

# Atiq to take office as DNCC mayor today

His DSCC counterpart Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh will take helm on Saturday

HELEMLU ALAM

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam takes charge of office today while his counterpart for south city corporation Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh will assume office on May 16.

Though the newly-elected mayors and councillors of DNCC and DSCC took oath for office on February 26, they had to wait until completion of the tenures of incumbent mayors.

Both the city corporations will not organise any programme marking the occasion, due to the ongoing shutdown for coronavirus, said officials.

Five-year tenure of the incumbent public representatives of DNCC expires today while that of DSCC on May 16.

Mohammad Zamal Mostafa, panel mayor of DNCC, said he will hand over his mayorship to the elected mayor this afternoon.

Tariq Shikder, media coordinator of the newly-elected DSCC mayor, said the mayorship will be handed over on May 16 as the first board meeting of incumbent Mayor Sayeed Khokon was held on that day five years back.

He said after assuming office, the new mayor will hold a board meeting along with newly-elected councillors soon.

Elections to the DNCC and DSCC were held on February 1.

As the newly-elected mayors had to wait for more than three months to take over duties, senior most panel mayor of DNCC had to perform duties as mayor.

Ward-4 Councillor Mohammad Zamal Mostafa took charge as the senior most councillor of the current three-member mayor panel. Atiqul resigned from his mayoral post on December 30, 2019 to take part in the election.

In DSCC, current Mayor Sayeed Khokon is discharging duties till completion of his five-year tenure. "My tenure will end on May 16 as per the first board meeting; until then, I will continue to discharge my duties as mayor," Khokon said last month.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

This makeshift bazaar beside the rail line in Tejgaon area is run by sellers who collect throwaway vegetables from trucks that supply to the kitchen market in Karwan Bazar. Amid the shutdown, this market has become essential for both sellers and buyers of low-income groups. The photo was taken recently.

## Violating safety directives Bangabazar market, two fashion outlets shuttered in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday shut down the Bangabazar market and two fashion outlets in the capital for flouting health safety directives to prevent transmission of coronavirus.

Bangabazar in Gulistan was closed around noon, HM Azimul Haque, additional deputy commissioner (Ramna Zone) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star.

"The space inside the market is too narrow and congested that it was not ideal to open shops at this time. Besides, no health measures were taken inside it," the ADC said.

Earlier in the morning, police shut down two shops of local fashion brands Aranya and VIVE in Dhanmondi, said Abdullahil Kafi, ADC of Dhanmondi Zone.

He said they did not build any tunnels or spray gates in the shops. Besides, arrangement of hand sanitizer did not seem to be enough.

They can open the outlets after ensuring health measures, the police official further added.

The government decided to reopen shopping malls, all types of shops and other businesses from May 10 on a limited scale ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr. Those would remain open from 10am to 4pm every day, SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

LOWER COURT ONLINE HEARING

## 34 accused get bail on first day

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A total of 34 accused in 18 different cases got bail from five virtual courts in Dhaka yesterday, on the first day of online hearing.

All the five courts started their hearing at noon through videoconferencing on the bail petitions filed by the respective lawyers through email.

Hearing the petitions, Metropolitan Sessions Judge KM Emrul Kayesh granted bail to four accused in four cases while Metropolitan Magistrate MD Sarafuzzaman Ansary granted bail to nine in five cases.

Besides, Metropolitan Magistrate Sadbir Yasir Ahasan Chowdhury granted bail to 14 accused in three cases, Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury to five in five cases and Metropolitan Magistrate Debdas Chandra Adhikary to two accused in a case.

COUNTRY'S FIRST VIRTUAL HEARING OF WRIT PETITION

# Take steps to prevent dolphin killing in Halda: HC to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned of the government to immediately take necessary steps to prevent the killing of dolphins in Halda river in Chattogram.

It also asked the director of Department of Environment in Chattogram to submit a report to this court through email within 72 hours, detailing which measures have been taken to prevent killing of dolphins in Halda river and ensure their protection.

Secretaries to the ministries of fisheries and livestock, and forest and environment, director general of department of environment (DoE), director of DoE in Chattogram, deputy commissioner of

Chattogram, and Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Raozan in Chattogram have been ordered to take necessary steps to protect the dolphins.

The High Court bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan came up with the order and rule after holding a virtual hearing on a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Abdul Qaium Litan seeking necessary directives to protect the dolphins and environment.

Barrister Abdul himself argued for the petition while Attorney General Mahbubey Alarm, Additional Attorney General Murad Reza, Deputy Attorney General Samarendranath Bishwas and Deputy Attorney General Amit Talukder

represented the state during the virtual hearing.

This is for the first time in the history of Bangladesh that the High Court heard a writ petition through digital means.

During the court proceedings, Justice Obaidul Hassan extended thanks to President Md Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Law Minister Anisul Huq for launching virtual court functions for hearing and disposing of cases using technology.

Virtual court functions are the first step in establishing e-judiciary in the country, the HC judge observed.

Barrister Abdul Qaium filed the writ SEE PAGE 4COL 4

## PM walking the wrong way: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday alleged that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is "walking in the wrong direction", by relaxing the shutdown.

"By relaxing the shutdown, the prime minister is fuelling the increase in number of coronavirus patients, and also related deaths. We think the prime minister is walking on the wrong direction," said Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, senior joint Secretary General of the party.

He made the remarks while distributing relief among the destitute at Rupganj of Narayanganj.

The BNP leader alleged that the government does not care about people's sufferings, as it was not elected through people's vote.

While distributing relief, Rizvi alleged that the general people are not getting government relief. "Ruling party men are stealing the reliefs," he said.

He urged the government to reach relief materials to the doors of the poor people to save them.

"It is the responsibility of the government," the veteran politician added.



A homeless woman wraps herself up in a discarded PVC banner to stay dry amid the rain. Locals said the woman, who appears to be intellectually challenged, has been living at Chattogram's CRB area for some time now. Even during the Covid-19 crisis, she doesn't leave her spot to collect relief. Rather, she passes her days with whatever is given to her by kindhearted people of the area. This photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Fire at Ukhia Rohingya camp guts 100 homes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

At least 100 makeshift houses were gutted in a fire at Kutupalong Rohingya camp in Ukhia upazila of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The fire broke out at block-H of Rohingya camp no-1 located at Lombashiaghona around 8:55am, said Mohammad Imdadul Islam, an official of Ukhia Fire Service Station.

On information, four fire-fighting units from Ukhia, Rampu, Teknaf and Cox's Bazar rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control after two hours, said Imdadul.

The fire that originated from a gas cylinder gutted nearly 100 makeshift houses in the camp, said the fire service official.

The extent of losses could not be assessed immediately, he added.

# 'How will we pay full fees amid this crisis?'

Private univ students demand waiver on tuition

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

A large group of private university students are demanding remission of tuition fees for the next semester, as their guardians are financially struggling due to the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

They are also saying activities of next semester should be delayed until the pandemic ends and everything returns to normalcy.

Most private university students come from middle and lower-middle-class families, which are struggling with money. Burdening them with payment of tuition fees will add more stress to an already stressful situation, they said.

"How will our parents pay fees when their earning sources have disappeared? Only government workers are getting salaries; the rest are either not getting wages or receiving reduced salaries," said Anny Sen, an organiser of Besarkari Biswabidyalaya Chhatra Oikya.

The alliance is campaigning for the remission online. They have sent a charter of demands to the prime minister,

education minister and University Grants Commission (UGC) via email.

Bangladesh Students Union (BSU) and other organisations held a human chain maintaining social distance in the capital on May 9, for remission of tuition fees for at least one upcoming semester.

Polash Datta, project lead of independent research organisation Dataful, said in a study, they found 84 per cent private university students said the pandemic has impacted their family income.

Furthermore, 43 per cent of students want the next semester to be delayed by one to six months.

The study was done on 317 students of 24 private universities via online between April 24 to May 3.

Private University Students Unity (PUSU) and Facebook group-based platform Private University Students Alliance of Bangladesh (PUSAB), both demanded remission of tuition fees.

Nishat Sunny, an organiser of PUSU, said it is too early to enrol students for the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## 332 foreigners leave Dhaka, 138 Bangladeshis come back home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 332 Indian and Pakistani citizens stranded in Bangladesh left Dhaka for their respective countries by two separate special flights of Air India and Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) yesterday.

Of the total, 176 were Indians and 156 Pakistanis, SM Wahidur Rahman, deputy director of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA), told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, 138 Bangladeshis stranded in India and Pakistan, returned home yesterday by two special flights of Biman and PIA, sources at HSIA and Biman said.

Of the Bangladeshi returnees, 80 returned from Mumbai, India, by a Biman flight which landed at HSIA at 6pm, said Tahera Khandaker, deputy general manager (public relations) of Biman.

Carrying 50 Bangladeshis, the PIA flight landed at Dhaka airport at 12:59pm, Wahidur said.

He further said carrying the Indians, the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

5YRS OF BLOGGER ANANTA MURDER

## Wait for justice not over yet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Yesterday was the fifth death anniversary of blogger and science writer Ananta Bijoy Das, who was hacked to death in broad daylight in Sylhet by a group of masked assailants in 2015.

Five years into the murder, family members and friends are still awaiting justice.

Ananta, an advocate for secularism and science, became the third victim in a spate of attacks against free-thinkers by militant groups in 2015, following science writer Avijit Roy and Oyasigur Rahman.

Ananta's brother Ratneswar Das filed a case with Airport Police Station accusing four unidentified miscreants and mentioned that Ananta was murdered by militants in a planned way. After two years, on May 9 of 2017, CID pressed charges against six persons in a revised charge-sheet.

The accused are Shafiu Rahman Farabi, Mannan Yahya alias Mannan Rahi, Abul Khaer Rashid Ahmed, Abul Hossain alias Abul Hussain, Harunur Rashid, and Faisal Ahmed.

Mannan Rahi and Abul Khaer were university students in Sylhet. Mannan confessed before a court on September 2, 2015 that he along with Khaer and two others hacked Ananta with a machete for his write-ups on "promoting freethinking".

Abul Hossain, Faisal Ahmed and Harunur Rashid are on the run. Mannan died at Dhaka jail on November 2, 2017.

The trial of the case started on May 7 last year at Sylhet Additional Metropolitan Magistrate Court. Later it was transferred to the Special

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Three wildcat cubs were rescued by police in Laksam upazila of Cumilla on Monday night. One Masum Khan of Kandipara union under the upazila noticed the three cubs on a field while harvesting paddy, and afterwards police came and rescued them. Police suspect that locals caught the cubs. The cubs were at Laksam Police Station till yesterday afternoon, and would be handed over to the forest department.

PHOTO: COLLECTED