contrary.

Researchers revisited the issue in a prospective cohort 1,194 adults (mean age, 58; mean body

# **Treating cancer during COVID-19**

PROF DR KAZI MANZUR KADER

People with cancer appear to be at increased risk of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and their outcomes are worse than those of individuals without cancer. This is especially valid for cancer patients with other diseases like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, kidney disease etc.

Evidence from China suggests that oncological patients are quite vulnerable to infection due to their compromised immune system as a result of both cancer and active cancer therapy like chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Many cancer patients are elderly and more susceptible to aggressive coronavirus

infection.

The constraints created by the pandemic have required health care professionals to make difficult choices, including those we made in drawing up prioritisation criteria to guide treatment decisions. Patients with potentially curable disease who could substantially benefit from treatment are given priority, whereas care for patients who were being treated with palliative intent, especially those for whom interventions are expected to have marginal benefit, is being deferred. Decisions about care for individual patients are made by balancing the risk that patients will contract COVID-19 because of exposures associated with cancer treatment and their risk for complications if they do, with the benefits of receiving potentially lifesaving cancer treatment.



locally advanced breast cancer, chemotherapy is required first for downsizing the tumour to make it operable and prevent the spread. Sometimes after surgery, adjuvant radiotherapy is required which will provide a good response to surgery, if not there is a chance of local recurrence and metastasis.

Considering the patient'

fish, meat, egg, milk, vegetables and fruits. To control associated diseases like diabetes, hypertension and kidney disease etc., by taking regular medications, proper diet and regular exercise

Cancer patients should take maximum precautions against COVID-19 by using facial masks when going out, maintaining social

[BMI], 27 kg/m2) who were at high risk for developing knee OA based on weight, history of knee injury or knee surgery, lack of confidence in knee stability, and modified lifestyle due to concerns about knee damage.

About 13% of patients developed incident knee OA during as long as 10 years of follow-up. In analyses adjusted for age, sex, and BMI, no physical activity trajectory or sitting pattern was associated significantly with knee OA. Patients classified as having low-tomoderate physical activity, compared with those who undertook no exercise, had a nearly significant lower risk for knee OA.

Clinicians should be comfortable encouraging patients to pursue at least low-to-moderate levels of physical activity for its known metabolic and cardiovascular benefits, without concern about excess risk for knee OA. Such activity might even provide protection against knee OA.

In this pandemic, treatment should be given to cancer patients after the evaluation of all clinical situations with precaution. For example, if a patient has

condition, chemotherapy dose can be modified with prophylactic growth factor. The interval between the cycles of chemotherapy may be prolonged than the usual gap in consultation with the oncologist.

Proper nutrition with a balanced diet and antioxidant-rich food may ensure multiple ways to support cancer patients by increasing treatment effectiveness, decreasing treatment toxicities, increasing treatment tolerance, decreasing disease progression, and ultimately increasing the quality of life and better survival chances.

Patients should try to increasing immunity by having a balanced diet that includes an adequate amount of

distance, staying at home, washing hands with soap repeatedly, avoid touching nose, eyes and mouth as much as possible.

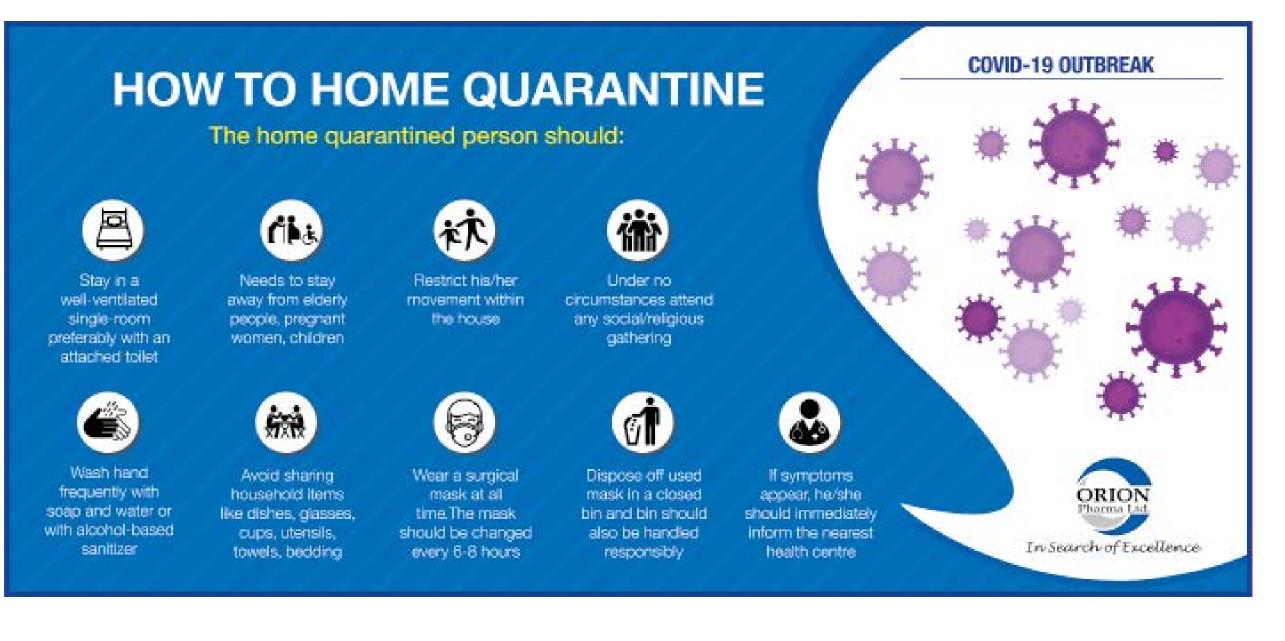
In conclusion, the novel coronavirus pandemic is a battle between people and viruses. Delivering care for patients with cancer during this crisis is challenging given the competing risks of death from cancer versus death or serious complications from COVID-19. All health care professionals should dedicatedly move forward with courage and take care of cancer patients accordingly.

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of Haematology and Stem Cell Transplant at Evercare Hospital Dhaka.







e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net DHAKA SUNDAY MAY 10, 2020, BAISHAKH 27, 1427 BS

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# Nigar attributes success to mother's encouragement

Cricket is undoubtedly the most beloved and followed sport in Bangladesh. People across the country get excited just to see the likes of Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim in action and to know their stories. It is the men's team that is often highlighted but during this nationwide lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, The Daily Star tried to contact women cricketers and shed light on stories of their struggles and hardships and to ask why they chose the profession. Today's, we unveil the story of wicketkeeper-batter Nigar Sultana, who was the top run-getter for Bangladesh in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in Australia earlier this year.

#### **R**AMIN TALUKDER



More often than not, there remains at least one unsung hero behind the success story of an individual. That unsung hero often works from behind the curtains but

almost as hard as the one in the frontline who gets all the plaudits. However, The Daily Star did find out the orchestrator of Nigar Sultana's success. For the wicketkeeper-batter, it is her mother who worked as a shield for her, paving Nigar's way to the Bangladesh women's team.

Even though Bangladesh is a sportloving country, it is still a reality that children have to go a great length to convince their parents before choosing a sport of any discipline as a career. And when the child is a girl, the struggles usually increase tenfold. However, Nigar's case was an anomaly as she was rather supported and backed by her family as she decided to choose cricket as career.

Bat and ball were Nigar's favourite toys since the day she learned walking. For Nigar, who started by joining her brother in playing cricket, the game became a kind of addiction as the days progressed. And after a lot of toil and hard work, Nigar finally became who she is today. But the starting of Nigar's journey was not very easy

While Nigar fought with bat and ball on the field, it was her family, especially her mother, who shielded her from all the external forces that could harm her career. Growing up in a small town like Sherpur, it was not at all easy for Nigar to keep playing with boys -- at the initial



stage -- and then to carry the cricket kits ignoring the taunts coming from a maledominated society. It was her mother who protected Nigar from all such things and it was understandable as to why the 22-yearold became emotional sharing that part of her story.

"There were obstacles from every corner at the beginning. I could only remain unfazed through all that only because of the support of my family. It is really hard for a girl to take cricket as a profession as people keep talking badly about it,"

explained Nigar as her voice got heavy.

Nigar's struggle compounded because she was a brilliant student. The student who got scholarships in grade five and eight, had failed to keep consistency in her studies as she got involved in cricket.

"I was very good at my studies. I could have become something else had I not chosen cricket. But still my family helped me pursue my cricketing career. They bore all the expenses for my cricket equipments. The kind of family that I grew up could manage that extra expense only by cutting off and saving money from the allocated fund for other necessities," sighed Nigar.

The year 2014 was a difficult one for Nigar. It was, however, the part that popped in her head when she explained her mother's contribution to her success.

"I first got called up for the national camp in 2013. I was also a part of the camp in 2014 for the World Cup. But unfortunately I could not make the team that year. It was then that a stubborn determination consumed me. Shapan sir, my coach, toiled hard and helped me a lot at that time. I used to go to the stadium for practise day in, day out and my mother used to be there at the stadium for me the whole time. She used to be there to encourage me and mainly so that no one could say anything to me. My mom used to cook lunch for me and bring it to the stadium. I used to have that during my brief break in the afternoon and then start practising again. Then I got called for the national squad in 2015 and that is how it began. And by the grace of Almighty, I have already played in three World Cups since then," said Nigar.

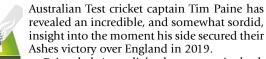
While giving most of the credit to her mother, Nigar did not forget to mention contributions of her brother Salauddin Samrat and school-level coach Mokhlesur Rahman Shapan. Nigar's brother, who used to take her to the field when she was a kid, was also the one who instilled the dream of becoming a professional cricketer in Nigar's mind.

Nigar is now spending time confined indoors due to the coronavirus pandemic and has temporarily put aside any personal goals being as she is just hoping for normalcy to return.



# Paine reveals a dirty secret

Agencies



Paine led Australia's charge to win back respect after the ball tampering scandal and has done so with humility and good humour. But he is also prepared to get dirty.

Australia headed to the fourth Ashes Test at Old Trafford last year with the series tied and needing a win to secure the urn on English soil for the first time since 2001.

Late on day five, Australia needed one more wicket with only few overs left in the day as dark clouds threatened to end the contest early, either through rain or bad light.

Speaking on a podcast, Paine divulged all the dirty details of his very own Matt Renshaw conundrum.

"I was feeling a little bit ill and there were some big, dark clouds rolling in over the grandstand and we only had about seven overs left and obviously we needed that one wicket," Paine said. "No drinks breaks left, umpires starting to talk to each other about (bad) light. I just had a horrible feeling that I needed to go to the toilet ... it was number two and so I basically just thought, 'Righto, can't waste any time, I'm gonna have to (go)'.

"I remember saying to Davey Warner, 'I'm actually going to have to do this', and did."

Just in case that didn't make it clear Paine soiled himself only moments before securing the urn, he continued.

'Unfortunately, it was one of those moments where the crowd went quite quiet," he said. "Because I was a bit unwell, it was a bit runny and you could actually hear it hit the ground. That ball was bowled I think by Mitch Starc to big (Craig) Overton. Luckily he didn't edge it because myself and David Warner literally had tears in our eyes."

তাং ০৯-০৫-২০২০খ্রিঃ





বাংলাদেশ সরকার

### পরিচালকের দপ্তর

জাতীয় বন্ধব্যাধি ইনস্টিটিউট ও হাসপাতাল, মহাধালী, ঢাকা-১২১২ Web: www.nidch.gov.bd (専門1 + bbo3 00069383)、町1第1 +bbo3 00059383 দ্মারক নং- জাববইহা/পথ্য/২০২০-২১/৯৬৭



Lionel Messi was seen in Barcelona's second individual training session yesterday, practicing like many of his countrymen in Italy and Spain, but Manchester City's Sergio Aguero (L) was enjoying video games while maintaining a strict home quarantine as training is yet to resume in England. PHOTO: COLLECTED

## 5 substitutes to be allowed

#### AFP, Lausanne

Football teams will be allowed to use five substitutes when play resumes after the coronavirus pandemic, the sport's law-making body announced on Friday.

The International Football Association Board (IFAB) said that it had agreed to a proposal by FIFA for a temporary change to the rules "to protect player welfare".

Teams face likely fixture congestion as they attempt to make up for lost time when play can resume.

The lay-off is expected to have an impact on player fitness levels too.

It also said that competitions which were using video assistant referee would be allowed to drop it for the time being.

The change will apply to competitions scheduled to be completed by 31 December of this year, although FIFA and IFAB left open the possibility that the period could be extended.

While teams will be able to make five substitutions, "to avoid disruption to the game, each team will only have three opportunities to make substitutions" as well as at half time or before extra time.

Italian football giants Inter Milan and AC Milan were both back training on Friday two months after a strict SERIE A lockdown which has hit the

AFP, Milan

northern Italian city hard. Inter said all their players and staff had tested negative for the coronavirus on Friday, clearing the way for them to return to individual training.

Captain Samir Handanovic led the way as players wearing face masks, arrived at the team's training centre. Temperatures were taken with three groups of players alternating to respect social distancing.

Their city rival resumed earlier in the week with club technical director Paolo

Maldini warning "not going back on the pitch would be a disaster."

Maldini, together with his 18-yearold son Daniel, both recovered from COVID-19, but the San Siro outfit revealed that some were still not negative. But opinions are divided on whether

to follow France and the Netherlands and end the season or follow the Bundesliga and return behind closed doors.

The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) met on Thursday with the government's technical scientific committee to discuss details of the medical protocol for a return to group training.

"Tell us what we need to do to return to play," FIGC president Gabriele Gravina was reported to have told government officials



Milan giants in training

Two members of Italian giants AC Milan were seen jogging at the club training ground on Friday, the second day of training while maintaining social distancing measures, as clubs slowly return to practice. PHOTO: TWITTER

২০২০–২১ অৰ্থ কলেৱে জাঠীয় ৰক্ষবাদি ইনস্টিটিটি ও হাসপাতাল এবং এব আওচাদীন জাঠীয় আজমা সেন্টাৰ, মহাখালী, ঢাকা-এ ভাৰ্তিকত বোগীদেৱ পদ্ম সমগ্ৰী (চাটল, ডাল মশলা: শাক-সৰজি ও ফলমূল; মাছ ও মাংস; পাউক্লটি এবং দুৰ ইত্যাদি খাদা-দ্ৰব্য) সংগ্ৰহের লক্ষ্যে লিনেন সামগ্রী বৌতকরণ কাজের জন্য প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী দ্বপর্বনাত/বৈধ ৰানদ্ৰুৰ। সৰববাহকাৰী দৰপত্ৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠানসমূহ হতে দৱপত্ৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠানেৰ নিজৰ পেটাৰহেত প্যাতে সীলগালা মূৰবন্ধতাৰে দৰপত্ৰ আজান কৰা ৰাজে। দৰপত্ৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠানকে অৰশ্যই দরপত্র সংক্রান্ত সরকারি গেজেট নোটজিকেশন পিপিএ ২০০৬ এবং পিপিমার ২০০৮ (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনীর আলোকে) প্রতিপালনপূর্বক এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট কাগজপরাদি ও নমুনা লখিলসহ দরপত্র জমা প্রদান করতে হবে

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6	লরপর নিডিউল বিরুয় ব টিকানা (প্রথান)							
	দরপত্র সিভিউল বিক্রন ব	মকিলের নাম ও	ভারপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তা, বন					
9	রিকানা (অন্যান্য) দরপত্র সিঠিউল বিত্রনা তবন	a sufficiency of		০ ৩ ০৪,০৬,২০২০খ্রিঃ, সময়ঃ ০৯,০				
			া দনগত সিঙিউদ নিক্রম আনস্কেন তারিখ্য ১৭,০৫,২০২০খ্রিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়) সিঙিউদ করেরে জন্য বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক/বে কোন তফসীলি ব্যাংকে ট্রেজনী চালানে কোন্ড নং ১-২৭১১-০০০০-২০ নখবে (ক-১ নং হতে ক-৪, খ-১, ৯) কাজেন জন্য নিন্দ্রেলিখিত গরিমাণ টাকা প্রতিটি কাজের জন্য জালাদা আলাদা ব জমা প্রদানকরতঃ তার মূলকণি দাখিল করতে হবেং যা অনলাইনে চেক করে সঠিক গাওরা গেলে ক্যানিয়ান, জানবই কর্তৃক সিঙিউদ সরবরাহ করা হবে। সরগত্র সিঙিউদ নিরুয়ের পেষ অবিধ্য ০৮.০৬.২০০৫টিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)।					
8	দরপর বান্ধে জমাদাদের	জাৱিব সময় ক	দরণম সেডডল সিরুরের শেষ আরম্বঃ ০৮.০৬.২০২০ন্ডঃ (আমন্য চলাকালান সময়)। দরণর বান্ধে দরণর কামাননের ভারিম্বঃ ০৯.০৬.২০২০ন্ডিঃ (বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিবা পর্যস্ত)।					
	इनि	1111, 144 V	পরণম বাজে পরণম জনালালের জারণম তের,তর,২০২০জ্রে (বেশা ১২,০০ খালেগ পর্বন্ত)। স্থানঃ জারীর বন্ধব্যধি ইনন্টিটিউট ও হালপাতাল, মহাধালী, ঢাকা এবং ডারপ্লান্ত কর্মকর্তা, কনানী থানা, ঢাকা।					
>	দরপত্র বাক্স খোলার ভারিখ,	, সময় ও ছান	ছান্য জানন্দ্ৰ বন্ধখনাৰ হনাগচানেন্দ্ৰ ও হালপাঙাল, মহাখালা, চাৰা অবং ভাগমান্দ্ৰ কৰককা, কালা খালা, চাৰা । কাৰিখ্য ০৯.০৬,২০২০খ্ৰিঃ, দুপুৱ ১২.৫০ ঘটিকায় (উপস্থিত দৱপৱলোকালের সন্দুখে) ছান্য জান্দ্ৰীয় বন্ধখনাথি ইনন্দিটিউট ও হালপাডাল, মহাখালী, চাকা।					
òć	কাজ্যে সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ							
	কাজের নাম		অবস্থান/স্থান	দরগর দলিলের মূল্য (অফেরকযোগ্য) টাকা	দরপর নিরাপন্তা জামানত টাকা (ফেরতযোগ্য) আর্শেইমানি			
	২০২০-২১ অর্থ-বন্ধসরে ম ইনসিটিউট ও হাসপার আন্তর্জাধীন জাতীয় অ মহাধালী, ঢাকা-এর জন্য নিমিত্তে উন্মুক্ত দরপর আহর	গল এবং এর গল্পমা সেপ্টার, শিল্পোন্ড কালের শি	জাতীয় বন্ধবাৰি ইনস্টিটিউট ও হাসপাতাল, মহাখালী, ঢাকা।	দিভিউল এর মূলা (অফেরতযোগ্য) ক-১ঃ ককনা থাবার (চাউল, ভাল, মললা)ও ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) ক-২ঃ শাক সবজি ও ফলমূলাঃ	বে কোন ডকনিনী ব্যাংক হতে পে-অর্ডাঙ্গব্যেক ভ্রাফট এর মাধ্যমে, পরিচালক, জাতীয় বক্ষব্যাথি ইননিটাইট ও হাসপাতাল, মাকা এর বরাবর নিয়্রোক পরিমাণ প্রতিটি গ্রুপের জন্য আলানা আলানা আনেটিমানি জমা দিতে হবে। কু-১ঃ কবন্য থাবার (চাউল, ডাল, মগলা)ঃ ৩,০০,০০০/			
	হাদগাভাগে ভৰ্তিকৃত রোগীদের খানদ্রেব্য/গতা নরবরাই ও গিনেন নামরী বৌতকরণ কাজ্য ক-১ঃ ককনা থাবার (মেউল, ভাল, মশলা) ক-১ঃ শাক নবজি ও ফামূল ক-৫ঃ মাড় ও মাংদ ক-৪ঃ গাঁঠকটি এবং দুধ খ-১ঃ গিনেন সামরী বৌতকরণ			১০০০/- (এক হাজার মার) ক-৫ঃ মাছ ও মাংল: ১০০০/- (এক হাজার মার) ক-৪ঃ পাউকটি এবং ভূথঃ ১০০০/- (এক হাজার মার) ৰ-১ঃ লিন্দে সামগ্রী (বৌতকরণ এর কাজঃ ৫০০/- (পীচপার) ৪ঃ ট্রিনিং সার্জিসেন্য ৭৫০/-	(তিন লক টাবা মাত্র) ক-২ঃ শাক দবজি ও ফলমূলঃ ৬০,০০০/- (যট হাজার) ক-৫ঃ মাড় ও মাংলঃ ৩,৩০,০০০/- (তিন লক রিশ হাজার) ক-৪ঃ পাউরপটি এবং দুখা ২,১০,০০০/- (দুই লক্ষ দশ হাজার) খ-১ঃ লিদেন সাময়ী ধৌডকরণঃ ৩০,০০০/- (রিশ হাজার) ৪ঃ রিনিং দার্কিদেনঃ ৫০,০০০/- (পঞ্জশ হাজার)			
	৫ঃ ব্রিনিং সার্কিসেস			(মাতগত পঞ্চাগ টাকা)				
22					নিস্টিটিউট ও হাসপাতাল, মহাখালী, ঢাকা কর্ত্বপক্ষেল সিদ্ধান্ত বে না। দৰপত্রলাডাকে সেটারহেড় প্যাচে এ বিষয়ে মুচলেক			
0.0	6.78				অধ্যাপক ডা. মোহাম্মন পাহেলুৰ বহমান খান গৱিচালক			





# Relief in Rajshahi Still many left out

Aid given to more people than primary estimate; four indigenous villages yet to get it

#### ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Though the relief distribution in Rajshahi so far has been provided to nearly triple the initial estimate of the poor, many belonging to indigenous communities in the district have remained out of the purview of government support.

Indigenous people, who largely work as day labourers on agricultural land or in the towns, are among those targeted by the government's relief efforts as the coronavirus situation rendered these day labourers jobless.

Many of them coped through the first few weeks of the shutdown using their savings and selling off livestock. The Daily Star identified at least four Orao community

villages in Matikata union of Godagari upazila, where the dwellers claim none have received any relief so far.

Of these families, 65 live in Habaspur village, 18 in Bhajanpur, 25 in Notunpara, and 28 in Silinda. "None of us got relief. The leaders say wait but how long

will I wait?" said Jagadish Chandra Bose of Habaspur.

"I don't get a job often when hunger forces me to go out. When I do get a job, the police chase me back home."

Ruhul Amin, chairman of Matikata Union Parishad, said these villages might have escaped the administration's notice due to their remote location. He said no one had brought the matter to his notice till now.

"Now, you've informed me. I will see for myself that SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Children playing with marbles on the street while their parents are waiting for relief goods in Chattogram's CRB area yesterday afternoon. The suspension of the economy has rendered many people unemployed, and with the schools closed, students have found more leisure than ever.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# LOOMING SESSION JAM DU considering holiday cuts

Ashik Abdullah Apu

Dhaka University authorities are considering cutting holidays to prevent a looming session jam and make up for academic losses caused by the ongoing indefinite closure of the institution over the coronavirus outbreak.

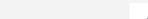
They are also mulling over arranging additional classes after the resumption of academic activities to compensate for the academic losses.

Keeping these points under consideration, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman will hold a meeting tomorrow with the deans to discuss the ssues, said deans of two faculties





Bangabandhu addressing a large crowd at Pabna Stadium on May 10, 1972.



### Another policeman dies from Covid-19

Law enforcers form teams to check on fellow infected cops STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another policeman died of Covid-19 while undergoing treatment at Central Police Hospital in the capital yesterday.

Jalaluddin Khoka, 47, a constable at Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), breathed his last around 7:10pm, according to a statement of the Police Headquarters.

### Countries must return to health surveillance

Says WHO, readies coronavirus app for checking symptoms **REUTERS**, Zurich

Countries must return to "basic principles" of public health surveillance if they are to bring the coronavirus outbreak under control, the World Health Organization's (WHO) top emergency health expert

said on Friday. The WHO, which said it is facing a \$1.3 billion funding deficit for its effort to tackle Covid-19, issued the call for more surveillance as many countries including the United States, Switzerland, Mexico and Germany have turned their efforts toward re-opening economies battered by the pandemic.

Mike Ryan, head of the WHO's health emergencies programme, said during a media briefing from Geneva that all nations should focus on the fundamentals of the global coronavirus fight: scouting potential new infections, hunting them down, confirming them and then separating those afflicted, to save others from the disease.

"We seem...to be avoiding the uncomfortable reality that we need to get back to public health surveillance," Mike Ryan, the head of the WHO's health emergencies programme, said during a SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



**PRAYER TIMING MAY 10** Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 3-49 12-45 5-00 6-35 8-00 JAMAAT 3-59 1-15 5-15 6-45 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

A week after the country reported its first Covid-19 case on March 8, the DU authorities suspended all academic activities till March 28. The suspension, which was later extended for an indefinite period, resulted in cancellation of midterm examinations of many departments.

Although some private universities are now offering online classes to students, the DU and most other public universities are yet to introduce such classes due to various problems, including lack of access to internet and electronic gazettes. Some DU faculties, however, are conducting surveys on online classes

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

#### Shamsuddoza Sajen

May 10, 1972

BANGABANDHU'S PABNA SPEECH On the third day of the four-day tour of North Bengal, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today visits Pabna.

He was warmly greeted by the locals. Speaking at a mammoth gathering at Pabna Stadium Bangabandhu rules out the possibility of any talks with Pakistani President ZA Bhutto before the latter recognises Bangladesh as a sovereign, independent state. He further says that Pakistan has lost prestige before the world community. As Pakistan's political master, the USA, has recognised the reality of Bangladesh, the country will follow suit whether there is any discussion or not, reiterates the prime minister. He calls upon

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

With him, the death toll among cops rose to seven and all of them were from DMP, the statement said.

Meanwhile, different police units are forming "special teams" to visit the Covid-19 infected force members and inquire about their health, maintaining social distancing. "The teams will visit

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Covid-19 infected police

AFP, Istanbul

In full protective gear, two doctors climb the stairs four at a time. Their first task of the day: to test a woman who has had contact with a coronavirus patient in Istanbul.

Turkish doctors

turn detectives

to track virus

Visibly perturbed by the appearance of men in white bodysuits on her landing, the resident in the populous Fatih district answers their questions before she is tested.

She will get her results the next day.

In Turkey, nearly 6,000 teams of "tracers" -- all health professionals -- track potential Covid-19 cases 24 hours a day by identifying and following up with people who have had contact with patients. By helping find new cases who are then quickly SEE PAGE 4 COL 8







### Rock 'n' roll pioneer Little **Richard dies**

#### AFP, New York

Little Richard, whose outrageous showmanship and lightning-fast rhythms intoxicated crowds with hits like "Tutti Frutti" and "Long Tall Sally," has died. He was 87 years old.

Reverend Bill Minson, a close friend of the legendary musician, told AFP Little Richard had died Saturday morning. He confirmed the cause of death was cancer.

With a distinctive voice that ranged from robust belting to howling falsetto, Richard transfixed audiences and became an inspiration for artists including The Beatles as he transformed the blues into the feverish new style of SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



In the United States, 20.5 million jobs were wiped out in April -- the most ever reported -- with unemployment rising

to 14.7 percent, the highest since the Great Depression. The world's largest economy has suffered the deadliest coronavirus outbreak, with more than 77,000 fatalities and nearly 1.3 million cases.

Mindful of elections in November, President Donald Trump has nonetheless vowed to reopen the country, and a growing number of state governors have already let business resume with precautions.

Trump played down the unemployment numbers, pointing to substantial gains Friday on global stock markets as proof that better times were ahead.

"We're going to have a phenomenal year next year," Trump told reporters. "I think it's going to come back blazing.'

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Discarded gloves and masks litter the dirty water at the base of the fountain near the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The fountain, meant for beautifying the premises, has become a repulsive sight and a possible breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes. This paper published a photo of the fountain's sorry state last week but things have only become worse. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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# Virus inflicts huge US job losses

Europe moves to keep its border shut for another month

AFP, Washington

The United States recorded its steepest job losses in history over the coronavirus pandemic as Europe moved to keep its borders shut for another month.

Hopes have been rising that the worst of the global catastrophe, which has killed more than 270,000 people, has passed, and the United States on Friday approved a new at-home saliva test to speed up diagnosis for Covid-19.

But after weeks of lockdown across the world, the effects have been painfully visible, with the global economy suffering its most acute downturn in nearly a century.