





Protecting those keeping city clean

Facebook group ICAN BD steps up to safeguard city cleaners

MD MIZANUR RAHMAN HIMADRI

“Stay home, stay well: beware of the virus... these are nothing but some fancy words for people like us who are working to keep you healthy by cleaning your city during a pandemic. But what did we get for this? Nothing.

“We had just been left to die. In the midst of all of this, a man and his friends have come forward to help us with personal protective equipment,” a waste collector in Rampura said while talking about the hardships their community is facing during the Covid-19 crisis.

According to a survey, households in the capital generate around 4,500 tonnes of waste in a single day and more than 21,000 cleaners and garbage handlers are involved in the management of this waste. During the outbreak of the highly transmissible virus, the waste collectors are at a higher risk of infection as they do not have any PPE or any proper training; they are working now as they always have -- with their bare hands.

“Two years ago, when I was working to achieve universal health coverage in Bangladesh under the USAID-funded health finance and governance project, I had seen how waste collectors felt unprotected every time when collecting garbage without protective gear,” said Tanver Hossain.

With an aim to support the vulnerable group, he along with two friends created an Facebook group called ICAN BD, through which they undertook an initiative

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Clad in protective suit and wearing masks, waste collectors drag garbage vans in Gulshan-2 area of the capital recently. ICAN, a social development organisation, has so far provided such safety gears to around 1,200 waste collectors in different parts of Dhaka for free.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

DU decides not to hold online classes

Cites many students' inability to join

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University authorities yesterday decided not to go for online classes for the time being considering a large number of students' incapability to attend.

The decision came following a meeting between the deans and the vice-chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman, said a university press release.

“Attendants of the meeting mentioned that a large number of students, who are currently staying at their village homes, are not capable of joining online classes as many do not have internet access and other digital facilities. Besides, many have financial insolvency and other obstacles, and so, under these circumstances, it would not be possible to hold online classes right now,” read the release.

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Land for landless peasants



Bangabandhu is seen blessing a young student at the Rangpur Circuit House on May 11, 1972, while the students are trying to leap over the wall to greet the prime minister.

May 12, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJAN

KHASLAND DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMME ADOPTED

The government has taken a decision to distribute khas land among landless peasants, says Land Minister Abdur Rab Serniabat. Under this scheme, initially, three lakh landless peasants will get land for cultivation purposes, he adds.

The minister further says that the peasants will not be required to pay any fees for obtaining khas land. The total number of landless peasants in the country is 26 lakh. Currently, the government has 4 lakh 62 thousand acres of khas land available for distribution, informs the minister.

The minister also shares that the government will form cooperatives of landless peasants and allocate large chunks of khas land to develop cooperative farming. There will be economic units comprising of 75



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‘Drug dealer’ killed in ‘gunfight’

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

An alleged Rohingya drug peddler was killed in a “gunfight” with police in Cox's Bazar's Ukhia upazila early Sunday.

The dead, Shawkat Ali, 28, used to live in Balukhali Rohingya camp, said Marjina Akhter, officer-in-charge of Ukhia Police Station.

On information, a police team, led by Ukhia Circle ASP Nihad Adnan Taiyan, raided Moragachtolta area around 2:00am to recover a consignment of yaba tablets, said the OC.

Sensing the law enforcers' presence, the drug peddlers opened fire. Police retaliated, triggering the “gunfight”, she said.

At one stage, Shawkat was hit, but his cohorts managed to flee, the OC said, adding that the injured was taken to Ukhia Upazila Health Complex

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Virus interrupts world's longest-running cartoon



AFP, Tokyo

Production of the world's longest-running cartoon and a mainstay of the Japanese weekend has been interrupted by the coronavirus, forcing the broadcast of re-runs for the first time in decades.

“Sazae-san”, which first aired in 1969, revolves around the life of Mrs Sazae, a cheerful but klutzy full-time housewife who lives with her parents, husband, son, brother and sister.

The 30-minute episodes aired Sunday nights are very popular, and for many in Japan have come to denote the end of the weekend.

But the cartoon, recognised as the longest-running animated TV series by Guinness World Records, has been hampered by the outbreak of

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Two AL men killed in infighting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Two Awami League activists were killed and three others injured in an attack by members of a rival group of the ruling party in the district's Shailakupa upazila yesterday.

The dead -- Obhi Hossain, 25, and his cousin Laltu Hossain, 45, -- were from Dhuliapara village in the same upazila, police said.

Locals said there was a long-standing rivalry between two groups of local AL men, led by Mokbul Muhuri and Abdur Rashid Khan, in Dhuliapara village over establishing supremacy.

Around 11:30am yesterday, some supporters of Rashid, carrying spears, machetes and other sharp weapons, attacked a group of supporters of Mokbul, leaving five of the latter's followers injured, said Shailakupa OC Bazlur Rahman.

Obhi and Laltu died on the way to the upazila health complex around

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Rickshaw-pullers looks on as illegal motorised rickshaws confiscated by police are kept on a pavement in the capital's Tejgaon area yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Fears of second wave grow

Wuhan reports a second day of new cases as parts of Europe, New Zealand ease restrictions

AFP, Paris

Swathes of Europe began the long process of reopening from coronavirus lockdowns yesterday, but the first new infections in weeks at China's ground zero offered a sobering reminder of the dangers of a second wave of cases.

The mixed fortunes illustrate the high-wire act governments face across the globe as they try to get economies moving while keeping in check a pandemic that has now killed more than 283,000 people and infected over four million.

As France and Spain basked in a relaxation of restrictions and Britain plotted a path to normality, the Chinese city of Wuhan where the pandemic was born reported a second day of new cases after a month without a sign of the virus.

And neighbouring South Korea announced its highest number of infections for more than a month driven by a cluster in a Seoul nightlife district.

With millions out of work and economies shattered, governments are desperate to hit the accelerator, but most are choosing a gradual approach as fears about a resurgence of the virus linger.

In parts of Europe, officials have been emboldened by declining death rates, with France's toll dropping to 70 on Sunday -- its lowest since early April -- and Spain's daily fatalities falling below 200.

‘JUMPING WITH JOY’

The French were able to walk outside without filling in a permit for the first time in nearly eight weeks yesterday, while teachers began returning to primary schools and

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Gonoshasthaya wants temp approval for its testing kits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoshasthaya Kendra has requested temporary approval of its coronavirus testing kit, saying that the validation process was being delayed.

The non-profit healthcare organisation also applied for a space somewhere around the capital's Dhanmondi to provide dialysis to kidney failure patients who have Covid-19 too.

There have been reports that patients suffering from kidney failure and Covid-19 have died without treatment because hospitals are reluctant to admit them, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafullah Chowdhury said.

“Our own testing has found the kits accurate more than 90 percent of the time. But validation by the government is getting delayed. Therefore, we seek temporary approval so we can test the people who are failing to get tested and are dying,” he told a press conference at Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in Dhanmondi.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) was supposed to issue a letter yesterday, asking for 200 Rapid Dot Blot kits, but Gonoshasthaya Kendra didn't receive the letter, he said.

“We don't know why that is,” the veteran physician

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|----------------------------|-------|------|---------|------|------|
| PRAYER TIMING MAY 12 | | | | | |
| Fajr | Zohr | Asr | Maghrib | Esha | |
| 3:49 | 12:45 | 5:00 | 6:36 | 8:00 | |
| JAMAAT | 3:59 | 1:15 | 5:15 | 6:46 | 8:30 |
| SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION | | | | | |

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|-------------------------|----|------|------|--|--|
| SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING | | | | | |
| RAMADAN MAY SEHRI IFTAR | | | | | |
| 18 | 12 | | 6:36 | | |
| 19 | 13 | 3:48 | 6:36 | | |
| 20 | 14 | 3:48 | 6:37 | | |