



The Daily Star



REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXX No. 121

JASHTRA 2, 1427 BS

Your Right to Know

RAMADAN 22, 1441 HIJRI

12 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

BANGLADESH UPDATE

1,202
New cases in 24hrs

20,065
Total cases

298
Deaths

3,882
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE
303,825
Deaths

4,485,204
Total cases

AMPLE FOOD STOCK, BUMPER BORO HARVEST

'No worries' for next six months

Bangladesh 3rd in global rice production

PINAKI ROY and SOHEL PARVEZ

Once the Boro harvest is completed across the country, the nation is unlikely to face cereal shortage in the next six months.

Analysing the food stock situation, experts said, by the time the current and upcoming stock of Boro would be consumed, in the next six months, Aman should be ready for harvest unless any natural disaster takes place.

But, they added, the main challenge for the government in coming days will be ensuring supply of other food items including fish, livestock and vegetables. Vegetables and fish farmers are already facing hard times as they are unable to sell their produce.

The prospect of a good harvest of Boro

following an increased production of Aman, higher wheat imports and fairly a good food-grain stock in public godowns provide confidence that the country will be better off in terms of food availability during its war against the rogue Covid-19 pandemic.

Concerns, however, remain high regarding the risk of price spiral of the staple rice as the Boro prices are on the rise in the producing regions.

"We need not worry about food as we have enough food stock. We had 12.75 lakh tonnes of rice even before the start of Boro procurement. Now the procurement of both Boro and wheat has begun. So, no worries for few months," said Sadhan Kumar Majumder, the food minister.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



The Covid-19 pandemic and a nationwide shutdown have thrown Ayesha Begum's life into uncertainty. A mother of one, the elderly widow had been staying indoors for over a month since the government enforced the shutdown on March 26 to slow the spread of the deadly virus. But she has recently resumed repairing bicycles, rickshaws and rickshaw vans along a road in the capital's Mugda area to make a living. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



- Last year's rice production 3.64 crore tonnes
- Annual consumption requirement 3.50 crore tonnes
- Public storage capacity 19.3 lakh tonnes
- Public food stock 12.85 lakh tonnes (May 1, 2020)

Big spike in new Covid-19 cases

15 more die, 1,202 test positive in 24hrs as case total tops 20,000

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The coronavirus situation will worsen further if the government fails to place the highly affected areas on strict lockdown immediately, experts warn as the number of Covid-19 patients continues to surge despite a nationwide shutdown.

The warning came after the authorities said coronavirus cases in the country crossed the 20,000 mark with a record single-day jump in infections -- 1,202 -- reported yesterday. Besides, 15 more deaths took the death toll to 298.

As many as 10,610 people were found to be infected with Covid-19 in the last 11 days alone, after the first case was reported on March 8.

On the increasing number of infections and fatalities, experts said the shutdown without the enforcement of strict lockdown in the severely affected zones was proving to be futile in curbing the spread of the deadly virus. At the same time, the economy continues to remain under severe

strain, affecting the livelihood of millions of people.

"We are losing the battle in both the ways. ... It's unfortunate that the government keeps extending the closure without any in-depth analysis," Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director of disease control at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, told The Daily Star.

Recently, the government has extended the shutdown, which was enforced on March 26, for the sixth time to May 28.

Data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) shows that Dhaka city remains the worst affected region with 58.11 percent of all Covid-19 cases detected here alone. Also, almost 80 percent of all cases were found in city and urban areas.

Talking on the issue, Prof Muzaherul Huq, former adviser (Southeast Asia Region) of the WHO, said, "Dhaka must be put on strict lockdown without any delay. Otherwise, the hospitals in the country will overflow with patients."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

HOSPITALS FOR COVID-19 Uniform system needed to ease patients' hassles

Says head of advisory body

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The national technical advisory committee on coronavirus has recommended that all hospitals dedicated to Covid-19 treatment should be brought under a network to reduce the sufferings of patients.

If the recommendation is implemented, patients and their attendants, who would not find seats at a Covid hospital, will not have to take the trouble of finding out another hospital, Professor Dr Mohammad Shahidullah, chair of the committee, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said, "For example, if a Covid-19 patient finds no seat at Kurmitola General Hospital, the hospital authorities would check the status of other hospitals and refer the patient to the nearest available hospital by issuing a token."

The patient would then be taken to that hospital by an ambulance arranged by the government, which is also a part of the recommendations made by the committee.

He said this simple initiative would reduce the sufferings of patients to a great extent

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

TRIBUTE TO PROF ANISUZZAMAN

The man who taught us the beauty of brevity of words

MAHFUZ ANAM

He always finished his speech much earlier than we wanted him to. His capacity to encapsulate all that he had to say in the fewest of words left us all, in his audience, gasping for more. After hour-long speeches that were our wont, the brevity of his address as the chair of the occasion kept us marvelling at his capacity to say so much in so few words. He taught us the beauty of brevity of words. Just as in his speeches so also in his writings -- literally not a word extra.

He was a person one would automatically respect just by being in his presence. He would not have to do anything or say anything. Just standing next to you, he would compel you to be awed by him. He would exude that unique affection, sophistication, decency and a special type of warmth that only a teacher could. The inner glow of his scholarship coupled with genuine humility would make a compelling case for a heartfelt respect for this soft-spoken man.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Anisuzzaman laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Professor Anisuzzaman was laid to rest at Azimpur graveyard with state honour yesterday morning.

Tributes for the country's leading intellectual poured in soon after the news of his death was announced on Thursday.

The burial took place around 10:00am after a namaz-e-janaza and guard of honour given by officials at the graveyard.

"My father was laid to rest in the grave of my grandfather," said the national professor's son Ananda Zaman.

Since Prof Anisuzzaman died with coronavirus, the burial adhered to the health guidelines.

Besides Ananda, the professor's brother Akteruzzaman and son-in-law Azimul Haq were present during the burial. Also present were State Minister for cultural affairs KM Khalid and Bengal

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

3 more infected with Covid-19 at Rohingya camp

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Three more Rohingyas tested positive for Covid-19 at Ukhiya refugee camp yesterday, a day after the first novel coronavirus case was reported in the camp.

Dr Anupam Barua, principal of Cox's Bazar Medical College, said 21 people, including the three Rohingyas, tested positive for Covid-19 in the district yesterday.

He said 184 samples were tested on the day at the field lab of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) set up at Cox's Bazar Medical College.

Meanwhile, around 5,000 Rohingya refugees from 1,275 families at Ukhiya refugee camp were placed under lockdown yesterday.

Dr Abu Toha Rezwan, chief health coordinator at the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner's (RRRC) office in Cox's Bazar, said

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



The water of the Karnaphuli is highly polluted at the conflux of the river and Chaktai canal in Chattogram city's Mariner's Drive area. Green activists blame release of untreated waste water and sewage waste into the river from households and factories for the poor state. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

BAHRAIN LABOUR MARKET

8,000 expats lose jobs amid shutdown

JAMIL MAHMUD

Some 7,000 to 8,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers in Bahrain have lost their jobs due to economic shutdown enforced by the country's government to contain coronavirus pandemic, an official at Bangladesh embassy in Manama said yesterday.

Recently a top official of Bahrain's Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) informed Bangladesh ambassador at a bilateral meeting that economic fallout due to the pandemic caused about 10,000 job losses in the tiny Gulf country, according to the embassy sources.

"Of the job losses, some 70 to 80 percent are those of Bangladeshi workers," the official said.

On the other hand, at least 12,600 undocumented Bangladeshi migrant workers have so far applied to get regularised under an amnesty programme declared by Bahrain government in early April, he added.

Bahrain is home to about 150,000 Bangladeshis. About 70 percent of them are low-paid workers in the construction sector. Besides, several thousand Bangladeshis, both male and female, are serving as household workers there, according to the Bangladesh mission in the country.

In Bahrain, authorities allow foreign workers to live and work without any local sponsorship. To avail such work permit, known as "flexi permit", a foreign worker has to get registered with the LMRA.

In contrast, local sponsorship is mandatory under the controversial "kafala system" to avail job in other Arab countries.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

European stocks rise defying Covid-19 fears

AFP, London

Europe's stock markets were mostly firmer yesterday as investors focused more on easing lockdowns than fears of another coronavirus wave, while Frankfurt shrugged off data showing that Germany has entered recession.

Some investors went fishing for bargains a day after stocks tanked on news of spiking jobless claims in the United States.

"After two down days for the markets, the week is ending on a more positive note for equities worldwide as fears of a second wave in the current pandemic ease for now," said AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould.

On Wall Street however, the Dow Jones index came off to a weaker start after Thursday's late rally, with the US trend pushing European markets off their highs.

"It's not been the best week for stock markets," said Craig Erlam at OANDA.

In addition to bad European growth numbers and rising tension between the US and China "the threat of a second wave of coronavirus cases is upon us in some countries just as others are starting to emerge from the first," he said.

The coronavirus pandemic has tipped Germany into a recession, official data showed Friday, with

Europe's top economy suffering its steepest quarterly contraction in more than a decade as lockdown measures began to bite.

The German economy shrank by 2.2 percent in the first quarter of 2020, federal statistics agency Destatis said, calling the quarter-on-quarter decline "the worst since the global financial crisis" in 2009.

The agency also revised its gross domestic product (GDP) figure for the final quarter of 2019 from zero growth to a contraction of 0.1 percent. That means Germany has experienced two consecutive quarters of decline, meeting the technical definition of a recession.

Still, European attention was firmly set on restarting economies, said analysts at Charles Schwab.

"European equities are trading mostly higher in afternoon action, with the markets continuing to eye reopening progress in Asia, with China posting stronger-than-expected industrial production in April, along with the continued commencement of reopenings in key regions of Europe and phased restarts in the US," they said.

Asian bourses earlier diverged on mixed Chinese data that showed retail sales contracted in April -- indicating crucial consumer activity remains weak -- offsetting figures showing the first growth in industrial production this year.

Uniform system needed

FROM PAGE 1

The committee that was formed on April 19 submitted a report to the health ministry on April 28.

"Government is taking some steps but it should take this step [introducing a network] immediately as this will not cost anything, except strong management," said Prof Shahidullah.

Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) will coordinate the system, he said.

Shahidullah said the government had implemented some recommendations, but the hospitals are yet to be brought under an umbrella and the ambulance service was not introduced.

Contacted, Nasima Sultana, additional director general at DGHS, said currently there are four dedicated mobile numbers to give patients the update about seat vacancy.

"We are updating our strategy regularly and we are trying to lessen

the sufferings of the patients," she added.

The Committee also recommended the appointment of specialised doctors, medical technologist and sufficient cleaners at the Covid hospitals for better treatment.

"The government told us that steps would be taken to fulfil the recommendations," said Shahidullah, also the president of Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.

Earlier, the technical committee also recommended that the test number be increased and it was taken into account.

Shahidullah said the government must ensure that the test results are given within a day as any delay in this process would increase the risk of spreading the virus.

Nasima said initiatives were taken to fulfil the recommendations phase by phase as it was not possible to incorporate all the recommendations overnight.

Big spike in new Covid-19 cases

FROM PAGE 1

"Those who have contracted the virus are spreading it others. That is why the infection rate is higher in the capital," he said.

"On average, an infected person spreads the virus to three others every day. Any delay [in enforcing strict lockdown] means more people will be infected," he said. "So the first task is to identify and isolate all the infected right away."

Following the reopening of garment factories, a good number of people returned to Dhaka. The presence of traffic on the streets also reportedly increased. As the government plans to ease the shutdown further, chances are there that more people will through the city, he pointed out.

"If that happens, the infection will increase at an arithmetic rate."

He also said any rise in test numbers and identification of infected patients were co-related.

DGHS data shows a record of 8,582 samples were tested in 41 laboratories across the countries in 24 hours till 2:30pm yesterday.

ZONING INFECTED AREAS

Be-Nazir Ahmed suggested areas with higher infection rates be put on total lockdown. He also advocated for lifting the closure from the unaffected zones, allowing economic activities to run.

Analysing data, he said it seemed 80 percent of the villages were free

from coronavirus infection. So the shutdown could be eased there, putting restrictions on the entry of outsiders.

"This will allow many to make up for their financial losses," he said, adding the villages could be marked as "green zone".

The government should then identify the areas where one or two cases were reported. Those areas could be marked as "orange zone", which according to him, would have 15 percent of all cases.

"The government could impose lockdown on this zone from 14 to 42 days until it becomes a green zone," he said.

The rest five percent areas which have the highest number of Covid-19 cases should be marked as "red zone" and be put on strict lockdown. "People from vulnerable groups of these areas can be provided with monthly financial incentives so that they don't feel helpless and act responsibly. This will help improve the situation."

DGHS BRIEFING

At an online briefing yesterday, Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) at the DGHS, said the total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases stood at 20,065.

As many as 279 patients recovered since Thursday, taking the total number of recovery cases to 3,882, she added.

8,000 expats lose jobs

FROM PAGE 1

It is expected that some 30,000 undocumented Bangladeshi workers will be regularised under the amnesty programme which will continue till December 31 this year.

Also, many of them are expected to avail the "flexi permits" to stay in the country.

As per Bahrain government's estimate, currently the country hosts around 55,000 undocumented workers. Of them, more than 80 percent are estimated to be Bangladeshis.

Sheikh Mohammed Tauhidul Islam, labour welfare counsellor at the Bangladesh Embassy in Manama, said as many Bangladeshis are expected to be legalised under the amnesty programme, the job losses will not affect Bangladesh's labour market there greatly.

Also, Bangladesh embassy has a plan to train up the jobless workers for developing specialised skills that will be required for employment in several sectors in near future, he told this newspaper via WhatsApp.

Some of the sectors include the ship building industry, welding, and electrical. Besides, Bahrain's finance, services, tourism and manufacturing sectors are also vibrant, he added.

Bahrain's dependency on oil revenue is low compare to many Arab countries, Tauhidul further said.

He said Bangladeshi workers in Bahrain turned unemployed following many on-going projects went shut due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Some 2,000 Bangladeshi workers who were involved in the construction sector lost their jobs since the pandemic, he added.

Tauhidul, however, said it is likely that Bahrain's economy would revamp quickly once the authorities manage to contain coronavirus infections.

This is because Bahrain's economy is small in size although it is diverse, he added.

The official said at least 441 Bangladeshi migrant workers have been infected with coronavirus in Bahrain as of last week.



A police team in PPE gives a guard of honour to Prof Anisuzzaman before his burial at the capital's Azimpur graveyard yesterday. The academic, also a freedom fighter, passed away at a city hospital on Thursday. PHOTO: STAR

The man who taught us the beauty

FROM PAGE 1

There was an open-arm aspect about him that would convince everyone that he would accept you not for what you represented or how powerful you were but for the very fact that you are someone who sought his counsel or guidance. He would never reject you, howsoever a bad student of his you were. Once in his presence you felt, howsoever undeservingly, respected and even welcomed and strangely safe, for you have reached a place from which you will return with dignity.

His voice was full of care and attention and had the ability of touching you deeply, very deeply. As he spoke, and he was not given to saying much, one would hang on to each and every word as if your life depended on it -- and often, if not life, but removal of much of your confusion did.

Those who were his direct students and many more others who were not -- including this writer -- we all received his love and support whenever needed them. At a time when celebrating Pahela Baishakh, Rabindra or Nazrul Jayanti or organising a simple musical soiree or a dance drama or holding a seminar or a debate was an act of defiance, teachers like Prof Anisuzzaman was our source of strength and guidance.

Our time at the Dhaka University -- from 1967 to 1972 -- was perhaps politically the most significant. Within those five years we saw the fall of the ironman Gen Ayub, the coming of another martial law under Gen Yahya, the student-led 11-point movement, the first general election in Pakistan's history, the rise of Bangabandhu to the pinnacle of his electoral victory, the most dramatic and unprecedented non-violent non-cooperation movement, the unbelievable spectacle of one man's voice holding sway over the mighty Pakistan army, the last few dramatic days of united Pakistan, the betrayal with the Bengalis by secret arms build-up while faking dialogue, the most brutal, vicious and barbaric genocide of our people, the tectonic shift in our movement from non-violent to armed one, the majesty of our people coming together in the struggle for independence, the magnificent victory and emergence of independent Bangladesh.

Through these tumultuous times among the teachers who supported, encouraged, protected, enthused, and led us to war by example, Prof Anisuzzaman was one of the most enduring for he did all this with such endearing and genuine love for the students.

His was a voice for democracy, rights

of all people and secularism expressed in the gentlest and kindest of manner. He was truly a scholar at the service of his people. During his later life there would hardly be any request for a book review, a blurb, a comment, an article or a request for presiding over a seminar that he would refuse, saying "I must encourage them all".

Though a school student in 1952, he became a language movement activist in the fifties. In the sixties, he joined every initiative against the military dictatorship of Gen Ayub and was a part of the group that formed the intellectual core that gradually took the nation towards the ultimate goal of independence. He was an integral part of the Mujib Nagar government and worked closely with the leaders there. His scholarly exposition of our cause for freedom helped to win over public opinion in India and abroad.

After liberation, he worked with Bangabandhu's government and was intimately involved in writing of the Bangla version of our constitution. He was a part of several education commissions and contributed to the formulating of education policies in the post-liberation era. He worked tirelessly for the reinstatement of the values and ideology of our Liberation War, actively supported the trial of the war criminals started by Sheikh Hasina's government and personally testified in the trials. These are but a very small sample of his many achievements.

Professor Anisuzzaman was a student's dream of a teacher. His openness was so welcoming and reassuring for anyone who would approach him with either a new idea or an interpretation of a literary text that she or he may have read. No opinion was for him unworthy of a discussion and no student was for him underserving of his personal time. He would always welcome each and every student who ever sought his guidance.

First was his warm voice and truly disarming welcome to his room as a teacher or his house. His soft-spoken words would soon encourage the student to feel at ease and discuss whatsoever s/he came to discuss with the venerable professor.

As soon as the discussion would start one could see that unique aspect of the professor's personality -- his patience. He would listen to whatever the student had to say without interrupting. At the end of it, he would, very softly and slowly, point out the flaws of what has so far been said and suggest some alternative ways of thinking.

There would never be a hint of intellectual superiority in this exchange. The respect and patience with which he treated each and every student was remarkable.

He did not know of any other world but that of a teacher. His writings and research were all meant for his students and for him to be a better teacher.

His humility was extraordinary. After his retirement, he would respond to literally everyone's request to grace their events as the chief guest. With no concern for his health, he would respond with his characteristic "yes" to attend seminars and book launches throughout the day. He continued this practice till his most recent bouts of illness, much to the concern of all those who loved him.

Like most freedom fighters, he did not like many of the aspects of today's Bangladesh. The inequality, the absence of justice, the lack of freedoms, the flouting of fundamental rights pained him enormously. But till the very end he remained optimistic about Bangladesh's future and rejoiced at its every victory however small or profound.

Every genuine scholar is unique and hence we will have to live with the fact that there will be none like him again, ever. So it will be our duty to build on the world that he left us -- a world of thirst for knowledge and intellectual rigour.

Post script. It was tragic enough that we lost him. But it was deeply painful to endure the fact that we couldn't show our last respects to his mortal remains. It is so heart rending to see him being buried without the thousands of us showering flower petals on his remains, and crying our heart out as we would have buried him.

I can picture the Shaheed Minar where many of us would have gathered to have a last glimpse of his coffin, thousands others who would have carried his body on their shoulders as we would have moved towards the Azimpur graveyard where he was finally rested.

To grieve at his demise from a distance, to express our sorrow remotely, to pray for his Eternal Peace from our homes is not the way we would have liked to say goodbye to our beloved professor, our teacher, our guide, our friend and our guardian angel. What we failed to express today, we pledge to make up with our adherence to what he stood for. Our love for Prof Anisuzzaman will remain for as long as we live.

Anisuzzaman

FROM PAGE 1

Foundation Chairman Abul Khair.

The final rituals and the burial were carried out as planned by the Prime Minister's Office.

The scholar and leading intellectual breathed his last at Combined Military Hospital at the age of 83.

TRIBUTES POUR IN

About Prof Anisuzzaman, Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla on Facebook said, "One of our region's leading intellectuals and a true secularist who gave meaning to having an educated mind..."

Nihad Kabir, president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in a statement said, "The country has lost one of its brightest luminaries in the education sector and a valiant freedom fighter in the passing away of National Professor Anisuzzaman... MCCI prays for the eternal salvation of the departed soul of Professor Anisuzzaman and conveys deep sympathies to his bereaved family."

The Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation in a condolence message said it will deeply miss his leadership.

"Dr Anisuzzaman's departure is an irreparable loss to the nation. The usual metaphors (tower of strength, pillar of the national community, a lighthouse to others, and so on) may be applicable, but is perhaps inadequate for he transcended them."

"As a distinguished scholar he educated us, as a truly enlightened human being he encouraged us, and with his humility, compassion and moral authority, he inspired us. He had received numerous honors and awards in his life, but perhaps much more important to him was the fact that he had won the admiration and the warm regard of almost all who came to know him."

"The Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation will deeply miss his leadership (he was our founding vice president and settler)," it said in a message.

Ganosanghati Andolan, Ain o Salish Kendra, Patuakhali Science and Technology University, Bangladesh University of Professionals, also paid tributes in separate messages.

Anisuzzaman was a freedom fighter and was a member of the Planning Commission of Bangladesh during the Liberation War.

He was awarded Ekushey Padak and Swadhinata Padak, the highest state awards given by the government of Bangladesh.

The Government of India bestowed on him the country's third-highest civilian honour, Padma Bhushan.

3 more infected

FROM PAGE 1

Block-F of Kutupalong Lombasia Rohingya camp was placed under lockdown after a the first coronavirus case was reported.

"Around 5,000 Rohingyas live in that block and they were asked not to come out of their homes until further notice. The daily essentials will be supplied to them from the RRRC's office during the lockdown," he told The Daily Star.

Sources at the district administration said the Rohingya man who tested positive for Covid-19 on Thursday was sent to the isolation centre, run by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Besides, his seven family members were under observation by the UN body. Their samples would likely be collected for Covid-19 testing.

Some 1.1 million Rohingyas live in squalid camps in Cox's Bazar. Of them, around 750,000 took shelter in Bangladesh since a brutal military crackdown was launched in Myanmar's Rakhine State in August 2017.

'No benefit' in anti-malaria drug virus treatment: studies

AFP, Paris

Treating Covid-19 patients with the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) had no positive effect and caused other health complications, two new studies showed yesterday.

The anti-inflammatory has been touted by US President Donald Trump among others as a potential "game changer", after initial studies in lab settings showed it may be able to prevent the virus replicating.

But several subsequent studies -- including one funded by the US government -- appear to have doused hopes that HCQ can help patients hospitalised with Covid-19.

In the first study released yesterday, researchers in France monitored 181 patients hospitalised with pneumonia due to Covid-19 and who needed oxygen.

Eighty-four were treated with HCQ and 97 were not.

They found no meaningful difference between the groups for either transfer to intensive care, death within seven days or developing acute respiratory distress syndrome within 10 days.

"Hydroxychloroquine has received worldwide attention as a potential treatment for Covid-19 because of positive results from small studies," said the authors of the research, published in the BMJ journal.



Finding no health worker or gurney around, a man carries his ailing 50-year-old mother in his arms to the emergency department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. They went to the hospital from the city's Banasree area by a rickshaw. The woman had been suffering from fever and breathing problems for the last few days. Some attendants of patients said getting service at the hospital becomes difficult on weekends compared to weekdays.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Giraffe, Maasai Mara, Kenya.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

GIRAFFE

Most people remember the movie *Out of Africa* for dazzling performances by Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. It is based on the book by Karen Blixen - writing as Isak Dinesen - a Danish woman who married a relative and moved to Kenya during 1913-1931 to build a coffee plantation which, along with her marriage, eventually failed. As her husband turns disloyal, the movie dwells on the romance between Blixen (played by Streep) and the Englishman Denys Finch Hatton (played by Redford.) But when I read the book last year, I was struck by how much Blixen devoted to the environment, to her relationship with African neighbours and employees, and to the land she worked. Perhaps the movie paid attention to this aspect of the book, but the Streep-Redford chemistry overpowered all else.

For me, a memorable moment of the book takes place when Blixen runs into a "big dead Giraffe bull" which had been shot by persons unknown near her farm. It causes her legal trouble because the killing of Giraffes was strictly prohibited in Kenya. This surprised me: a century ago, conservation was largely ignored and hunters such as Teddy Roosevelt were celebrated for their African trophies.

When I finally got to see the Giraffe in its home turf in Kenya's Maasai Mara last year I immediately understood why hunting it had been outlawed so long ago. It is a beautiful creature which moves gracefully as it reaches branches of Thorn and Acacia trees high up to eat leaves. Its long neck and beautiful body patterns add to its allure. When reaching down to drink water, it spreads its front legs

so its head can reach ground level. Though it is improbably large, the creature never once looks out of place in the sprawling African savannah.

Being the tallest mammal on the planet makes the Giraffe's life interesting. The baby arrives into the world by dropping five feet to the ground as its mother gives birth. It stands up within thirty minutes and can run ten hours after birth. The adult Giraffe is no slouch when it comes to running, attaining speeds of 35 miles per hour on its long legs. Its heart has to be large - weighing 25 pounds - in order to pump blood all the way to the brain.

Reaching heights of 18 feet and weighing between 2000-3000 pounds, the Giraffe eats a lot. With a 21-inch long tongue capable of grasping, it cleans out the leaves of taller branches, chewing them like a cow. The trees are often thorny, so the tongue and the inside of the Giraffe's mouth are covered with tough tissue for protection. This herbivore eats 65 pounds of leaves and grass daily. On the average it lives for 25 years.

For a long time scientists believed there was only one species of Giraffe with nine subspecies (races.) However, recent DNA testing indicates that Giraffes fall into four species with five subspecies. Although their numbers are declining, they are considered "Vulnerable" by the IUCN, not "Endangered."

The extraordinary sight of Giraffes moving about gently in the open meadows of Maasai Mara will remain with me for a long time.

facebook.com/ikabirphotographs or follow ihtishamkabir on Instagram.

PATIENTS WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS Investigate denial of treatment at hospitals

Amnesty urges authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International has expressed concerns about media reports that say hospitals in Bangladesh are not admitting people exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms.

The organisation's own investigations also found hospitals refusing to admit people with the symptoms, despite having the capacity to diagnose and treat them, it claimed in a statement issued on Thursday.

For the investigation, medical staff at 12 hospitals were interviewed and it was learned that "persons were turned away because hospital staff feared being exposed to potential Covid-19 cases," Amnesty said, calling upon authorities to investigate the allegations of people being denied treatment.

"The shortage of necessary medical equipment has not only made the frontline health workers' job difficult, it in fact puts them at the greatest risk of being exposed to Covid-19," said the Amnesty statement.

It also decried the government's "repression of freedom of expression" and criticised the recent arrests made under the Digital Security Act.

The organisation alleged that it is still not clear how cash transfers to the poor, economic and agricultural stimulus packages, cash incentives for informal workers and health insurance and bonus payments for medical professionals are going to be implemented.

All's well that ends well

Covid-19 positive couple flees Dhaka; recover in Kushtia hospital after cops track them down

RAFIUL ISLAM

Tasikul lost his mind after his seven-month pregnant wife tested Covid-19 positive.

As he was informed by BSMMU authorities about his wife Shilpi Ara testing positive on April 23, a day after learning about his own infection, the private car driver decided to leave Dhaka secretly.

The next morning, the couple -- along with their four-and-half-year-old daughter, who tested negative -- left their Kamrangirchar house for their village home in Kushtia.

"My wife thought she was going to die... She suspected she would not get medical support for her pregnancy during the crisis," Tasikul told The Daily Star yesterday.

"She kept on crying and did not take any food since she learned of her infection. She insisted me to take her to her village home... I was in a fix and took the wrong decision [of going home]," he said.

Tasikul said what also caused him to take the decision was that they used to live in a small room of a house, and shared a toilet and kitchen with four other

families. "It was not possible to maintain isolation," he said.

After an arduous journey by rickshaw and auto-rickshaw till Rajbari, the family was intercepted by local police, thanks to prompt communication by officials from Director General of Health Services and Kamrangirchar Police Station.

They were taken to Kushtia General Hospital. "We were put in the isolation ward. My daughter tested positive a couple of days later," Tasikul said.

After two weeks of treatment, the couple and their daughter tested negative.

They are now in home quarantine after being released from Kushtia General Hospital on May 9.

"My gratitude to Allah that my family is safe now... I am now waiting for the new baby to come," Tasikul said.

He said he is relieved as all his family members have recovered.

At the same time, a new worry has gripped Tasikul, as his wife will soon give birth, and she may need to visit a hospital multiple times at a time when many are being denied treatment and some are being infected while taking treatment at hospital.



Maybe she was bored to the bone as she had to remain stuck at home and went on pestering her mother to take her out shopping. On top of that, Eid is also around the corner. They took precautions too -- the mother and daughter wore face shields and masks. However, under the present circumstances when the number of infected has crossed the grim milestone of 20,000, such a decision exposes the family to the risk of contracting Covid-19. This photo was taken at a clothing outlet on Mirpur Road yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

A survivor returns to the frontline

Doctor joins duty immediately after beating Covid-19

ARUN BIKASH DEY, CIG

When Asiful Hoque tested Covid-19 positive on April 14, his whole world went into a whirlwind at first. But soon enough, the medical officer at Banskhalhi Upazila Health Complex in Chattogram gathered himself and rode the wave, because he knew his duty beckoned him.

After recovering from the virus, Asiful returned to work on May 10 to serve the patients. He was seen attending to patients at the health complex last week.

Asiful told this newspaper that he was also supplying food and daily essentials to families who were in home isolation in the upazila, on behalf of a voluntary organisation.

A student of 52nd MBBS batch of Chattogram Medical College, Asiful joined the health cadre in the 39th BCS last year, and was posted at his native upazila as a medical officer.

Asiful suspects he was infected by a patient at the health complex, as he did not visit any other place other than his residence and his workplace in the last three months.

"After I was suffering from fever and dry cough

for two days, I went to Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases for testing on April 12," he told The Daily Star, adding, "On April 14, I received the result."

"I was worried for a moment, but I stayed strong and was preparing myself to fight the virus," he said. "My family members, neighbours, house owner, relatives -- were all supportive."

"My neighbours and landlord provided cooked food everyday to my family members who were in isolation in the house," he added.

"After completing isolation period, I did not wait for a single day to join work," said a beaming Asiful. "The nation needs the service of doctors and healthcare providers most at this moment. I did not want to waste a moment to serve the nation."

"Besides, I thought others' morale would be boosted seeing me in service again," he said.

Momena Akter, upazila nirbahi officer of Banskhalhi, said Asiful has set an inspiring example. "His comeback will also give strength to patients, some of who have become panicked and frustrated after getting infected," she said.



Asiful Hoque

Youth murdered in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A youth was stabbed and beaten to death allegedly by his peers in Mymensingh city's Akua area on Thursday night.

The victim was identified as Ayon Ahmed (20). He and some other youths had a scuffle in his neighbourhood on Wednesday night. Following the feud, Ayon slapped one of them on Thursday evening, police quoted family and locals as saying.

Later, the other group attacked Ayon, said Kotwali Police Station Officer-In-Charge Md Mahmudul Islam. He, however, could not say the reason behind the altercation.

Locals rushed to the spot and took Ayon, who was stabbed in the chest, to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital where he was declared dead, said the OC.

The body was sent to MMCH morgue for autopsy. Victim's uncle filed a murder case, accusing nine youths.

Earlier on May 1, Towhidul Islam Khan (24), an honours final year student at Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, was stabbed to death by miscreants at his rented house in Mymensingh city.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

DU researchers to sequence genomes from 100 samples

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of teachers from Dhaka University's (DU) biological science faculty have started conducting research to sequence genomes from 100 coronavirus samples taken from patients from across the country.

Prof Sharif Akhteruzzaman of genetic engineering and biotechnology department, who is also chief of the university's corona response technical committee, made the announcement at a view-exchange meeting held at the Centre for Advanced Research in Science building yesterday.

"Initially, genomes of 100 viruses collected from the samples will be decoded. In the secondary stage, genome sequencing centring three types of Covid-19 positive patients -- those having full symptoms, partial symptoms and asymptomatic -- will be carried out," said Prof Sharif.

"We may be able to know whether different symptoms in Covid-19 patients

are result of mutations of a specific gene. If we get to know, it will be easier to manufacture vaccines targeting our citizens, since we saw earlier that vaccines invented by one country may not work on people of another country," he added.

Prof Sharif also said the estimated cost of the entire project is around Tk 1 crore. He urged the government and non-government institutions to assist them in this regard.

Earlier, eight researchers at the Child Health Research Foundation -- led by Dr Senjuti Saha and her father, eminent microbiologist Dr Samir Kumar Saha -- sequenced genome of the novel coronavirus, Sars-Cov2, for the first time in Bangladesh, which may help to trace origins of infections in the country.

Genome sequencing is the process of identifying what nucleotides -- the basic building block of DNA and RNA -- are present in a certain cell and in what order.

Waterkeepers, Bapa receive safety gear

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Banalgadesh Paribesh Andolan (Bapa) and Waterkeepers Bangladesh have received safety gears from China for Bangladeshi health workers.

The consignment includes 3,000 PPE, 1,000 goggles and 18,000 masks which reached IEDCR on May 14, said a press release signed by IEDCR Director Dr Meerjady Sabrina Flora and Bapa General Secretary Sharif Jamil.

They said the safety gears came from a number of NGOs -- including Qiantang River Waterkeeper, Green Zhejiang, and River Angels of primary and secondary schools around Hangzhou Zhejiang.



Amid the multitude of flag-bearing garment workers campaigning for their rights, one stands with a sign in her hands, demanding compensation for workers if they are infected by Covid-19. Garments Sramik Trade Union Kendra organised the human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Al-Muslim turns factory into quarantine centre for workers

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH and REFAYAT ULLAH MIRDHA

Al-Muslim Group, a leading garment exporter, is constructing quarantine centres at Savar to treat its workers who show Covid-19 symptoms.

The group will inaugurate a centre, which will be able to house 60 patients, at the factory premises very soon. All treatment costs will be borne by them.

"We are preparing another centre in the same building with 60 beds. but construction might take a while," said Imteaz Ahmed Matin, general manager (admin) of Al-Muslim Group.

Matin said so far, nine out of its more than 16,000 workers have been infected with coronavirus. "So, we are turning our 12,000 square-foot accessories factory building into a quarantine centre."

If any worker shows Covid-19 symptoms, they will be sent to the centre immediately. The group will appoint two doctors, six nurses and some technicians in a day or two, he said.

The doctors and technicians will collect test samples from workers and those will be sent to the nearby hospitals or government testing labs. Workers will have to stay at the centre until reports come back.

If the report of a worker comes back positive, they will be sent to hospitals or other centres for further treatment. If it comes back negative, they will be released from the centre, said Matin.

Al-Muslim Group reopened its factories April 25 at Savar's Ullail. The group has taken such an initiative to mainly stop community transmission, as workers' residences are not properly maintaining health-safety measures,

he further said.

It is not only Al-Muslim Group, other organisations are also taking initiatives to set up such centres, said a senior executive of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

Furthermore, BGMEA is going to set up four coronavirus testing labs in the next 15 days in four industrial belts -- Savar, Gazipur, Narayanganj and Chattogram -- with the help of local administrations and health offices, the executive added.

As of yesterday, more than 60 workers from 37 garment factories got infected, said industrial police.

Savar UNO Parvejur Rahman said Al-Muslim Group's initiative is welcomed, and other organisations can follow suit.

Savar's health officials will provide technical support.

New loan agreement

FROM PAGE 12
programme will be declared along with the budget of FY1972-73. It will be a part of the first five-year plan. It will also complement the next development budget.

The government is also preparing an estimate for the country's total demand in food, agriculture and industrial sector up to June 1974. A primary assessment shows that total demand will exceed Tk 1,000 crore. **INDO-BANGLA LOAN AGREEMENT** Three loan agreements worth Tk 24 crore are signed today between Bangladesh and India. The first agreement stipulates that India will give Tk 10 crore for revival of the rail and telecommunication system and purchase of tools and machineries for power stations. Under the second agreement Indian will give Tk 6 crore loan for purchase and maintenance of two F-27 aircrafts and two ships. According to the third agreement India will supply unrefined oil worth Tk 8 crore.

BANGABANDHU'S MEETING WITH DP DHAR

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman today holds a meeting with DP Dhar, chairman of policy planning in the Indian external affairs ministry, at Gonobhaban. It is reported that the discussion focuses on bilateral relations between the two neighbouring countries, including the recently concluded Indo-Bangla trade deal.

2.5 LAKH BALES OF JUTE EXPORTED IN APRIL Bangladesh has exported 2.5 lakh bales of raw jute and finished jute products in April. The total amount of jute export since independence is 8 lakh bales. Currently, jute is the only source of foreign currency for the country. **AGRICULTURE COMMISSION WILL BE SET UP SOON** Agriculture Minister Sheikh Abdul Aziz informs today that an agriculture commission will be set up soon. The commission will work for reconstruction of the agricultural sector to make it more productive and people-oriented.

SOURCE: May 17, 1972 issue of Dainik Bangla.

2 killed in 'shootouts'

FROM PAGE 12
the "gunfight" took place around 12:30am when a team of Rab-1 raided near T&T Bottola area on information that drug peddlers gathered there.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the gang opened fired, prompting the Rab officials to retaliate, triggering the "gunfight" that continued for around 10 minutes, he claimed.

Later, the gang members seized firing and backed off leaving the bullet-hit body of Jalil behind. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, Kamruzzaman added.

A Rab personnel was also injured during the incident, he claimed.

Rab claimed to have recovered two firearms, twelve bullets and 500 pieces of yaba pills from the spot.

Meanwhile, another man was killed in a "gunfight" with police in

Khilgaon. The dead Billal Hossain, 29, was accused in at least 16 cases for robbery, mugging and murder, said Arsel Talukder, a sub-inspector of Khilgaon Police Station.

The SI said a team of police picked Billal up on Thursday afternoon from Goran area and the "gunfight" took place when they took him in Shekher Jaiga area to arrest his accomplices around 11:30pm on Thursday.

Sensing presence of police, the criminals opened fired at them, prompting them to retaliate, triggering the "gunfight", leaving Billal wounded with bullets, he claimed.

He was rushed to DMCH where doctors declared him dead, Arsel said.

The bodies were kept at DMCH morgue for autopsy.

The Daily Star, however, could not independently verify the law enforcers' claims.

Narcos active again

FROM PAGE 12
residents, is infamous for drug trading.

With some coronavirus cases and deaths, the place is one of the high-risk spots for Covid-19 infection. The drug dealers grabbed this opportunity.

A few days ago, drug peddlers in the camp used to sell narcotics in adjacent areas after police crackdown. Now, however, they have started selling again inside the camp, said several sources at the camp.

At least 100 drug peddlers, mostly women, now run this illegal business, while customers are also visiting the camp.

Among the drugs, cannabis, heroin, and yaba pills are on the top of the customers' choice.

Wishing not to be named, a drug peddler said the demand for cannabis is now high with its price doubled. Now, a small pack (puria) of cannabis is being sold for Tk 100. Prices of a yaba tablet are stable, which is available for Tk 250 to Tk 300. Each puria of heroin is being sold for Tk 150.

"As no one obstructs them from selling drugs and no drives are being conducted by law enforcement agencies, they [drug peddlers] became active again," said a camp leader, preferring anonymity.

While visiting the rail line and Wasa Bhaban areas in Karwan Bazar recently, these correspondents saw young women with babies selling cannabis on the streets in broad daylight.

It was also seen that a drug peddler, selling cannabis, switched quickly to begging from people when she saw a

police vehicle arrive. A shopkeeper there said 10 to 12 women sell cannabis near Wasa Bhaban.

In Mirpur, Jheelpar slum is infamous for drug trading. Eight to 10 people led by one Dulal run the illegal business. Although Dulal lives in Narayangani, his men control yaba and cannabis trade in the slum.

In Gudaraghat Bazar in Mirpur-1, a poultry seller under cover of his trade is selling drugs by some drug peddlers, said sources.

There are more such spots in Mirpur like road no 9 in "H" block, road no 8 in Sareng Bari, Kingshuk Balur Math, and Shine Pukur Slum.

Drug dealers' attempts amid the shutdown came to light with some recent drug seizures and arrests.

On May 12, Rab recovered 2,475 yaba pills from a person in Shyamoli.

In another drive, the force detained a youth with 700 purias of heroin from Mohammadpur area.

Khorshid Alam, an assistant director of DNC, said they filed at least 150 drug cases in Dhaka north area on March. But in April, it came down to under 50.

"We have to get close to the suspects to catch them, which is unsafe at this time. Some of our colleagues are also in quarantine," the DNC official said.

Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP, said there is monitoring has not become lax, but the current situation is responsible for limiting their activities.

Debesh Roy

FROM PAGE 12
He was admitted to the hospital near his residence at Baguihati, on the eastern fringes of Kolkata, on Wednesday after exhibiting symptoms of sodium-potassium imbalance and breathing problems, his family members said.

Roy's condition deteriorated on Thursday night and he suffered a massive cardiac arrest and died at 10:50pm India time, our New Delhi correspondent reports quoting the family.

A regular contributor to a number of Bangla dailies, he was a staunch critic of the attacks on liberals in India in recent times and attended protest meetings despite his failing health.

Born in Pabna, Bangladesh on December 17, 1936, Roy, whose career as a writer spanned five decades, made his debut with Jagati.

Shifting to Jalpaiguri from Pabna, Roy came under the influence of leftist ideology that went on to form his political views, leading to his eventual involvement in workers' movements in Kolkata.

The northern part of West Bengal formed the setting of many of his books, which include Udbastu, Borisaler Jogen Mandal, Samay Asamayer Brittanta, Kolkata O Gopal, Nirastrikan Keno, Shorirer Sarbassyata, Teestapuran and Manush Khun Kore Keno.

Trump

FROM PAGE 12
The comments came after Trump further hardened his rhetoric towards China, threatening to cut ties with the rival superpower completely as relations have steadily deteriorated over the pandemic.

"There are many things we could do... We could cut off the whole relationship," Trump said Thursday in an interview with Fox Business News.

"You'd save \$500 billion if you cut off the whole relationship."

Trump said that his relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping is "very good" but added: "Right now I just don't want to speak to him."

The threat came a week after a trade call between US and Chinese trade negotiators in which both sides stressed their commitment to the Phase One trade deal reached in January.

However, fulfilment of the deal looks increasingly tenuous in the face of the pandemic and a looming global economic downturn.

In the pact signed in January, China agreed to buy \$200 billion more in US goods over two years than it did in 2017 -- before the trade war erupted and triggered tariffs on billions of dollars of two-way trade.

'DARKEST WINTER' An ousted US health official warned Congress on Thursday that President Donald Trump's administration has no "master plan" to fight the coronavirus pandemic and is unprepared to distribute enough vaccines to immunize millions of Americans.

Rick Bright told a House panel that without clear planning and an improved coordinated response, "2020 could be the darkest winter" in decades for Americans.

Bright was removed last month from his post as head of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), the agency charged with developing a vaccine against coronavirus.

In his first congressional appearance since his demotion, he presented a grim picture to lawmakers.

"We don't have a single point of leadership right now for this response, and we don't have a master plan for this response," Bright said.

He also warned that the 12- to 18-month timeframe being discussed for developing a viable vaccine might be too aggressive.

'No worries' for next six months

FROM PAGE 1
This is only the public stock that the government uses for supporting economically vulnerable people. But the main stock remains with the farmers and others in private sectors. And this year, the Boro production was good, he said.

PUBLIC FOOD STOCKS Until May 11, rice stock at public godowns was 9.97 lakh tonnes and wheat stock 2.82 lakh tonnes. The food ministry says the current food stock at public warehouses is "satisfactory".

The government started procuring paddy and wheat from April 26. The total target of procurement is eight lakh tonnes of paddy and 11.5 lakh tonnes of milled rice (parboiled and sunburnt).

The food department bought 104 tonnes of paddy and 826 tonnes of rice until May 11. Besides, it procured 15,280 tonnes of wheat against the target of 75,000 tonnes from this year's harvest.

The government has the capacity to store 19.3 lakh tonnes of food grains in its godowns. Besides the food stock, the market has seen quite good supply of rice.

BORO RICE Farmers planted rice on 47.54 lakh hectares of land in the current Boro season, according to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE).

"Based on crop cutting data, it can be said that we will be able to achieve our Boro production target of 2.04 crore tonnes this Boro season," said Md Shahjahan Kabir, director general of state Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI).

"As we are going to have a good crop yield, we will have a stock of rice for the next seven to eight months. There will be no problem."

Boro accounts for more than half of annual rice production in the country.

In a report on Bangladesh last month, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), also predicted higher Boro production this season, thanks to favourable weather and low pest infestation.

Besides, Kabir said, the agriculture ministry gives incentives during the

coming season of Aus paddy.

The ministry last month declared Tk 9 crore of incentive to provide seed and fertiliser to small and marginal farmers to encourage cultivation during the Aus season. The government also reduced irrigation charge by half for the pumps owned by Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation.

Aus cultivation target has been raised to 13.26 lakh hectares in the coming season, 20 percent higher than the previous season. Aus production target has been set at 35 lakh tonnes, up from 27.75 lakh the previous year.

"We are also proceeding with good plan regarding Aman. Everything will be good if there is no natural calamity," said BRRI director general.

Boro is harvested in April-May period of the year and it accounted for 54 percent of total rice production at 3.64 crore tonnes estimated in fiscal 2018-19.

And the rain-fed Aman rice season brought 38 percent while Aus season contributed to the rest 8 percent to the annual rice basket.

Kabir said Bangladesh's annual consumption requirement is 3.5 crore tonnes and the estimate shows last year's total production was higher than the estimated demand.

And increased production helped the nation to largely cut dependence on imported rice.

Rice import tumbled 98 percent to 4,180 tonnes between July 1 and May 12 of the current fiscal year from 205,790 tonnes in the whole fiscal of 2018-19.

"We are self-sufficient in rice," he said. "With record production and harvesting of rice in every three months, there is no scope of famine in the country. The main task is to ensure access for all. At the same time, market should be monitored to curb price volatility."

As per the USDA data, with a production of 3.6 crore tonnes of rice Bangladesh stands in third position globally in rice production after China and India that produce 14.6 crore tonnes and 11.6 crore tonnes respectively. Earlier Indonesia was in

third position, producing 3.49 crore tonnes of rice.

Agricultural economist MA Sattar Mandal said nearly two-third of rice would come safely if there is no unfavourable weather in the rest of the harvesting period.

"It appears that there would be good buffer," said Mandal, also a former vice chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University.

Quazi Shahabuddin, former director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said paddy farmers usually market 50-70 percent of total production of Boro.

So, from the production forecast, it appears that marketable surplus of the grain would be one crore to 1.40 crore tonnes, he said.

Mandal said focus should be given also on Aman as much as possible as the rain-fed rice crop is the second major crop after Boro. Aman accounts for 38 percent of the total yearly rice production.

HOW MUCH FOOD NEEDED Asked how much food we need every year, Akhter Ahmed, agriculture researcher and country representative of IFPRI, citing USDA research said Bangladesh had a surplus of 3.73 crore tonnes of food grains (rice and wheat) from May 2019 to last month.

As per the monthly statistics of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Bangladesh consumed total 3.58 crore tonnes of food grains in last one year, he said.

VEGETABLES, PROTEIN SOURCE Asked about the food stock situation, Dr M Asaduzzaman, former research director of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) said, once the Boro is harvested, the country would not face any food shortage at least for next six months.

So, the government now should concentrate on fixing the supply chains of vegetables and other food items, he said.

"Farmers are unable to send their vegetables to different parts of the country. The government should immediately fix it," added Asaduzzaman.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষকের কার্যালয়
সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল
মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা-১২২১

মেমো নং সইআমেকছা/টি-১৩/এএমসি(২০১৯-২০)/OTM/১২২ তার ১৪/৫/২০২০ইং

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (এএমসি)-২০১৯-২০

সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল, মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা এর ২০১৯-২০ইং অর্থ বৎসরের জন্য স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকার অন্তর্ভুক্ত মেডিকেল কলেজ এএমসি এর ১২৭-১২৭০২-২২৪০২১০১১ অর্থনৈতিক কোডের আওতায় (জিওবি) স্বাস্থ্য (প্যাকেজ নং-১) ১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ (কোড নং-ঔষধ ও প্রতিষেধক-৩২৫২১০১৯) (প্যাকেজ নং-২) চিকিৎসা যন্ত্রপাতি (কোড নং-৪১১২৩১৫) (প্যাকেজ নং-৩) ল্যাবরেটরী যন্ত্রপাতি (কোড নং-৪১১২৩০৬) এর মাধ্যমে অত্রের নিম্নে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী বিধিবিধান মোতাবেক (১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক প্রকৃত ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী, (২) ও (৩) এর জন্য প্রকৃত ট্রিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিম্নে হইতে সীলমোহকৃত নামে ("নামের উপরে এএমসি দরপত্র" উপস্থাপন) দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা ও পরিবার কল্যাণ বিভাগ, স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়।
০২	প্রকল্প/প্রতিষ্ঠান	সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল, মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা।
০৩	সম্প্রদায়/সম্পদের নাম	অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক।
০৪	প্রকল্প/সম্পদের কোড	১২৭-১২৭০২-২২৪০২১০১১
০৫	প্রকল্প/সম্পদের নাম	ঔষধ, এচিপিএনএসপি।
০৬	টেন্ডার প্যাকেজ নাম্বার	জিডি/এএমসি/৩টিএম-০১
০৭	দরপত্র করা বাবদ চালানের কোড নং	১ ২ ৭ ১ ১ ০ ০ ০ ০ ২ ৩ ৬ ৬
০৮	কাজের নাম	(১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ (২) চিকিৎসা যন্ত্রপাতি, (৩) ল্যাবরেটরী যন্ত্রপাতি।
০৯	দরপত্র গ্রহণ প্রতিষ্ঠান/পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত (OTM)।
১০	বাজেট ও তহবিলের প্রকৃতি	উন্মুক্ত।
১১	দরপত্রের কাজের বিবরণ	(প্যাকেজ নং-১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ (কোড নং-ঔষধ ও প্রতিষেধক-৩২৫২১০১৯) (প্যাকেজ নং-২) চিকিৎসা যন্ত্রপাতি (কোড নং ৪১১২৩১৫) (প্যাকেজ নং-৩) ল্যাবরেটরী যন্ত্রপাতি (কোড নং ৪১১২৩০৬)।
১২	দরপত্রাদাতার যোগ্যতা	(প্যাকেজ নং-১) এর ক্ষেত্রে প্রকৃত ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী লাইসেন্সধারী কোম্পানি হইতে হইবে এবং (প্যাকেজ নং-২ ও ৩) সহ সকল প্রস্পেক্টর ক্ষেত্রে সরকার কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত প্রকৃত ট্রিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীর ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, মূল্য সন্মোজন কর নিবন্ধনকরণ, অ্যাককর সনদপত্র, আর্থিক সচ্ছলতার সম্পর্কে ০১ বৎসরের ব্যাংক স্ট্যাটমেন্ট, নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র, মালিকানা সনদপত্র/প্রতিনিধির ক্ষেত্রে ক্ষমতাপত্র, ছবি-০২ কপি, নমুনা স্বাক্ষর, কাগজে তালিকাভুক্ত নয় এর অধীকারনামা গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত, ভোটার আইডি কার্ড কপি, স্মার্টসি কাগজের বিঘাত ২ বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতার স্বাক্ষর কার্যসম্পন্ন ফটোকপি ও ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি সনদপত্র দরপত্রের সমিত দাবি। দরপত্রাদাতার যোগ্যতা হিসাবে বিবেচিত হইবে।
১৩	দরপত্র তফসিলের মূল্য (অনুসরণযোগ্য) ও প্রাপ্তিস্থান	(প্যাকেজ নং-১) ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক ঔষধের জন্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা হারে, (প্যাকেজ নং-২) চিকিৎসা যন্ত্রপাতি এবং (প্যাকেজ নং-৩) ল্যাবরেটরী যন্ত্রপাতি এর জন্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা হারে টেন্ডারী চালানের মাধ্যমে অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক, সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল এর অনুসূচীতে যে কোন তফসিলী ব্যাংক অফিসের মাধ্যমে করা যাবে, অনলাইন ডিপোজিট প্রিন্সিপাল মূল্যকপি জমা কর্তৃক দরপত্র তফসিল সরাসরি নিয়ন্ত্রণকারীর দপ্তর এবং পরিচালক, যেমিও ও দেশীয় চিকিৎসা, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা এর অফিস হইতে, অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সংগ্রহ করা যাইবে।
১৪	দরপত্র তফসিল সংগ্রহের তারিখ ও সময়	১৪/০৫/২০২০ইং বৃহস্পতিবার হইতে ০৪/০৬/২০২০ইং বৃহস্পতিবার পর্যন্ত মোট=১১ (একুশ) দিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।
১৫	দরপত্র তফসিল দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০৬/২০২০ইং বৃহস্পতিবার সকাল ৯-০০ ঘটিকা হইতে দুপুর ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত দরপত্রসমূহ অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক এবং পরিচালক, যেমিও ও দেশীয় চিকিৎসা, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর, মহাখালী, ঢাকা এর অফিস কক্ষে প্রকৃত টেন্ডার ব্যাগে নামের উপরে এএমসি দরপত্র উপস্থাপন কর্তৃক দাখিল করিতে হইবে।
১৬	দরপত্র তফসিল খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০৬/২০২০ইং বৃহস্পতিবার মধ্যাহ্ন ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।
১৭	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবী	অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক।
১৮	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা ও টেন্ডারফোন	সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল, মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা-১২২১ ও ফোন নং-৯০৩২০৪৮
১৯	অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	ক. দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার দিন সরকার কর্তৃক ছুটি ঘোষণা করা হইবে, সেই ক্ষেত্রে পরবর্তী কর্মসিদ্ধে দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার তারিখ হিসাবে গণ্য করা হইবে। খ. দরপত্রের সকল শর্তাবলী দরপত্র তফসিলের অনুচ্ছেদসমূহে সন্নিবেশিত আছে।
২০	বিশেষ নির্দেশনা	ক. কর্তৃপক্ষ সকল দরপত্র/ফটোকপি/অনুসূচী দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও বাতিলের সর্বমম ক্ষমতা রাখেন। খ. সর্বক্ষেত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা-২০০৮ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী বিধিবিধান অনুসরণ করা হইবে।

১৪/৫/২০২০
ডাঃ স্বপন কুমার দত্ত
অধ্যক্ষ-কাম-অধীক্ষক (অপস)
সরকারি ইউনানী ও আয়ুর্বেদিক মেডিকেল কলেজ ও হাসপাতাল
মিরপুর-১৩, ঢাকা-১২২১
ফোন ৯০৩২০৪৮/মোবাইল ০১৮১২২৯৯৩০১
E-mail: guamach@hospi.dghs.gov.bd

জিডি-১৫৩

Pabna University of Science and Technology
Office of the Project Director

Memo No. PUST/PD/e-GP/OTM/15 Date: 14/05/2020

e-Tender Notice (FY/2019-20)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following works of under "Pabna University of Science & Technology Development Project", PUST, Pabna.

Sl. No.	Re-Tender ID	APP ID	Package No. & Invitation Ref. No.	Name of works	Tender publication date & time	Tender closing date & time	Method
1	460340	158695	PUST/PD/e-GP/OTM/15	Procurement of Stationery items for the Project Directors Office under Pabna University of Science and Technology Development Project, PUST, FY 2019-2020	14-May-2020 18:00	04-June-2020 11:30am	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender 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-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Engr. Lt Colonel G.M. Azizur Rahman, afwc, psc (Retd)
Project Director
Pabna University of Science & Technology Development Project

GD-852

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC LATEST UPDATES

MORE THAN 302,000 DEAD The coronavirus has killed at least 302,489 people worldwide since it surfaced in China late last year, according to an AFP tally on Friday at 1100 GMT based on official sources.

LOOMING RECESSION The coronavirus pandemic could cut up to 9.7 percent off the global economy, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday. Meanwhile, Europe's economic powerhouse Germany tipped into a recession in the first quarter, with its economy shrinking by 2.2 percent due to the pandemic.

BRAZIL, MEXICO CASES SURGE Brazil and Mexico on Thursday reported a record one-day rise in new coronavirus cases, just as leaders of both countries intensified attempts to reopen their economies.

RUSSIA PROBES FT, NYT Russia on Thursday launched a probe into the Financial Times and the New York Times after the newspapers said local authorities could be vastly under-reporting deaths from the coronavirus in the country.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



A medical worker takes a swab sample from a staff member from the AOC computer monitor factory to be tested for the COVID-19 coronavirus in Wuhan in China's central Hubei province, yesterday. Wuhan, the original epicentre of the new coronavirus outbreak in China, has tested over 3 million residents for the pathogen since April, and will now focus its testing efforts on the rest of its 11 million population, according to state media.

PHOTO: AFP

Mortality rates hint at higher death toll

AFP, Paris

The coronavirus has now taken 300,000 lives globally, according to official figures. But depending on the way deaths are counted, the real human cost could be far greater.

The official figures include only those deaths attributed to coronavirus, but experts are increasingly looking at data comparing this year's death rates with previous years -- regardless of the official cause.

This "excess deaths" metric raises the spectre of a much higher toll, as it includes fatalities indirectly related to the virus -- for example, people suffering from other illnesses who could not access treatment because of the strain the pandemic has placed on hospitals.

Throughout the crisis, methods of data compilation have differed widely between nations, making direct comparisons difficult.

In Italy, between February 20

and March 31, 12,428 people were recorded as having died of the coronavirus. But in the same period, authorities noted 25,354 "excess deaths" compared with the average of the five previous years.

For the United States, the difference is even more striking: according to data for March, before the country was hit by the worst of the pandemic, the number of excess deaths reached 6,000 -- more than triple the official COVID-19 toll.

Even in Germany, widely considered by experts to have handled the outbreak better than other EU countries, 3,706 deaths more than the average were noted in March, even as the official virus toll was 2,218.

Even without a standardised counting method, excess mortality data is the best indicator of how the virus has impacted different countries, said professor Yvonne Doyle, the medical director of Public Health England.

Virus may kill 190,000 in Africa

Warns WHO; ADB says world economy may shrink 9.6pc

AFP, Washington

The coronavirus could infect a quarter of a billion Africans and put intolerable pressure on the continent's fragile health system, a new report said yesterday, as the pandemic's global death toll topped 300,000.

Despite fears of a second wave of infections, borders began opening up in Europe and lockdowns continued to ease as governments try to get stalled economies moving again, with experts warning world output could shrink by 10 percent.

The nexus of poverty and risk was also laid bare by a World Health Organization report that warned Africa is a hotspot waiting to happen, despite so far having escaped the worst of the disease.

Researchers say fragile health systems on the world's poorest continent could quickly be overwhelmed, with modeling suggesting 231 million people could become infected.

Up to 190,000 of them could die, the study published in the journal BMJ Global Health suggested.

With large populations living in slums, social distancing is all but impossible for many on the continent, and health experts say only a vaccine will prevent widespread infection.

Despite scientists working flat out towards that aim, experts say it could still be many months -- or even years -- away. And without a robust roll-out plan, even highly developed countries could struggle to take advantage of any breakthrough.

Meanwhile, the Asian Development Bank yesterday doubled its previous estimate of the cost of the pandemic, saying the world economy would shrink by \$8.8 trillion -- almost a tenth of global output.

Up to 242 million jobs will vanish due to the virus, the Manila-based bank said.

Advertisement for Belcrest 3 Bedroom Apartments at Block-D, Bashundhara. Includes contact information for Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd, 91 Gulshan Avenue, and a call to action: Call on 16687.



Residents try to salvage belongings amongst their houses destroyed at the height of Typhoon Vongfong in San Policarpio town, Eastern Samar province yesterday, a day after the typhoon hit the town. Tens of thousands of people were forced into cramped shelters by the powerful storm, making social distancing nearly impossible as the nation battles the coronavirus pandemic.

PHOTO: AFP

Myanmar denounced at UNSC for violence

AFP, United Nations

UN Security Council European member states and Britain on Thursday denounced violence in Myanmar and expressed concern over the coronavirus pandemic in the country, in a document China refused to endorse, diplomatic sources said.

Britain, which initiated the session, said it was concerned about "the heavy toll" an escalation of violence between the Myanmar military and the insurgent Arakan Army was "taking on civilians at the time of COVID-19 crisis."

The country's northwest has been embroiled in an increasingly brutal civil war between the military and Arakan Army rebels demanding more autonomy for the region's ethnic Rakhine Buddhists.

"The conflict has already led to a spike in internal displacement, additional restrictions on humanitarian access," Britain said in a statement.

EU members Belgium, Estonia, France and Germany expressed the same concern, calling for "an immediate, comprehensive and nationwide ceasefire."

1,000 Rohingyas stranded at sea

Says Amnesty as Southeast Asia shuts borders for the persecuted minority

REUTERS, Jakarta

At least 1,000 Rohingyas are stranded at sea as Southeast Asian nations tighten their borders to keep out the new coronavirus, Amnesty International said on Friday, urging action to ensure they were not buried in an "invisible graveyard" at sea.

Rights groups believe at least two boats carrying Rohingyas, members of a Muslim minority from Myanmar, are off the coast of the Indonesian province of Aceh, but officials said they had no clear information.

Spokesmen for the Western Fleet of the Indonesian navy as well as Aceh's disaster mitigation agency and search and rescue team told Reuters they were trying to confirm the location of the vessels.

Refugees from two other boats have landed in Bangladesh since mid-April, many starving and emaciated after weeks at sea. Survivors from one said dozens died on board.

Saad Hammadi, from the South Asia Regional Office of Amnesty International, said the refugees could have been sailing for several weeks or even months without food or water, citing information from humanitarian agencies and local news reports.

In a virtual news conference he urged Indonesia and Australia, who chair an anti-people smuggling and trafficking forum known as the Bali Process, to ensure the refugees are allowed to land safely "so that we don't see the sea become an invisible graveyard."

The Australian foreign ministry said it could not immediately comment and a spokesman for the Indonesian foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Senate okays bill to pressure China over Uighur rights

REUTERS, Washington

The US Senate approved legislation on Thursday calling on President Donald Trump's administration to toughen its response to China's crackdown on its Uighur Muslim minority, the latest push in Washington to punish China as Trump blames Beijing for worsening the coronavirus pandemic.

The Republican-led Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent, without a roll-call vote.

Passage sends the measure to the Democratic-led House of Representatives, which must approve it before it is sent to the White House for Trump to sign into law or veto.

The House approved its own legislation late last year responding to the treatment of the Uighurs. That measure called for sanctions against senior Chinese officials responsible for the crackdown on Muslims in the Xinjiang province, angering China.

The United Nations estimates more than a million Muslim Uighurs have been detained in camps in Xinjiang in recent years. China denies mistreatment of Uighurs.

Official notice from the Bangladesh government regarding the suspension of the 2019-2020 examination. The notice lists the exam name, dates, and details of the suspension. It includes a table with columns for exam name, suspension date, and other relevant information. The notice is signed by the Director of Examinations, Bangladesh Education Board.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

“Acting has been my lifelong pursuit”

- Sharmili Ahmed

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Sharmili Ahmed is a powerful presence for the television and film industries of Bangladesh. She is a living legend who has acted in numerous television dramas and also appeared on the big screen in several movies back in the sixties. The eminent and inspirational actor has been working for more than five decades. She recently turned 73. In a candid chat with *The Daily Star*, she looks back on her glorious career.

Based on your experiences as an actor, who do you think plays the most critical role in a tele-fiction, play or film?

The captain plays the most important role on the ship -- and on the sets, the director is the captain. The director has the most critical role, and can bring out the best in an actor. My film career started with eminent director Subhash Datta, and I consider him my mentor.

When you first started working, how did your family react?

My family has always been supportive of my career. I never had to face any obstacles from them. My acting career started with the help of my father. Him and his brothers were artistes themselves. My mother used to play the sitar and she was an avid reader. I am grateful to be born into such a culturally rich family.

You're still a graceful presence on the screen after so many years. What is your mantra for success?

I believe that I have come this far because of my willpower. I am never tired of working, as acting has been my lifelong pursuit. I feel honoured to receive so much love from the people of this country.

You are known for playing maternal roles on the screen nowadays. Do you like playing such roles?

I feel very lucky, as so many people address me as 'Maa'. Everyone sees me as a mother figure in their lives, and that is a huge achievement for me. During shoots, my co-artistes always help me pack up and cook meals for me. I feel truly blessed, as not everyone gets to have such adoration. My co-artistes are like family to me.

How are you spending time at home now?

I am reading books, watching television and films. I recently watched *Abirbhab*, a film that I was in. Many of my colleagues check up on me regularly, and I have been talking to my close ones on the phone as well. Dilara Zaman sent me home-cooked meals just a few days ago. I am having a good time at home.

When the shows don't go on

Theatre professionals on grappling with the coronavirus pandemic

PRIVANKA CHOWDHURY

As we wrestle with the coronavirus pandemic, theatre artistes and production workers are trying to figure out how to stay afloat and take care of their community, since the very notion of live entertainment has become taboo.

“I haven't been to rehearsals or performed on the stage for so long. However, I am happy because I finally have some free time to read my books without any distractions,” says actor and costume designer Samiun Jahan Dola. “The panic is very real, but it is also the right time to reflect upon our actions,” she adds. “Freelance performers and technicians are not doing well at all, as live shows have been cancelled. Some groups and individuals have taken initiatives to support struggling artistes temporarily, but a better strategy is needed in the long run. We might need to rethink our performances in ways that may not adhere to the classic form of theatre, but they may give rise to a different form.”

Dola recently practiced a soliloquy by Dr Faustus, from home. “I've been in touch with some of my friends, and we are trying to collaborate on certain projects. We also need to stand beside the underprivileged communities at this time. I believe in the words of Swami Vivekananda -- those who serve others serve the Lord in the true sense,” she explains.

Theatre activist and President of Goti Theatre Mony Pahari noted that the coronavirus pandemic has inevitably jeopardised people's livelihoods. “As our group works in remote areas of Rangamati, we are hardly known in the mainstream scene. Since we are at home, I, along with my husband and daughter, have turned our bedroom into a small studio, from where we have been recording charity shows since March 31,” she adds. “We wanted to help people in need. We have received generous donations from our fellow theatre activists and the public from nine countries, including Bangladesh. Till date, we have reached out to

nearly 255 families through our theatre workers and teachers all over the area. So far, they have conducted 12 charity shows, and hope to help more families in the future. “My daughter Falgun, who is otherwise shy, played the keyboard at one of the shows when she learned that it was for helping others,” adds Mony.

On the other hand, Jyoti Sinha, General Secretary of Manipuri Theatre and Cultural Officer of Shilpakala Academy in Moulvibazar, noted that the most important factor in theatrical performances is the audience. “The pandemic is affecting us financially and psychosocially,” she says. “Several of our artistes are students, for whom theatre is a much-needed breather from their hectic academic lives. Most of our performers are also freelance dancers who depend upon live shows. Like most organisations, we are

who has worked on over 700 plays, has been completely out of work for over two and a half months now. He returned to his hometown once all cultural events were cancelled by the government. “I have been asked to return to Dhaka, but I am skeptical about going back,” he says. “I am also afraid of losing my job. Some well-wishers from different groups have offered help, but I have not been informed about any permanent solutions.”

Theatrical productions have been the only source of income for make-up artiste Shubhashish Dutta Tanmoy, for the last 25 years. Needless to say, the absence of live shows has hit him hard. “A few theatre activists came forward with aid, but that was given to two of my assistants, as they had greater priority. It is indeed a frustrating time,” he says. “I have served Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy for



A performance of 'Kuhukjal' by Dhaka Theatre at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

also exploring the digital platform, but the essence of theatre lies in the interactions with the spectators. “Nonetheless, basic communication and individual practices are keeping their hopes high for a quick recovery from these difficult times, according to Jyoti. “We are worried about the aftermath of the pandemic, as the return of audiences in the auditoriums will take some time, but we are not giving up. Financially, we have reached out to our members, with support from the district administration,” she adds.

Sound assistant Ujjal Chandra Sarker,

years. I am hoping that they will take initiatives for the livelihoods of workers like us.”

On the other hand, set designer Mohammad Monir Hossain has worked with different theatre groups and designed the sets for numerous events at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. He has been out of work with no payment, for quite some time. “Currently, I am living in my hometown, but the situation is not ideal here either. The Group Theatre Federation has asked me to submit my National ID Card. I am hoping to receive some support from them,” he adds.

Golden Globes changes foreign-language eligibility rules due to Coronavirus crisis

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) has updated its rules for Golden Globes submission and eligibility, along with a few minor twists to reflect the changes in the film and TV industries due to coronavirus pandemic. The HFPA alters the rules annually, as a result of what happened the previous year, and many of these changes reflect the nominations and wins.

According to Variety, HFPA has announced that foreign language films will not need a theatrical release in their own country to be eligible for the 2021 Golden Globes.

Earlier the rule stated that foreign films must be released in their country of origin during the



SOURCE: AP

15-month period from 1 October to 31 December prior to the awards.

The temporary new rule is: “Foreign-language motion pictures that had a bona fide theatrical release planned to begin in their country of origin

during the period from March 15 until a date to be determined by HFPA when cinemas in that country have generally reopened, may instead be released in any country in any format (e.g. a motion picture format such as in theatres or on pay-per-view

or a television format such as subscription streaming service, subscription cable channel, broadcast television, etc.) and will still be eligible for the Golden Globe foreign-language motion picture awards’.

Also, the movies will not be screened for HFPA members in a theatre or screening room, but the distributors of these films will have to get in touch with the HFPA to make a screening date on the official HFPA calendar and provide all the members with a screening link or a DVD copy of the film to make it possible for the members to view it at home.

Tina Fey and Amy Poehler will host the 93rd Golden Globes. No date for the awards ceremony has been announced yet.

“If I don't raise my voice, I can't call myself an artiste”

-Shafayet Mansoor Rana

SHARMIN JOYA

Talented television director Shafayet Mansoor Rana predominantly reflects on contemporary issues through social satire and dark humour in his stories. Widely appreciated last year was his Eid tele-fiction *Amader Shomajbiggan*, a story about the voices of the masses. This year, his Valentine's Day release, *Poripurok*, based on a true story, also stood out.

Since directors have mostly been confined to their homes due to the coronavirus outbreak, they have ample time to come up with innovations in storytelling. Rana shared that he wants to work on dark humour and political satire, if he makes anything based on the pandemic.

Television channels and production houses are highly competitive in the country. Every year, more than a thousand tele-fictions are produced, targeting

festivals such as Eid. “When art is considered just as a tool for business, the quality of stories is compromised,” shares Rana. “A forty-minute tele-fiction is shot in just a few hours. If such is the case, can we truly expect the product to be worthwhile? Good productions need enough time and consistency.” According to Rana, the mismanagement in the industry has resulted in the lack of grooming institutions for both directors and actors. The television arena also lacks proper platforms for constructive criticism.

Owing to the pandemic, this year, channels are likely to release leftover productions, that were previously shot. “I am hoping that these projects will be an eye opener to the policy makers and they can find the loopholes,” asserts Rana.

According to Rana, the television industry seems to be dependent on trending topics and audiences' preferences. There are



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

hardly any risk takers who will invest in challenging ideas. “This has been a tradition followed by our television channels,” states Rana. “You will see that most television channels are almost doppelgangers of one another, with similar content. If we can't give our audience anything new, we certainly can't blame them. Satyajit Ray always tried to convey messages through his films. I don't think he ever thought about how the audience will accept them, which is why his films are considered to be some of the best works in cinema.”

At the same time, Rana suggested that artistes should be conscious about taking up projects, noting that unprofessionalism affects the whole process as well.

“Every profession has certain defining features. However, the arts are still not considered as 'serious' fields,” he explains. “We need to raise our voices against unprofessionalism. If I don't raise my voice, I can't call myself an artiste.”

Among the thousands of tele-fictions that are produced every year, the critics and viewers appreciate only a handful. Despite that, the process of producing tele-fictions has remained the same for years. “Prior to taking up a project, I arrange rehearsals and schedule meetings with the artistes. I spend a lot of time on a single project,” asserts Rana. “The quality of a project will fall if my concentration is divided.”

Nuhash Humayun and Pritom Hasan join the fight against COVID-19 through 'Bichhuz'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

WaterAid collaborated with director Nuhash Humayun and musician Pritom Hasan to launch a creative campaign, through the web series, Bichhuz. The show sheds light on the importance of handwashing with soap, as the first line of defense against the coronavirus.



The cast of 'Bichhuz'

The story is about four rebellious friends, who are reluctant to follow basic hygiene practices. Bondhu the puppet, voiced by Pritom Hasan himself, tries unconventional ways to pursue the four of them to develop good hygiene habits. The four friends in the series are played by members of Tokai Theatre. The series takes audiences on a journey with all the characters, as they learn the importance of handwashing through humour, sarcasm and existing challenges.

Nuhash and Pritom are also the advisory board members of the Youth for SDG 6 platform. Apart from working on this series, the duo has been supporting WaterAid to raise awareness amongst the youth.

“Today's youth confides in understanding things on a deeper level, rather than being told what to do. We need to speak to them in their language -- be that unconventional, rebellious or completely unexpected,” Nuhash shared at the launch of the campaign. “As a director by profession and an advisor to the Youth for SDG 6 platform, this project is very close to my heart. I believe it will bring about a wave of positive hygiene habits and fulfill our main aim of development.”

Voicing Bondhu the puppet has been an exciting journey for Pritom. “The

whole process required dedication and days of training. We all have the power to convince people through music, humour and sarcasm. It's what brings people together,” he said. “*Bichhuz* has been developed for a cause. We have to remind people that washing hands is one of the most effective ways to protect ourselves right now.”

Episodes of *Bichhuz* are now available on WaterAid Bangladesh's official Facebook page and YouTube channel, along with other social media platforms.

“We are happy that youth icons like Nuhash and Pritom are supporting us. The youth are our catalysts for change. They can promote handwashing as a practice for their families and their communities -- leading to a healthier and safer Bangladesh,” shared Hasin Jahan, Country Director of WaterAid.

WaterAid launched their #FightCoronaUnited campaign in March 2020 to support people and communities across the country through online and on-ground awareness activities. WaterAid's youth wing, 'Youth for SDG 6' was inception last year. They currently work with over 1,000 student volunteers for developing healthy hygiene habits across their institutions and in their communities.

386,723 businesses pivot to delivering groceries online in Dhaka

NONE-OF-YOUR-BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

DHAKA: While the Covid-22 outbreak has led to many businesses closing their shutters, many in the city have pivoted towards delivering groceries to the citizens in lockdown.

"I don't know what happened. I had all 57 ride-sharing and food delivery apps installed on my phone because I can eat for free half the month thanks to their discounts. However, I woke up yesterday to about 289 notifications freezing up my phone and they are still coming one after another. It has been two days. All the service centres are closed and now my phone is permanently stuck, only showing notifications," said Jahid Hossain, 32, a single man living in North Badda.

The sudden pivot of so many companies might seem surprising to many but earlier in May, the country's leading online grocer ChillDeal.com.bd's laid-back approach towards its customers meant too many failed orders and piling up of refunds.

"Initially, we were under the impression that ChillDeal was a giant player in the field no one could compete against. I mean, if you



look at their marketing and public relations, anyone would agree. After all, they promised to be the first company to deliver diapers to the International Space Station but thankfully, this has given us the opportunity to step up,"

said Ahnaf Bashir, founder of Horizontal Vertical, a coaching centre that now delivers groceries.

We tried reaching out to ChillDeal but unfortunately, after being put on hold for

180 minutes listening to diaper ads, our correspondent gave up.

Aside from the usual startups and logistics services delivering groceries, CNG autorickshaw drivers and rickshaw-pullers have also stepped up, organising through a Facebook group. However, not many were sympathetic to their cause. Noman Akash, CEO of Techstosterone, a former IT firm that is now a delivery service provider, thinks that the government should step in and ban all these types of services. However, he disagreed that the industry needed any regulation.

"We [delivery companies] are already taking utmost care to ensure that the parcels reach our customers safely. Regulatory measures would only hinder the process and bog us down with bureaucracy. What safety measures are they ensuring? There is a reason we have such investments in communication and management for a smooth service. You get what you pay for," said an exasperated Noman Akash, CEO of Techstosterone, a former IT firm that is now a delivery service provider.

Upon asking how many of their riders were tested for Covid-22, Noman disconnected the call and was unavailable for further comment.

A CELEBRITY HAS JUST DIED AND YOU SHOULD ALL GET YOUR POSTS READY TO FEEL INVOLVED

ENTERTAINMENT CORRESPONDENT

Stop the presses folks, a celebrity has just died.

The singer, 103, who had multiple fatal diseases society chooses to play down, passed away last night leaving millions of people absolutely shocked.

The death dominated the news cycle for a good three days, with people waxing lyrical about the famed voice behind "I will keep liking all your posts to remind you of my existence even though you clearly told me you want nothing to do with me".

The next step in the mourning will be a procession of counterculture narratives which will serve to remind the world of how fallible and flawed their celebrity was and the problematic nature of hero-worship.

"I cannot believe he is dead. It's the end of an era," a fan said, parroting an old trope, which people have come to associate with expressing grief or loss.

"It's like a part of my childhood died," another fan said, showing just how easy it was to make people think in certain, conventional ways.

Since news of the death broke fans have been posting their condolences on social media. For a brief moment, the world has found itself disassociated with the daily concerns of life, which is a good thing.

A debate also broke out about what some lines from some of the singer's songs meant, with many confusing projecting their own insecurities as interpretation.

Finally, a few sharp listeners also pointed out how the singer was actually faking his death. "It's no coincidence that they joined Club 103. All those in that club... it's really shifty how they died. Plus when they sang, 'I know you love someone else, but let that someone else be me; I will come back from my death just you wait and see...' I think it proves that this isn't over," a fan said.

Satireday staffer quits as line between reality and satire no longer exists

Damning resignation letter from writers show how far they spiralled months into satire-writing career

AANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM

Dear Editor,
Three weeks ago, I wrote a piece for your page on American conservatives, nay, white people. However, the piece had lost relevance before it could live out its originally predicted shelf life. Much like the vegetables now rotting due to the complete destruction of supply chains across the country, my satire piece perished before it could go from your email inbox to the presses.

My work is full of references and exaggerations. It tries to exaggerate reality just a little. Doesn't go too far, packs a few easter eggs from previous pieces which no one but six-and-a-half people notice. I used to think the humour would go just far enough to point out the glaring flaws in our world, but it would still be too ludicrous to come true one day.

I'm not sure if that sounds like humble bragging about how nuanced my writing is. If it does, I assure you, I have some gripe with the pieces I have been writing, and would like to spare zero praise for myself.

If I am succeeding at exaggerating my words just enough to show how severe some social or infrastructural issue is -- all under a thin veil of humour -- why does reality keep catching up to my "nonsensical" jokes? Am I not stretching my imagination further, or are the things I am writing magically coming true? Am I being possessed by the Shaka Laka Boom Boom pencil's evil twin?

When Covid-22, as we like to call it in Satireday, first broke out in the country, the idea of everyone going to work in hazmat suits cracked me up. "It'd be like a uniform. No one would be able to make fun of that one dude for wearing football boots to work every day," I thought, cracking myself up



at how ridiculous it would be if at the final stage, we'd all have to work inside a formless void in hazmat suits, avoiding any and all human contact.

Now we're all stuck at home, logging into some server I can't see, working with a few colleagues I have forgotten the faces (and for some, names) of. Time is barely moving, and I see little difference between my life and an everlasting void now.

The state appears convinced that the virus can be beat by sheer willpower as they proceed with reopening the economy. People are out buying iftar and PPE all from the same streets. The crackdown has become less focused on the virus, and more

on free speech.

In the USA, people are protesting for their right to haircuts, convinced that white privilege will ward off any disease.

I can't make this up anymore. The line between reality and satire has been erased, and we are now living in those ridiculous worlds Sukumar Ray used to craft in his poetry. There was one poem called *Ekushe Ain* where the government would fine people for walking on the streets. That state would also imprison poets and writers, cracking down on their freedom of speech.

Perhaps Sukumar Ray, too, was possessed by the Shaka Laka Boom Boom pencil's evil twin. Perhaps the line between reality and satire has always been blurred, and I am merely new to this craft.

A wise man once told me that the only way he can cope with journalism/writing as a career is by binge drinking, and I see his point now. With immeasurable regret, I have to hand in my resignation letter, because I believe there is nothing left for me to satirise.

This world has lost every sense of normalcy, and I hope those UFO sightings mean some higher power will come to rescue or destroy us. We'll either have a Koi Mil Gaya moment or a War of the Worlds moment -- at least there will be some excitement.

Warmest regards,
Correspondent who never decided on one particular byline.

This is the full text of the letter we received from one of our MANY writers. While she raises some valid points, we believe this may also be a negotiation tactic as we have not paid her in months.
-- Ed note



STAIRWAY TO CONTAGION

There's a feeling I get when I walk up the steps
And my spirit is crying for leaving.
In the shops I have seen
Shoppers crowding, obscene
And the wheezing of those who stand looking
Ooooooh it really makes you shudder...



A warrior scholar and his final prayer

BADIUZZAMAN BAY

GR EAT names are formed by great events. It's a truism that applies as much to the leaders and revolutionaries as to the pundits and intellectuals. Let us keep this in mind as we bid farewell to one of the best minds of our nation, Professor Anisuzzaman, 83, who died at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka on May 14, 2020. Newspaper headlines will tell you that he is the most high-profile victim of the coronavirus in Bangladesh till date. Personal tributes will offer little-known tidbits about the man behind the mountain that he was to everyone else. But history will remember him as someone whose superior knowledge could only be rivalled by his fierce love for his country, tested as it was by his activism during the great events that shaped his life as well as the course of the history of the land.

As a scholar, Professor Anisuzzaman could rightfully claim to have realised his full potential—as an activist, he was in the same ballpark as many great sociocultural reformers of his time. In the end, his was a life lived to its fullest. In his own words: "I wanted to be a teacher. In that I've achieved more than what I deserved. I wanted to be a lifelong learner. I tried to learn as much as I could. There were unexpected turns every now and then, but those were nothing compared to the love that I have received. I have no regrets with my life," he wrote in a column for Prothom Alo on the occasion of his 80th birth anniversary in 2017.

Professor Anisuzzaman was part of what many consider as Bengal's Golden Age, which produced some of the most defining moments of its history. He led a very active life, teaching, researching, writing, editing, attending seminars, and spearheading social and intellectual campaigns. He wrote profusely on the identity issues of Bengali Muslims and the Bengali community in Bangladesh, as well as language, politics, culture, education, religion, and society. He was also one of the individuals who played an instrumental role in creating the "grand narrative" of the nationalist history of Bangladesh. From a broader perspective, three of his achievements stand out: his participation in the Language Movement in 1952, his role as a member of the Planning Commission of the government-in-exile in 1971, and finally his leading role as a member of the committee that drafted the Constitution in Bangla, which was adopted as the official version on November 4, 1972.

Born on February 18, 1937 in Kolkata, Anisuzzaman moved to Khulna after the 1947 partition. He grew up in a

family that nurtured writing. His father, Dr ATM Moazzem, was a homeopathy practitioner who loved writing while his grandfather, Sheikh Abdur Rahim, was a journalist and writer. In a way, the transformation that the three generations of the family went through could be seen as representing the transformation of the Bengali Muslims in general—the grandfather supported Islamic exceptionalism and the 1905 Partition of Bengal, the father supported the movement leading to the creation of Pakistan along religious lines, and the son, disillusioned by its bloody fallout and the divisive politics promoted by the then government, resisted it.

As he grew up, during those tumultuous years of the newly carved out country, he actively campaigned for the recognition of Bangla as a state language, and shortly afterwards, became involved in left-leaning politics which played

1985-2003, 2005-08) and Chittagong (1969-85), and was involved in various capacities with a number of universities outside the country.

As a researcher, he was disciplined and methodical, so much so that his mentor Professor Abdur Razzaq, who had an abiding influence on him, once reportedly described him as the most disciplined researcher he had ever known. I remember attending a seminar at the Bangladesh National Museum where Professor Anisuzzaman delivered a lecture, on October 29, 2017. In simple, clearly articulated words, he presented a paper on "Muslims in Bengal (up to the 18th century): Plurality of Identity"—a subject that he explored in many other books and articles as well.

The paper was based on the premise that the idea of identity is more fluid and multi-layered than we generally tend to think. An individual has multiple

History will remember him as someone whose superior knowledge could only be rivalled by his fierce love for his country, tested as it was by his activism during the great events that shaped his life as well as the course of the history of the land.

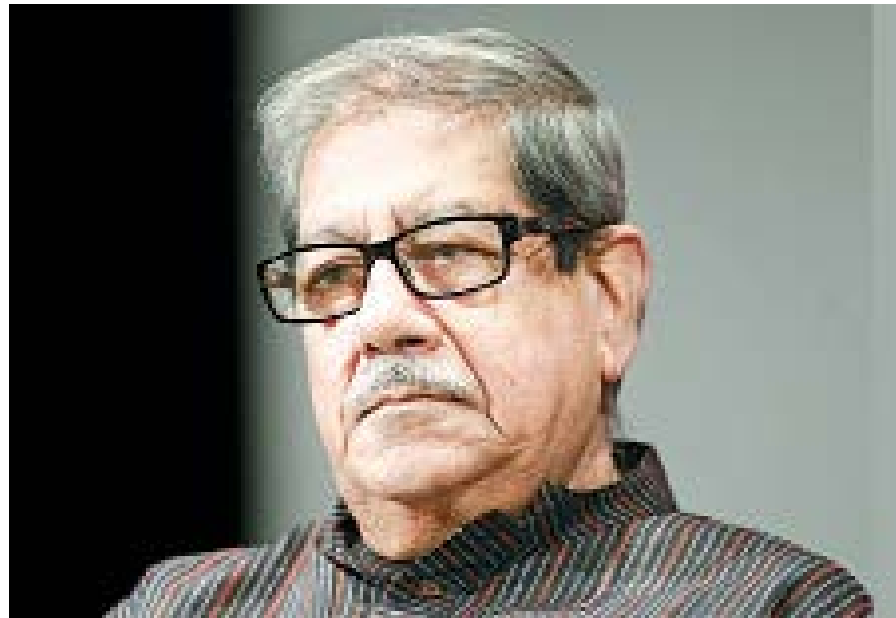
I remember listening in awe as he talked, standing on the dais for nearly an hour, showing a captivated audience why he was held in such high regard. The paper, preceded by a note on Professor Abdur Razzaq, was presented without so much as a brief interlude, a remarkable feat given his age and failing health at that time.

Professor Anisuzzaman's canon includes books of different genres but the bulk of his work consists of research books and scholarly articles, as well as books that he had edited, sometimes along with co-editors. Among his research projects, two deserve particular mention: *Muslim Manash O Bangla Sahitya* (1964), an assessment of the position of Bengali Muslims and the nature of their contributions in Bengali literature and Bengali history in general, and *Purono Bangla Gadya* (1984), an assessment of the grammatical, orthographical and literary conventions of Old Bangla prose as well as emerging literary trends and conventions. There is no denying that it was partly because of his exceptional academic prowess that he had been so popular with his students and fellow researchers.

After all that he achieved in his long life, could there still be something that he craved? There was one, and he said that himself: "I wasn't born on this land of Bangladesh but I do want to die here. This is my final prayer."

He would be happy to know that his final prayer was answered. There can't be a more befitting end to the life of a warrior scholar who gave his nation so much, in so many ways, only to get so much love and respect in return.

Badiuzzaman Bay is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*. Parts of the obituary are borrowed from an article written by the author in 2017. Email: badiuzzaman.bd@gmail.com



Professor Anisuzzaman (1937-2020)

a vital role in shaping his progressive worldview. This was evident in the subsequent years when he fought against Pakistan's sinister campaign against indigenous culture, took part in the 1969 mass uprising, the post-war movements against the war criminals, the 1990 anti-autocracy movement, and pretty much all the major sociopolitical developments in between.

But any obituary of Professor Anisuzzaman will be incomplete without an acknowledgement of the fact that, before he died, he was regarded as among the most well-known and respected Bangladeshi academics in international academic circles. His records as both a teacher and a researcher are enviable. In his long career, he taught Bangla in both universities of Dhaka (1959-69,

identities although he or she may choose one over the others. Likewise, he argued, the identity of the Bengali Muslims is complex and multi-layered. "When we identify a group of people as Bengali Muslim, we highlight only one aspect of their self-identity. But if we observe closely, we'll see that they contain multitudes," he said, stressing that plurality is an essential feature of our identity. He then drew on historical documents, accounts by contemporary writers, and literary sources to present a compelling picture of the diversity of Bengali Muslims in different ages in terms of their preference for language, attire, occupation, customs, and religious and political beliefs—which made them different not only from their Hindu counterparts, but also from each other.

Reducing vegetable growers' anxiety

Storage facilities can help them save their produce

SINCE the beginning of the countrywide shutdown on March 26, vegetable growers across the country have been incurring huge losses as many of them have not been able to sell their produce due to a lack of buyers and transport facilities. Those who could manage to sell their produce, had to sell them at very low prices. It has become difficult for the farmers to negotiate a fair price under the current situation, as buyers are not visiting the vegetable producing zones like they used to at normal times.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension, our farmers have produced 54 lakh tonnes of vegetables so far this fiscal year. Unfortunately, while vegetable production has increased in the country over the last few years, the much-needed storing facilities have not been developed. In a proper cold storage, vegetables such as pumpkins, tomatoes, brinjals, green chilies etc, can be stored from three weeks to three months. Therefore, increasing our storing capacity is very important to ensure that all the hard work of our farmers do not go in vain. With proper cold storage facilities in place, farmers would never have to sell fruits and vegetables at throwaway prices. If they do not get a fair price, they can store their produce and sell them in the lean season when the demand and price is high.

It is good to know that the Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM) has placed a project proposal to government to build 15 storage facilities in various parts of the country to solve the problem. We hope the proposal gets the government's approval. At the same time, private initiatives to build cold storages should also be encouraged. Besides, online platforms should be developed so that marginalised farmers can sell their produce at better prices. Since building cold storage units will need some time, what the government should do now to save the farmers from counting losses is to ensure transport facilities for them so that they can bring their produce to the big cities and sell them. It will also ensure a steady supply of vegetables, which are a crucial part of people's daily diet.

Herd mentality vs herd immunity



SHAMSAD MORTUZA

REMEMBER getting caught by your parents for trying out roadside pickles or tawdry coloured crunchy ice outside your school? Better even, remember getting caught by your spouse for devouring the

dessert despite your rising sugar levels, or for savouring the second serving of *kachchi* at a wedding despite your cholesterol? And remember how you tried to wiggle out of trouble by shifting the blame on someone else? In response, you must have heard the age-old taunt that haunt generations throughout the ages: "if someone else jumped off a building, would you jump too?" This psychology of following the mob—or "herd mentality"—is an evolutionary survival instinct that has helped mankind huddle together and avoid dangerous situations by running away or hiding from a common threat. Herd mentality is our inclination to remain in social groups. Hence when a new gadget hits the store, we desire to own it—not because it is the greatest gadget ever, but because everyone else is buying it. Does it mean we do not have individual choice while making decisions? History tells us, using the actions of others as the only guide without seeking information on our own can be very dangerous. Whimsical investment in shares following the mob is a case in point.

The last example also suggests that not all herding is a manifestation of cooperation. In biology, there is a concept called "selfish herd". A group of guppies will stick together thinking the predator will eat those in the periphery. A herd is formed completely out of the selfish desire of individuals, with no regard for the collective entity. Herding also benefits us as we can gather information about potential threats from one another.

The government decision to impose a lockdown herded us. We listened to the doctors, experts and lawmakers during this pandemic. We remained home under voluntary isolation or relaxed lockdown.

We were told that we are all potential vectors, carriers of the virus. If we come in contact with others, we will harm each other. Collective fear was instilled in us to stimulate our herd instinct. We became angry at those who are not deemed our own. We disowned the non-resident Bangladeshis coming from affected countries. We saw them as threats to our compact social grouping. In fact humans, unlike sheep, need two flocks: "one to belong to and make them comfortable and another to blame all of society's problems", according to author James Rozoff.

In the last two months, we have learned to readjust life, migrating some of our social activities online. We went live on Facebook, chatted using apps, found

go to a store, you get mobbed as if you are witnessing scenes from *Les Misérables*. Some of us heard it, and tried to reach out. Some of us pretended not to hear it, and tried to hoard essentials to secure our own.

As the disease gnaws away at our resources and reduces us to our bare selves, a new mantra is heard: "money before lives, lives before money." First, the garment workers were allowed to break the herd protocol. "If we don't open now, businesses will go away for good," we heard. The selfish herd at the core allowed the peripheral ones to become vulnerable to the disease that is zeroing in on us. Then other business houses followed. "Eid is the only time we make money," we heard. We allowed another

swerves now he endangers everyone on board, and if he does not, he will kill five people for sure.

I heard the Home Minister explaining the absence of police monitoring. He sounded rather helpless: "if people want to dive into water and drown, what can you do?" Yes, people want to feel alive before they die again. Wasn't it Freud who talked about death drives? If we are vectors like insects, we might as well jump into the fire. Besides, they want to be out there in the open; honk, shout, gibe at others. They want to breathe in polluted air or remain stuck in traffic jam to be alive.

If you think hard, you will see how a part of the herd is being driven to jump off the cliff. The selfish herd will stick to the core. The peripheral ones will attend funerals, take selfies in malls, or ride a bus. The chances are, if we allow some of the group to be exposed to the disease, then we may even attain herd immunity. The World Health Organization has let the secrets out: this disease is here to stay. It will be an endemic like HIV. The vaccines that are in the making will not reach a country like us before 2022. Even if they do, they will be exuberantly expensive, therefore not affordable. The logical thing to do is to let the body create its own antibody. Given the low mortality rate, the better option is to create self-resistance. Imagine how many of us will starve to death if there is no money to buy food. "Lives before money, or money before lives?"—that is the question. So what do we do? Sacrifice a certain part of the herd and buy time for the uncertain future or sacrifice uncertain amounts now, hoping for a certain recovery later? The trolley trouble returns.

The fear is collective. We are angry at the mob who have dared to break the lockdown because they are putting us all at risk. The fear is also individual. We at the core of the herd are selfish herding, hoping that the predator virus will get those who are out there. The situation is not unique. You see it unfolding in every country. Every leader is posed with the same dilemma.

At times, it is better simply to follow the herd.

Shamsad Mortuza is a professor of English, University of Dhaka (now on leave). Currently, he is Pro-Vice-Chancellor of ULAB. Email: shamsad71@hotmail.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Sexual violence still rampant

It is indeed disheartening to know that as the pandemic continues to spread, many innocent girls and women are falling victim to sexual violence. Though the virus was successful in limiting numerous things, it barely had an impact on sexual violence. There are plenty of reports that shed light on the growing number of rapes taking place across the nation. What is even worse is that many of the victims are minors. At a time when most of humanity is taking a blow from Covid-19, how can these perpetrators commit such atrocities? Apart from the rapes, domestic violence is also on the rise as many women are being tortured mentally and physically amidst the lockdown. It seems that our existing laws are not helping prevent such abuse. The authorities need to take stringent measures if we are to reduce the rate of violence against women.

Nadira Khan, Dhaka



Should Bangladesh defer LDC graduation?

DEBAPRIYA BHATTACHARYA and FAREHA RAIDA ISLAM

BA NGLADESH has attained considerable development progress in the past three decades. This has led it to enter a dual-graduation phase—moving out from low-income country to lower middle-income country group (World Bank classification) in 2015, and meeting all three criteria for exiting from the least developed country (LDC) group (United Nations classification) in 2018. Bangladesh willingly embraced its graduation journey as it added landmarks to its development milestones. However, the Covid-19 pandemic is amplifying the country's pre-existing vulnerabilities, and adding new challenges to the progress of the economy and society.

Covid-19 has been unfolding in Bangladesh at an alarming rate. As of May 15, 2020, 20,065 infections and 298 deaths have been reported, which are the highest numbers among all 47 LDCs. As the country struggles to address the so-called dilemma between saving lives and securing livelihoods, it is obvious that the economy in the coming years will go into a slump, manifesting in loss of jobs, income and savings. These adverse impacts of the pandemic will fall disproportionately on the traditionally "left behind" citizens, slowing down attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Thus, there are justified concerns whether the pandemic will jeopardise the smooth and sustainable transition of the largest LDC in the world. Should Bangladesh defer its LDC graduation, scheduled in 2024? The urgency of a response to this question is dictated by the upcoming triennial review of the United Nations Committee for Development Policy (UN-CDP), where Bangladesh's progress towards graduation will come up for scrutiny for the second time.

As is known, in order to graduate from the group, LDCs have to meet at least two of the following three criteria for two

consecutive triennial reviews: gross national income (GNI) per capita; human asset index (HAI), consisting of education and health indicators; and economic and environmental vulnerability index (EVI) based on a host of structural factors. Alternatively, a country can also graduate upon meeting the "income only" criteria by recording GNI per capita of USD 2,460. Bangladesh is likely to experience deterioration of all the indicators underwriting the three sets of graduation criteria in the coming years.

The GNI per capita of Bangladesh during the last review in 2018 was USD 1,274 (against the threshold of USD 1,230), which may be expected to stagnate, if not fall. Besides an upward estimation of the national income by 15 percent in 2015, three other factors which contributed towards attainment of the income threshold by Bangladesh were robust growth rate of gross domestic product (GDP), high inflow of remittances and stability of exchange rate. International financial institutions have already downgraded the forecast for GDP growth rate between 2-3 percent for the year 2019-20, and more pessimistically for the upcoming fiscal year. Remittance inflows (providing the differential growth between GNI and GDP) are already significantly down, and do not portend well because of the dampened oil price and return of our migrant workers. Due to the emerging weakness in the current account, not the least because of subsidence of apparel exports, the international exchange rate of the national currency may depreciate. All these three factors will be under pressure, and may report a downward trend in the coming years.

Regrettably, many of the six indicators of the human asset index of Bangladesh, three each from health and education components, will also decline due to the pandemic. The distress in our health sector has been chronic, with budget allocation for health being as low as less than one per cent of GDP. Although

maternal mortality and under-five mortality due to Covid-19 infections have been low, these indicators are expected to suffer in the coming months. Increased domestic violence against women are being reported. Pregnant women are opting for unattended deliveries and unsafe practices due to fear of being infected in hospitals. In addition, there is constrained access to antenatal and postnatal services, leading to severe consequences on women's health. Children under-five and newborns may be deprived of access to nutrition and emergency healthcare during the pandemic, which can lead to malnutrition and make them prone to stunted growth, infections and lethal illnesses.

In the education sector, gross secondary enrolment may fall as the poverty level increases, particularly in the rural areas, in the aftermath of the pandemic. Arguably, the gender parity index for gross enrolment at the secondary level will be most adversely affected as poverty escalates. Grassroots-level information indicates the possibility of higher dropout of female students as incidence of



IMAGE BY KAZI TAHSSIN AGAZ APURBO

not be reflected in the available data for the assessment of graduation criteria of the LDCs. However, the UN-CDP has recently adopted a broader assessment framework as well as country-specific risk analysis, to make an informed decision. The candidate countries are entitled to put up their views in written form, and CDP may also seek their advice regarding the graduation process. It will be a country by country decision, including the one on Bangladesh.

At the same time, a growing global sympathy for the LDCs is observed in view of the Covid-19 impact. The G20 has called for special support measures for these countries to help them counter the impact of the pandemic. If this trend gathers momentum, a systemic decision through a resolution at the United Nations may be taken to defer the graduation of all LDCs.

Nevertheless, Bangladesh will have to prepare its technical analysis soon. By staying in the group, Bangladesh may not only continue to enjoy the available preferences, but could also tap into new opportunities. On the other hand, by sticking to the graduation process, the country may use the Covid-induced situation as an opportunity to accelerate its preparation for graduation.

In the final analysis, deferring the graduation of Bangladesh from the LDC group will be a political decision to be taken by the government of the day. In part, it will be dictated by our emotions linked to the 50th anniversary celebrations of the country in 2021. It will also be associated with the development narrative we want to project—a victim of vagaries of nature or a resilient nation in the face of extreme adversities (or maybe both!). Regardless of the choice, Bangladesh will have to take a decision in this regard soon.

Debapriya Bhattacharya and Fareha Raida Islam are Distinguished Fellow and Programme Associate-Research at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, respectively.

As the country struggles to address the so-called dilemma between saving lives and securing livelihoods, it is obvious that the economy in the coming years will go into a slump, manifesting in loss of jobs, income and savings.

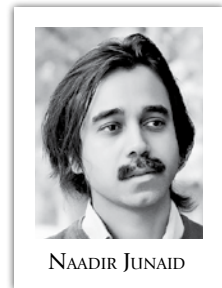
early marriages is on the rise.

Two of the eight Economic and Environmental Vulnerability Index indicators, namely, instability of exports of goods and services and instability of agricultural production, could become important for Bangladesh in the post-pandemic phase. Slackened demand in the global market for both manufactures and services originating from the LDCs is going to affect Bangladesh's export and remittance earnings. More importantly, if the global economy enters into a protracted recession, prospects for these two sectors will remain unstable, if not uncertain, in the near future.

Regarding agricultural production, it is to be seen how the current *aus* and the upcoming *aman* harvests fare in the country.

Paradoxically, during the review in February 2021, the impact of Covid-19 will

Are we praising the right films?



NAADIR JUNAID

WHEN did we last watch a formally-innovative Bangladeshi film that made a conscious attempt to confront and denounce a long-standing social problem of our country? And when did we last witness

people's huge enthusiasm to watch a film that did away with alluring ingredients and attempted to raise people's sociopolitical consciousness? Taking a look at influential films of world cinema makes us understand that good films incorporate thought-provoking content as well as innovative form. A socially-relevant story cannot instill critical consciousness into viewers if it is accompanied by traditional filmic devices that provide shallow entertainment.

Hirak Raajar Deshe and *Bhoot er Bhabishshat*, two Bangla films of West Bengal, draw amply on humorous elements. Yet, instead of trivial entertainment, these films provide piercing political critiques. In *Hirak Raajar Deshe*, apparently amusing dialogues in the form of rhyming couplets contain Satyajit Ray's acid wit. They jolt the audience and make them understand the sheer injustice that torments people within the rule of a ruthless tyrant. In *Bhoot er Bhabishshat*, discussions on filmmaking in the film's narrative and frequent shifts from narrative events to the conversation between two people disturb the spectator's passive immersion into the film. Because of its innovative form, *Bhoot er Bhabishshat* does not provide the viewers with the pleasure they usually obtain from watching a conventional film.

Satyajit Ray once wrote: "For the truly serious, socially conscious filmmaker, there can be no prolonged withdrawal into fantasy. He must face the challenge of contemporary reality, examine the facts, probe them, sift them and select from them the material to be transformed into the stuff of cinema." Contemporary Bangladeshi films made outside the dominant film industry are not informed by the above statement of this

much-revered Bengali filmmaker. In the past, films made in our country such as *Shurjokanya*, *Rupali Shaikat e*, *Shurjo Dighal Baari*, *Matir Moina* and *Rumway* came to grips with serious social issues, such as subjugation of women in patriarchal societies, dictatorial rule, exploitation of the underprivileged, harmful effects of religious orthodoxy, the rise of Islamist extremism etc. Instead of highlighting flamboyance and flashiness, the directors deployed new and creative cinematic

characters' direct looks at the camera, internal monologue, voice-over narration, references to real events, use of symbols, imaginative use of sound and music etc to explore various social and cultural aspects of post-independence Bangladesh.

Throughout *Ghuddi*, well-thought-out dialogues convey political critiques as well as artistic subtlety. In one scene, the internal monologue of the protagonist who was a freedom fighter becomes a sharp observation



Still from *Hirak Raajar Deshe*.

techniques to deal with urgent problems. These films, unlike certain contemporary Bangladeshi alternative movies, did not change reality into spectacle.

In another Bangladeshi film *Ghuddi*, we see a romantic relationship between characters, songs, and lighthearted scenes. Despite the inclusion of such customary elements of commercial cinema, the director also uses complicated strategies such as frequent mentions of movies in the narrative,

of contemporary reality: "I have been searching for something from the shattered remains of 1971 to today's mansions symbolising honour, power and wealth. What have I been looking for? I also fought in the Liberation War. What is my identity? Am I free now?" In another sequence, the film provides trenchant political criticisms through the dialogues of a young man: "An old shirt and it is badly torn. In 1947, the British gave the shirt to my father. Father did not throw it

away. He became very happy only by mending it. In doing so, he betrayed us silently." The young man also says: "History was written untruthfully. They taught us a distorted history. And all this was done deliberately. You have still kept everyone in the trap of a false history."

It is unfortunate that we do not come across such profound and socially-meaningful dialogues, nor do we see attempts at formal experimentation, in alternative films made in our country nowadays. Many of our alternative films are characterised by the presence of glamorous male and female performers, romantic plots, events containing sexual overtones, superficial dialogues, puerile humour, and attempts to popularise various aspects of the capitalist society, thereby making us suspect that they are made to cater to the mass market as well. If these films address social problems, they only show the depravity of a small office employee, or a village headman, or a petty hoodlum. Often, their criticisms do not seem to have any connection with realism and practicality. Therefore, these films cannot trouble the powerful people guilty of social injustice and exploitation. Instead of counteracting the dominant ideology, they serve to sustain the status quo by glamorising today's consumerist lifestyle.

However, such films have often received raves in our society and the directors are lauded for making such productions. It seems neither the critics nor the audience notice the lack of innovation and significant social messages in these films. Referring to the film audience of West Bengal, in an interview Satyajit Ray once said: "We have a fairly backward audience here, I must say, in spite of the film society movement and all that. If you consider the large audience, it's a backward audience, unsophisticated audience exposed to the commercial Hindi cinema more than anything else." Ray's remarks seem to be an apt description of the large audience of our contemporary society as well. If artistically-innovative and socially-responsible films are not shown and discussed regularly, people will not understand the importance of cinema as a social weapon and an art form. They continue to equate cinema with clichéd

stories of romantic relationships and cheap entertainment.

Recently, I came across a video on Facebook depicting a play performed by little boys and girls. To my sheer surprise, I observed that the children were talking about attraction towards the opposite sex, physical beauty, having a boyfriend or a girlfriend etc in an obnoxious way. Never have I seen less than 10-year-old children talking about such topics so grossly in a play or in a film. This video clearly shows the very unpleasant influence of the tasteless television dramas and films, even on the children in our present-day society. In the 1980s, children were so enthusiastic to watch a film like *Emil er Goenda Bahini* where many youngsters performed. That film inspired children to show compassion for caged birds and animals, write imaginative essays in magazines, and confront a criminal. In contrast, today's children of our society are mimicking distasteful dialogues used frequently in many television dramas and films.

In the past, well-made western films starring iconic performers such as Alec Guinness, Clark Gable, Doris Day, Gregory Peck, Audrey Hepburn, Rock Hudson, Gina Lollobrigida, Omar Sharif, Sophia Loren and Anthony Quinn were shown in our country in the cinemas and in BTV. Film societies regularly organised events to screen important films made by European, Latin American, African and Asian filmmakers. Nowadays, the above-mentioned names do not sound familiar even to many university students in our country. Many people do not bother watching masterpieces such as Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon* and Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*, nor do they lament the lack of films like Tareque Masud's *Matir Moina* and Zahir Raihan's *Jiban Theke Neya* in our country nowadays. If films marked by banality and flamboyance continue to be eulogised, many people in our society will not understand the nature of a good film. We cannot expect to witness cultivated aesthetic taste and critical consciousness among many people if run-of-the-mill films continue to be produced and praised.

Dr Naadir Junaid is Professor at the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, University of Dhaka.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING SUPPRESSED

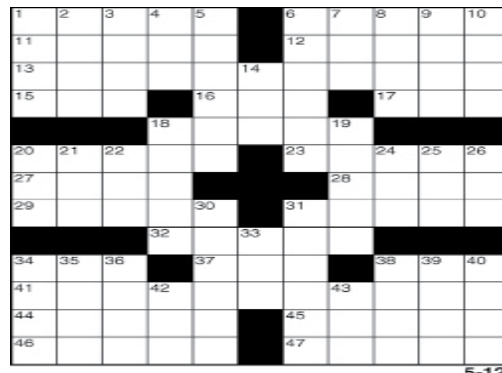
May 16, 1943

On this day in 1943, Nazi troops quelled the monthlong Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, in which Polish Jews, led by Mordecai Anielewicz and the Jewish Fighting Organization, resisted deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Scientist Curie
 - 6 Lock setting
 - 11 Potential oak
 - 12 Sports site
 - 13 Evaluation criteria
 - 15 Ready to go
 - 16 Cocoa holder
 - 17 Tennis court divider
 - 18 Poet's concern
 - 20 New Jersey player
 - 23 Drive off
 - 27 Turkey neighbor
 - 28 Stalactite setting
 - 29 "Stop being a wimp!"
 - 31 Dip a KP chore
 - 32 Absorb
- DOWN**
- 1 Atlas pages
 - 2 Lot unit
 - 3 Tooth part
 - 4 Auditor's org.
 - 5 Tooth part
 - 6 Sponge
 - 7 Curved path
 - 8 Noble gas
 - 9 Writer Rice
 - 10 Ultimate
 - 14 Cashew or pecan
 - 18 Less
 - 19 News summary
 - 20 Poorly lit
 - 21 Pitcher's stat
 - 22 Mover's truck
 - 24 Golf goal
 - 25 Cain's mother
 - 26 Was a pioneer
 - 30 Belarus neighbor
 - 31 Rainy day creation
 - 33 Narrow brooch
 - 34 Needle features
 - 35 Orderly
 - 36 Postmark part
 - 38 Ump's call
 - 39 Harp's kin
 - 40 Formerly owned
 - 42 Look upon
 - 43 Negative link

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.



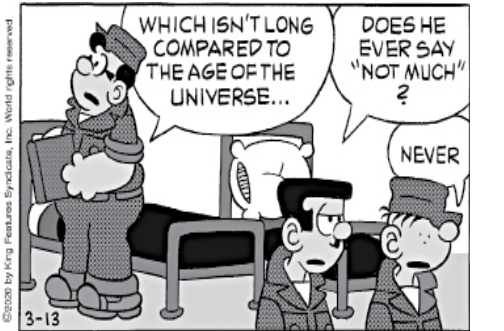
YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

PAGE TARA
TIMED ADAPT
ORATE RAZOR
LAZING RIGOR
ETON ROMNEY
TEN GARAGE
THATIS ORR
CRAYON ASIA
LIZ GAZING
EVITA CURSER
AGED TESS

BETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



A Birthday Tribute to Rabindranath

The Poet of Hope and Faith

A WEBINAR PRESENTATION BY FAKRUL ALAM FOR IGCC ON 9 MAY, 2020

Let me begin my speech in this birthday webinar organized by the High Commission of India in Dhaka to commemorate Rabindranath Tagore's 159th birthday by referring to his last public address, *Sabhyatar Sankat* or *Crisis in Civilization*. Read out on behalf of the unwell poet four months before his death on 14 April, 1941, it is an address made pessimistic initially, not

quote from the concluding section of the poet's speech, although all around him were "crumbling ruins of a proud civilization strewn like a vast heap of futility," he would not "commit the grievous sin of losing faith in Man" (*The Essential Tagore*, 215). Rabindranath goes on in his speech to envision "a dawn" emerging eventually, in all likelihood from the East, "where the sun rises," to allow humankind to reclaim their "lost heritage" (216).

Rabindranath Tagore thus offered to a world, even when fratricidal armies were clashing bloodily in one of the gloomiest phases of human history, a "ray of hope" through his vision of the future. This is why I believe that the theme chosen by the Indian High Commission of Bangladesh at this critical juncture of human existence is a particularly apt one—*tabiguru* offers us through this final address to the world, as he always did through his works and philosophical musings as well as his actions, a demonstration of his unwavering faith in humankind. Rabindranath, is ultimately the poet of hope, encouraging all of us to cope with public as well as personal crises, through his actions, as well as his words. Now that we are in a corona-infected world, confined to our homes, constricted in our movements, and leading cramped lives in shrinking, bordered spaces, more than ever, we need to remember on this birthday event what Rabindranath articulated at every turn of his eighty years in the planet—hope is what we can never abandon. For him, the sun will rise again and break through night, inevitably, naturally and invigoratingly. Surely, his father Maharshi Debendranath Tagore had been prophetic in naming him Rabindranath—for he is truly "Robi," a sun who can guide us in these, and all other times of crisis.

Personally, I am more addicted to Rabindranath's songs than any other

genres or creative outlets that streamed from him, and so let me focus in particular on one of his best-loved songs, "Anandodhara Bohiche Bhubane," (Happiness Streams Across the Universe), to see how he himself coped with personally difficult situations. The song was composed in 1908 at a time when Rabindranath had become overwhelmed by personal tragedies. His dear wife and unfailing helpmeet Mrinalini Devi became ill and died on 23 November, 1902; nine months later, his daughter Renuka died at the age of thirteen; Satis Roy, a young poet and teacher of his Shantiniketan school he was particularly fond of, died four months later of typhoid then raging in Bengal, and his youngest and dearest child, the thirteen-year old Samindra, died of cholera in November 1907. As Rabindranath's biographer Krishna Kripalani, puts it, it was as if God had "sent him, as He had done to His Servant Job of the Old Testament, a series of bereavements and afflictions" to try him (201). What he does in the song, however, is admonish himself for letting depression grip him when God seemed to be sending down every day reasons for living. As Rabindranath berates himself in the song, why was he sitting alone, submerged in the self, and "feeling forlorn," when day and night heavenly bliss was splashing across the universe, and the sun and moon beaming down forever? He should rather consider his sorrows "inconsequential," fill the void in his life with love for others, and act positively. This then is the kind of philosophical musing offering rays of hope to us that we can recall on his 159th birthday in this corona-infected year.

Let us remember at this time too that during these years of bereavement, Rabindranath was fully involved in all kinds of humanitarian and national causes and not only

writing poetry and staying depressed. After all, these were the years when he was running his fledgling school in Shantiniketan set up for altruistic purposes with his own money, taking an active part in the swadeshi movement till he got fed up with its excesses and increasingly communal bent, and working on schemes to help the peasants in his estates in east Bengal lead better lives.

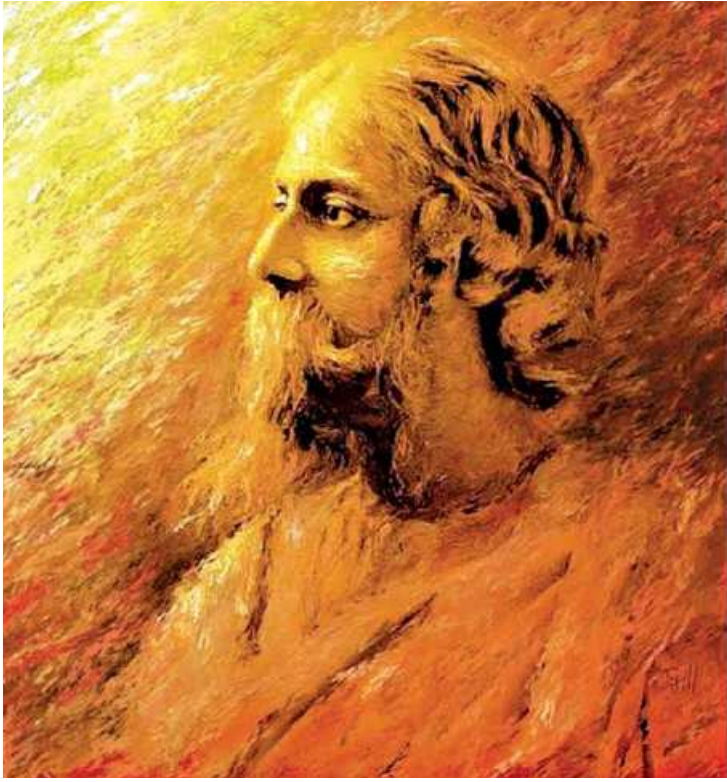
Always, Rabindranath was the activist coming up with ways of helping people cope with the consequences of the natural or man-made disasters periodically ravaging the subcontinent. An example that comes to my mind on this occasion is the way he decided to aid the victims of people suffering from the famine-like conditions created by floods in North Bengal in 1932. What he did on this occasion was adapt for performance the long poem he had first written in English titled "The Child" that he had subsequently recreated as the Bengali poem "Shisu Thirta" in 1932. This adapted version became a Kolkata fund-raising event organized to help distressed people. What we find then is Rabindranath typically contributing the way he could at a moment of crisis, yet again.

The Rabindranath I would like us to commemorate on this birthday webinar is therefore the activist, as well as the seer-poet, who offered again and again rays of hope for his people through his life and works. In a part of the book he translated as *Thoughts from Rabindranath Tagore*, he urges us to "meet the morning light" and not sit with our face "turned away" from it; in his essay on "Hindus and Muslims," he exhorts them to "demolish the barriers that have been built" in their minds; in another essay titled "The Tenant Farmer" he points out that no matter how difficult the situation is, one must not give up "the will to live"; in his breakthrough poem "Nirharer

Swapna-Bhanga" or "The Fountain's Awakening" he is rhapsodic in the final line because "the sun has finally found its way!" In another poem "Sabhyatar Prati" or "To Civilization" he declares that we must "burst through all barriers that hem us in and feel/This boundless universe's pulsating heartbeat!" In his last, death-bed poem, "Tomar Srishtir Poth" or "On the Way to Creation", he tells us to embrace "truth" and cleanse "our innermost being by its light". And in a song-lyric he wrote on one of his birthdays, "Hey Notun" or "O Herald of the New," he urges himself to be "Like the rising sun/ Burst through the heart of the void and unveil yourself/ Let life be revealed as triumphant."

Rabindranath Tagore, then, is forever our "robi" shining steadfastly over our part of the world, sending his rays of hope across the subcontinent, and even to other parts of the world, warming our hearts and minds with his poems, songs, plays, dance-dramas, fiction, prose, the institutions he created like Visva-Bharati or Sriniketan, and, indeed, through his exemplary life. His musings on the world of the spirit, harmony between peoples, the limitations of nationalism and the need for an international outlook; his thoughts on rural reconstruction, cooperative development, preserving the environment and education amidst nature are as relevant as ever. For us in Bangladesh, in particular, he has been an unending source of inspiration and a sustaining force. For our two nations, of course, he is a bond that is permanent. On this birthday webinar, being organized at a time when our people are trying to cope with the crisis brought about by Covid-19, we know that he is a ray of hope we can turn to and be inspired by as we move on to better days and a brighter future.

Fakrul Alam is UGC Professor, Department of English, University of Dhaka.



only by the shadow cast on the whole world by the seemingly all-engulfing Second World War, but also by the colonial arrogance on display then. But for Rabindranath, though the situation was grim, and though misery, misunderstanding and violence seemed to cloud the horizon, hope was not something to be forsaken, even in an apparently apocalyptic situation. To

Rabindranath Tagore and Jatragan

TAPAN BAGCHI

Rabindranath Tagore's (1861-1941) childhood and adolescent memories of stage performance involve both *Jatra* and theatre. His elder brother Jyotirindranath Tagore (1849-1825) had composed a play called *Sarojini* (1875) in the fashion of a *jatra* alongside burlesques like *Kinchit Jogajog* (1872) and *Hathat Nabab* (1884) and plays like *Purushbikram Natak* (1874) and *Alik Babu* (1900). Jyotirindranath's *Sarojini* was performed by professional *jatra* artists and the show took place inside the Jorasanko Thakurbari. *Jatra* shows were popular during Tagore's time and Rabindranath as a child had first-hand experience of watching them. Though generally children were not allowed to be audience to those, there was one exceptional occasion when they were allowed to watch a *jatra* named *Nal Damayanti* based on the Mahabharata. In his memoir titled *Chelebela* Tagore recalls his immaturity and his experience of watching an incomplete *jatra* performance.

Tagore himself never composed any *Jatrapala* per se, neither was any of his plays except *Bisarjan* ever performed by any *jatra*-group. But the influence of indigenous drama or *jatra* can be easily traced in many of his plays. By adding various elements of *jatra* he had endowed his plays with a novel significance. It is often very difficult to differentiate between a *jatra* and a stage play by looking at their scripts alone. But there are huge differences between the stage conventions used by the two. A stage-play is invariably influenced by Western traditions. On the other hand, *jatra* employs Bengal's unique indigenous dramatic traditions. A close analysis reveals that the styles of writing used by the two are also distinct. In his plays Tagore nurtured both *jatra* and Bengal's own consciousness towards theatrical tradition. From the memoir of Pramathanath Bishi (1901-1985) one comes to know that Tagore himself considered writing *jatras*:

The success of our *jatra* performances prompted Rabindranath to write *jatra* too. One day he told me, "see, I am thinking of penning *jatra*." I said, "all avenues of literature have your footprints; won't you leave a few by-lanes for apprentices like us?" I don't know what he had thought after I finished my words. But after some thinking he replied, "alright, go." As if to say "I am sparing that for you." (Pramathanath Bishi, *Rabindranath O Shantiniketan*, Visva-Bharati Publishing Dept., Shantiniketan, 1372, p.181)

The character of Bibek (conscience) which

is an integral part of *jatra* conventions, can be found in Tagore's plays too. In plays like *Chirakumar Sabha* (1907), *Sharadotsav* (1908), *Raja* (1910), *Achalayatan* (1912), *Dakghar* (1912), *Falguni* (1916), *Muktadhara* (1923), *Raktakarabi* (1926), *Rather Rashi* (1926), *Tapati* (1930) he used parables and *uktigeet* (songs sung in *jatra* that begin by quoting from others) akin to the songs sung by Bibek and Niyati (fate) in *jatra*. Characters in Tagore's plays who may be said to parallel Bibek are Akshay in *Chirakumar Sabha*, Thakurdada in *Sharadotsav*, Baul and Pagol in *Raja*, Dadathakur in *Dakghar*, Andhabaul in *Falguni*, Dhananjoy Bairagi in *Muktadhara*, Bishu Pagal in *Raktakarabi*, Bipasha in *Tapati*, Aparna in *Bisarjan*, the poet and the hermit in *Rather Rashi* etc.

He never felt the need to borrow a character representing conscience from the Western



traditions. Little doubt that Tagore created the characters akin to Bibek in his plays treading on the path of a thousand-year old Bengali dramatic tradition. Not just the character of Bibek, but researcher Naren Biswas believes that even Aparna's character in *Bisarjan* is a "centenary edition of Bibek in *jatra*" (Naren Biswas, *Prasanga: Sahitya - Sanskriti*, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 1989, p. 152.) Tagore's commitment to tradition endows a unique richness to his plays. Tagore could never accept the westernized concept of a stage for his plays. He explained his views as:

"The stage inside the mind of a thinker has no death of space. Magicians weave scenes there. Such a stage, such scene is the destination of a playwright; no imitated stage, no spurious scene

can fit the imagination of a poet" (Rabindranath Tagore, 'Rangamancha', *Rabindra Rachanabali*, Vol. 5, Visva-Bharati, Kolkata, Reprint, 1974 (Bhadra, 1381), pp. 451-52).

Lyrical-tendency in Tagore's plays is an integral part of his style. But in the original performances we notice an abundance of music and songs. Especially in *Krishnajatra* music is used as a major element.

Though Tagore got his idea from the character of Bibek in *jatra*, he made his characters different from the conventional figure. Thus, we find Thakurda in *Sharadotsav* as a playmate of the boys too. In the play *Raja* the characters of Baul and Pagal were added. Moreover, in the character of Panchak in *Achalayatan*, one can trace the effects of *jatra*. In the play *Tapati*, Tagore moved closer to Bengal's indigenous theatrical style i.e. *jatra* by

opting out the use of backdrop.

Tagore not only recognized the importance of *jatra*, but he also accepted it alongside his own theatrical ideas. We can consider Kabi (poet) and Sannyasi (ascetic) in *Rather Rashi* as characters created out of the influence of *jatra*. The character of Andha Baul (the blind minstrel) in *Falguni* also reminds us of Bibek of *jatra*. In fact, he is a more intense form of Bibek. We can then very well understand that even Andha Baul can be a guide to life, kindling the rays of hope by rectifying errors of life.

It is not difficult to discover similarities between Tagore's dance-drama and the narrative opera style of *jatra*. Presence of dance in *jatra* is a natural tendency. But even after coming across the era of narrative opera, we find that in the modern era Tagore retains that dance tradition.

If we consider the aspect of theatrical sensibility, we can find remote similarities between Tagore's plays and *jatra*. Issues prominent in *jatra* like the conflict between good and evil, triumphs of morality, religion and humanity also find apt modern expressions in Tagore's plays.

There is no denying the fact that as a playwright Tagore is original and modern. But he had also proudly acknowledged that he had been influenced by the thousand-year old tradition of *jatra* in Bengal. And the conventional Bibek of *jatra* has been converted to indispensable characters in his plays. The portrayal of stoicism in *jatra*'s Bibek and his invocation to pronounce the revelation while being outside the plot—all have been rejected by Tagore to reconstruct his own version of Bibek considering the need of time. In this way by simultaneous acceptances and rejections Tagore has enriched his creative treasure.

"Atithi" is a famous short story by Tagore. Its success as a motion picture is also reputed. The hero of this story becomes a companion to a boat-riding troubadour circus group. In the story the reader gets to know about various folk performances like *jatra*, *panchali*, poets' assemblies and dance shows that were important components of contemporary village fairs.

Tagore included the context of *jatra* in his novels as well. We get more references of *jatragan* in the novel *Noukadubi*. A conversation between Kamala, Shailo, and Umesh portrays an incident prior to the beginning of a *jatra* show.

Tagore firmly believed that *jatra* can be used effectively as a medium of public education. Hence, he had introduced various features of *jatra* in his plays. He even thought of propagating national history and tradition through such native performances. He believed that a *jatra* can have more impact on the mass than books.

Tagore realized the value of *jatra* and considered it as Bengal's cultural heritage. He considered this public medium of education as a chief implement for cultural development. Therefore, he had developed plans to patronize *jatra*. Tagore understood how *jatra* is connected to our roots, and hence he showed strong inclination towards this dramatic form of folk literature.

Tapan Bagchi is a poet and Folklorist of Bangladesh. He is also a Deputy Director at Bangla Academy, Dhaka. Translated by Swati Roy Choudhury, an Assistant Professor of English at Mankar College, Burdwan, India.

TOOTHPASTE TRIP SIDELINES AUGSBURG COACH

Augsburg coach Heiko Herrlich will have to sit out the Bundesliga resumption this weekend after breaking quarantine rules to go and buy a tube of toothpaste. The 48-year-old was to have made his debut as in Saturday's game with Wolfsburg after a two-month wait when the sport was shut down because of the coronavirus. "I made a mistake by leaving the hotel," admitted Herrlich who said he went to a supermarket to buy toothpaste and skin cream. "In this situation, I didn't live up to my position as a role model for my team and the public." Herrlich, who underwent treatment for a brain tumour in 2000, admitted: "I'm a risk patient, to be precise. Even if I have followed all hygiene measures both when leaving the hotel and otherwise, I cannot undo this."

--AFP



Bundesliga returns with world watching

REUTERS

Bundesliga teams will be allowed up to five substitutions per match when it restarts on Saturday after the coronavirus stoppage, while teams will be relegated provided the season is completed, the German Football League (DFL) said on Thursday. Short-term venue changes will also be permitted if health reasons dictate and the season will continue beyond its rescheduled finish date of June 30 and into July if necessary, the DFL said following a general assembly.

WHAT TO WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

Borussia Dortmund v Schalke 04

Live from 7:30 pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

Dusseldorf v Paderborn

Live from 7:30 pm

Eintracht Frankfurt v M'gladbach

Live from 10:30 pm

TOP FIVE

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Bayern Munich	25	17	4	4	55
Dortmund	25	15	6	4	51
RB Leipzig	25	14	8	3	50
M'gladbach	25	15	4	6	49
Leverkusen	25	14	5	6	47



A picture taken on Thursday shows love locks on a fence in front of the Signal Iduna Park, the home of Borussia Dortmund, ahead of the return of the Bundesliga today.

PHOTO: AFP

The Bundesliga will be the first major European league to resume when it gets going following a two-month break due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second tier will also get underway. All matches will be played behind closed doors, and progress will be watched around Europe. Doubts have already surfaced after second tier Dynamo Dresden's entire squad were quarantined by the local health

authority following two positive tests, forcing their first two games to be postponed. However, when three players at Cologne tested positive, only the trio were isolated. Under German law, the final decision in such cases lies with local health authorities. Football's rule-making body IFAB ruled earlier this month that teams could make five substitutions instead of three

as a temporary measure but said the final decision lay with competition organisers. The DFL became the first major league to implement the change which is designed to help teams cope with fixture congestion. The DFL said that all but one of its 36 member clubs voted in favour of maintaining relegation. No decision was taken on what would happen if the season had to be called off for health reasons.

Recorded crowd in lieu of roars

AGENCIES

Broadcaster Sky is offering viewers the option of watching Bundesliga matches with recorded crowd noise, including singing, when the league resumes without spectators on Saturday.

Sky said viewers could choose to watch the matches with natural sound, which is likely to be shouts of players and coaches or opt for an "alternative audio with a recorded stadium atmosphere".

Unfortunately, the spectacle of the Rivierderby will be missed today with no flares or chants expected inside the stadium. There will certainly be no deafening roar, either after a goal is scored or from the mouths of lions as once was the case in a 1969 Revierderby.

Their rivalry had grown immeasurably as Dortmund rose up and took a slight upper hand after decades of being dominated.

After Visiting Schalke took the lead, a fan invasion led to police storming the field with their dogs, who ended up biting Schalke's Friedel Rausch and Gerd Neuser.

Both teams met again in January 1970, and the Dortmund players found a warning when they strode onto the field -- four lions rented from a nearby safari park.

'I can win the most slams'

REUTERS

Novak Djokovic believes he will win the most Grand Slams and become the longest-reigning World No. 1 before he retires. The 32-year-old Serb has 17 Grand Slam titles to his name -- two behind Rafa Nadal and three fewer than

Roger Federer -- and said he has no doubt in his ability to overtake the other members of the so-called 'Big Three'. "I'm always very confident," the current World No. 1 said in an interview on In Depth with Graham Bensinger. "I believe I can win the most slams and break the record for longest number one. Those are definitely my clear goals."

Djokovic was in imperious form before the coronavirus pandemic brought the circuit to a halt in early March.

Swiss great Federer also owns the record for total number of weeks at number one, with 310, and consecutive weeks at the top position, with 237, compared with Djokovic's 282 and 122. "I don't believe in limits. I think limits are only illusions of your ego or your mind," he said.

Djokovic spoke at length about how he almost quit the game after falling in straight sets to unseeded Benoit Paire at the Miami Open in 2018. He also told tales about surviving bombings in his native Serbia in 1999.



'No plans to lift restrictions on sporting activities'

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite easing restrictions on business and social activities amid the extended general vacation, the government is not yet planning to lift restrictions on the country's sporting activities.

"At the moment, there is no situation to participate in any competitions or tournaments as sporting activities are suspended. If players contract the virus during practice or training, it can be dangerous," Zahid Ahsan Russel, state minister for youth and sports, told The Daily Star on Thursday.

On March 16, the ministry released a circular instructing all national sports



After being closed for more than a month and a half, the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium has been opened as restrictions on businesses around the country are slowly eased. The sports shops are seeing a decent number of customers, but safety measures are apparently very lax.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Dhaka Premier League after Eid-ul-Fitr. "There may be demand from the sports arena, but for the sake of the people the government does not have any plan to relax restrictions at the moment," Russel said. "Some businesses may remain open to keep the economy running but all schools, colleges, universities, government offices are closed. If we want to resume sports, how will athletes gather in the capital without transport facilities?"

Replying to a query, the sports minister said: "It is not possible to set a timeframe to restart sport because we can't predict the trend as sometimes it [rate of infection] rises and falls."

Russel also said that some federation officials communicated with him to ask to resume competitions, but he told them to provide concrete proposals.

"Football has proposed whether they can resume it in isolation [without spectators] after testing for Covid-19. I told cricket and football authorities to submit their plans as to how they want to organise their leagues. If they need to do it, they can do it step by step but they have to let us know about their steps and we will check out plans and think of whether to approve any proposals," said Russel.

Youth and sports secretary M Akhter Hossain said that they are for not thinking of resumption of sports activities anytime soon.

"No directive regarding sporting activities may come until the end of the general vacation [May 30]. No discussion regarding this has taken place," Hossain told The Daily Star on Thursday.

We have already sought Tk 2 crore more allotment from the finance ministry. If we get approval, we will bring another 2000 athletes under the assistance programme. In this case, we may meet the demands of different federations in near future.

ZAHID AHSAN RUSSEL
STATE MINISTER FOR YOUTH AND SPORTS

federations to suspend activities. Two months since that declaration, there is already disagreement among stakeholders over whether to resume. Most Premier League clubs want the season ended without any more competition but footballers are opposed to that idea.

Meanwhile, the Cricket Welfare Association of Bangladesh have demanded the resumption of the



Paul Pogba (R) and some of his Manchester United teammates, including Victor Lindelof (L) and Andreas Pereira, were pictured training for the second time this week at a cricket club in Cheshire yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Spartan issues apology to Tendulkar

AFP, New Delhi

Indian great Sachin Tendulkar has settled a lawsuit with an Australian but maker he accused of failing to pay him under a licensing agreement.

Spartan Sports group apologised to Tendulkar for using his name and image after he terminated a deal with them, according to a joint statement.

Tendulkar claimed millions in damages in a lawsuit filed last year. The statement did not say there was a financial deal in the settlement.

The company acknowledged that "Mr Tendulkar has had no association with Spartan since 17 September 2018."

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার		বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ	
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়		নারায়ণপাড়া	
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি			
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০১/২০২০-২০২১			
তারিখ: ১৪/০৫/২০২০খ্রিঃ		০৫/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ	
১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া থানা পুলিশের ২০২০-২১ অর্থ সালে নিয়মিত আইসিআর/পার্শ্ব বর্ষিক মোসামকালের টিকানার নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে পবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট/২০০৮ অনুসারে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে।		১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া থানা পুলিশের ২০২০-২১ অর্থ সালে নিয়মিত আইসিআর/পার্শ্ব বর্ষিক মোসামকালের টিকানার নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে পবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট/২০০৮ অনুসারে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে।	
১	মহাপত্র/বিভাগ	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।	
২	ক্রয়/সেবার শর্তাবলীর নাম ও জেলা	পুলিশ সুপার, নারায়ণপাড়া।	
৩	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখ	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, তারিখ ১৪-০৫-২০২০খ্রিঃ।	
৪	দরপত্রের বিধি	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের জন্য নারায়ণপাড়া থানা পুলিশ বাহিনীর জন্য জরুরি নং-১৬ এর প্রস্তুতকৃত অনুযায়ী মাল্যমান সর্বোচ্চ।	
৫	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)।	
৬	ব্যাংক ও অফিসের ঠিকানা	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার কর্তৃক ব্যাংক বরাদ্দ হতে।	
৭	দরপত্র দাখিল করার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৫/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ ১৭.০০ ঘটিকায় অফিস চলাকালীন সময় (ট্রাফিক লাইট ব্যতীত)।	
৮	দরপত্র দাখিল করার শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হতে ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।	
৯	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।	
১০	দরপত্র দাখিল করার স্থান	১) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া, ২) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, পুলিশ কলেজ (তুন্ডুয়া রোড সাম্মানী পাড়া)।	
১১	দরপত্র দাখিল করার স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া।	
১২	দরপত্র দাখিল করার স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া।	
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিল করার স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, নারায়ণপাড়া।	
১৪	দরপত্র দাখিল করার স্থান	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখের সাথে প্রকিউরমেন্টের নম্বর (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকে) দরপত্র ব্যতীত খোলা হবে।	
১৫	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখ	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখের সাথে প্রকিউরমেন্টের নম্বর (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকে) দরপত্র ব্যতীত খোলা হবে।	
১৬	বাসসীকৃত ক্রয়/সেবার মোসামকাল	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।	
১৭	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখ	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।	
১৮	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখ	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।	
১৯	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখ	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।	
২০	দরপত্রের আকার নং ও তারিখ	১১ নং নারায়ণপাড়া, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ বিভাগ।	

PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT **BSRM** building a safer nation

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

Trump threatens to cut bilateral ties with China

Beijing asks Washington to 'meet halfway', cooperate in fight against pandemic

AFP, Beijing

China yesterday urged the United States to meet it halfway and strengthen cooperation in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic after President Donald Trump threatened to sever bilateral ties.

Relations between the world's two largest economies have deteriorated in recent weeks, with both sides trading barbs over the origins of the virus that has killed more than 300,000 people.

"To maintain the steady development of China-US relations is in the fundamental interests of the people in both countries, and is conducive to world peace and stability," said foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian at a press briefing.

"At present, China and the US should continue to strengthen cooperation against the epidemic, defeat the epidemic as soon as possible, treat patients, and restore economy and production. But it requires the US to meet halfway with China."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Shoppers queue up at the entrance to Suvastu Nazar Valley shopping complex in the capital's Shahajadpur yesterday. An employee of the mall is measuring their body temperature with an infrared thermometer before allowing them in to check if anyone is showing symptoms of Covid-19. Amid a countrywide shutdown, the government allowed shopping malls to operate on a limited scale from May 10 ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr.

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

New loan agreement with India



SC Bose, younger brother of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, calls on Bangabandhu on May 16, 1972.

May 16, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN



TK 1000 CRORE EMERGENCY PROGRAMME

The government is preparing an emergency reconstruction and development programme worth Tk 1,000 crore to normalise economic activities and increase overall production. It is hoped that if the programme can be implemented properly the overall production in the country will reach pre-war levels. This two-year

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Debesh Roy passes away

STAR REPORT

Veteran Bengali novelist Debesh Roy -- a fierce fighter against communalism who was conferred the prestigious Sahitya Akademi award for his novel 'Teesta Parer Brittanto' -- died at a private hospital in Kolkata late on Thursday night, his family members said.

Roy was 84 and he is survived by his son.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

With law enforcement agencies now busy tackling the coronavirus situation, drug dealers have seemingly taken advantage of the consequent reduction in monitoring and become active again in different spots of the capital.

These correspondents learnt this after visiting some spots and

LAX SURVEILLANCE AMID COVID-19 CRISIS

Narcos active again

talking to police and Rab sources.

After the countrywide shutdown was enforced to contain the spread of Covid-19, police, Rab, and the Department of Narcotics Control have hardly raided any spots where drugs are traded unless getting specific information. Besides, they also stopped searching suspected people for the sake of health safety.

The number of drug cases has

decreased significantly.

Earlier, around 1,400 drug cases were filed with 50 police stations in the capital on average each month, following regular drives. But in April, the number came down to just 123, according to data of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Mohammadpur's Geneva Camp, a densely populated area and home to around 40,000

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

2 killed in 'shootouts'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged drug peddler was killed in a "gunfight" with Rab at Banani in Dhaka early yesterday.

The dead Abdul Jalil, 45, an inhabitant of Banani's Korail Slum, was accused in at least 16 cases with different police stations, said Md Kamruzzaman, an assistant director of Rab-1. The Rab official said

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING MAY 16

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
3:47	12:45	5:00	6:38	8:00	
JAMAAT	3:57	1:15	5:15	6:48	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MAY	SEHRI	IFTAR
22	16	3:46	6:38
23	17	3:46	6:38
24	18	3:46	6:39

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

করোনা থেকে বাঁচি স্বাস্থ্য বিধি মেনে চলি

- বাংলাদেশে কোভিড-১৯ প্রতিরোধ ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ এবং অর্থনৈতিক কর্মকাণ্ড ক্রমাগত চালু করার সুবিধার্থে বিভিন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠান, স্থাপনা ও পেশার জন্য এক গুচ্ছ কারিগরি নির্দেশনা প্রস্তুত করা হয়েছে।
- স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক দায়িত্ব প্রাপ্ত একদল জনস্বাস্থ্য বিশেষজ্ঞ চীন ও অন্যান্য দেশের সংশ্লিষ্ট কারিগরি নির্দেশনা অনুসারে নির্দেশনাগুলি প্রস্তুত করেছেন। স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েব সাইট (www.dghs.gov.bd) থেকে এগুলো ডাউনলোড করা যাবে।
- কারিগরি নির্দেশনাগুলি সর্বস্তরে একান্তভাবে প্রতিপালন করার জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট সবাইকে পরামর্শ দেয়া হলো।

মনে রাখবেন আপনার সুরক্ষা আপনারই হাতে

স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর
স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়

SHWAPNO HOME DELIVERY

YOU CALL FROM YOUR PHONE WE DELIVER AT YOUR HOME

Nearest outlet: Get the contact number of your nearest outlet from the list below

Call the number: Call the number to place your order

Confirm the order: A Shwapno representative will receive your call and confirm the order

Delivery: Within a few hours you will receive the delivery at your door step.

Make Payment: Through Ecash, Debit/Credit card or cash on delivery

DHAKA ZONE					
• GULSHAN 1	• GULSHAN 2	• GULSHAN CENTER	• BANANI 11 BRIDGE	• BANANI BAZAR	• UTTARA 11
01847265126 01313054781	01313055109 01730028498	01847265328 01401188123	01313054869 01730028440	01401188181 01847265127	01992045746 01313054614
• UTTARA 3	• UTTARA 5	• MIRJOLA	• BACHINDHARA	• DHAMMONDI	• GREEN ROAD
01999081054 01732752457	01992045848 01847265211	01999081200 01316802384	01991093331 01313054552	01999081013 01313054852	01401188101 01951076512
• JAGATOLA	• LAHERABAD HOUSING	• BISHAMNAPUR	• DHAKA HOUSING	• MIRPUR 1	• MIRPUR 10
01313055426 01401188184	01992045851 01847265144	01847265234 01795135364	01999081118 01401188145	01999081043 01313054545	01992045850 01724531660
• MIRPUR 12	• MIRPUR 11	• WEST KAPUR	• KHILGAON	• BANASHREE C	• MALIAD
01999081072 01401188151	01401188100 01847265277	01999081017 01847265143	01313055064 01313054995	01992045861 01970024457	01999081174 01847265320
• MOHANGAR	• BASHARD	• AZIMPUR	• GOPIBAE	• RAJMOONROAD	• WARI
01313055428 01847265219	01999081145 01847265280	01847265114 01313055410	01847265148 01847265248	01401188190 01313054591	01992045854 01313055340
SYLHET ZONE					
• UPOSHOHOR	• PACHANTOLA	• ZINDAGAZAR	• SHROGANI	• AMBARKHANA	• SYLHETGAZE
01999081104 01313054539	01999081106 01787688819	01999081103 01313054793	01313055067 01708138480	01847265341 01313054890	01999081107 01313054541
CHATTogram ZONE		• HALISHOHOR	• GOLPHAR	• CUMILLA ZONE	• CUMILLA SPC
		01999081039 01708138451	01313055071 01847265136	01313055068 01313054645	01401188170 01313054643
• JOYDEPUR		• NARAYANGANJ	• NAGAR	• SEKRI	
01401188175 01401188120		01847265223	01847265271	01313055031 01708333886	

*Delivery charge applicable
*Conditions apply