



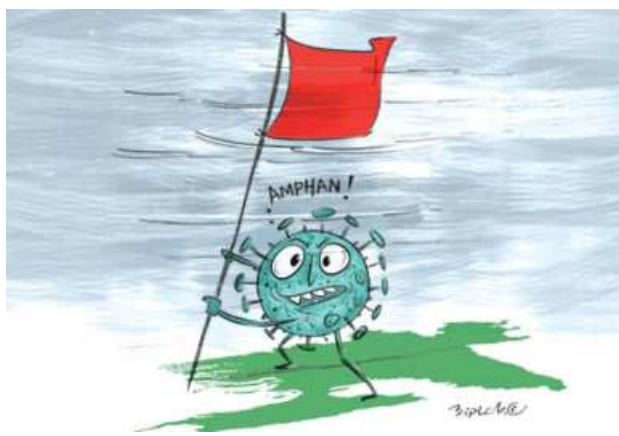
The Daily Star



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Bracing for Amphan fury

Landfall this evening; thousands hunker down in shelters to evade the brunt of one of the strongest cyclones formed in the Bay



PINAKI ROY and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Thousands of people have been moved to storm shelters in 19 coastal districts of the country as Cyclone Amphan is set to make landfall this evening with heavy rainfall and storm surges above 10 feet.

"This is one of the strongest cyclones formed in the Bay of Bengal and will hit the coast with a wind speed of around 160 miles per hour if it does not become weaker or change its course," Dr Samarendra Karmakar, former director of Bangladesh Meteorological Department, told this newspaper.

It will batter coastal areas of Bangladesh as well as India, said

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Waves crashing into the Patenga Beach in Chattogram yesterday as the country braces for cyclone Amphan. Inset, people from a char in Bholas Charfassion upazila are being taken to a cyclone shelter in the upazila town on a trawler.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN, STAR



Tide could be the key factor

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Already downgraded to Category 4, Cyclone Amphan could weaken further by the time it makes landfall close to the western Sundarbans, experts said yesterday.

They, however, expressed concern that it might still wreak serious havoc on Bangladesh as a storm surge, depending on the tide.

Md Shah Alam, former director of Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), said the wind speed of the cyclone would certainly be less at landfall than at the sea.

He said the storm surge would depend on when the cyclone makes landfall -- during high tide or low tide.

Another point of concern was that the cyclone still continued to cover a large swathe of the funnel-like Bay, pushing waters northwards, which would only worsen the storm surge around the time it hits, Shah Alam added.

Quamrul Hasan, the BMD forecast officer on duty, said the main feature

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BANGLADESH UPDATE



1,251 New cases in 24hrs



25,121 Total cases



370 Deaths



4,993 Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE



321,567 Deaths



4,938,701 Total cases

Tobacco users, smokers at higher risk

Says DGHS; 1,251 more infected, 21 die

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The risk of smokers contracting Covid-19 is two times higher than non-smokers, said Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

She said this yesterday at the regular online briefing on the coronavirus pandemic and suggested that people refrain from using tobacco.

"Tobacco damages the lungs and creates breathing complications. The risk of contracting the diseases becomes twice as high," she said.

Quit smoking and remain healthy, she suggested.

According to WHO, Covid-19 is an infectious disease that primarily attacks the lungs. Since smoking impairs lung function, it is harder for the body to fight off coronavirus.

It further said that tobacco is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory disease and diabetes.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

'Nobody can feel our pain'

With no salaries, majority of teachers at private schools, colleges suffer in silence before Eid

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU

This will be the first Eid for Arafat Haque, a lecturer of Demra University College, when he will not be able to buy anything new for his seven-year-old boy.

A non-MPO teacher, Arafat did not get salaries of March and April but his colleagues who enjoy the benefits under the MPO drew salaries on time and they will even get the festival bonus for Eid-ul-Fitr.

Under the monthly payment order (MPO), teachers get 100 percent basic salary from the exchequer with some house rent and medical allowance.

"I am running my families by borrowing from relatives and friends but that too will not be possible in the near future. We are teachers -- we cannot just stand on the roads asking for money, or start selling vegetables," Arafat said.

According to Bangladesh Teachers Association President Nazrul Islam Rony, the situation of more than two lakh non-MPO teachers at 37,000 secondary school, madrasas and technical institutions are more or less the same in this time of pandemic.

"In the absence of salaries, the teachers are living an inhuman life. If the situation worsens, it will be catastrophic for them," Rony said.

The authorities, on the other hand, argue that they were unable to pay the teachers' salaries as the tuition fees from students, their only source of earnings, could not be collected.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

SSC results via text for the first time

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

For the very first time in the history of Bangladesh, the education boards have decided to send results of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and equivalent exams to guardians' mobile phones via SMS.

The results would be published after Eid-ul-Fitr, Mahbub Hossain, secretary to the Secondary and Higher Education Division, told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

Monjurul Kabir, senior systems analyst of Dhaka Education Board, said they started sending messages to all mobile operators to alert their consumers about the process of receiving results of the exams.

"We hope that all the candidates or their guardians will register for receiving their results," he said.

Prof Ziaul Haque, chairman of Dhaka Education Board who is also the head of inter-board

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Restrictions they do not heed

Thousands leave capital to spend Eid with their loved ones; police say they're overwhelmed

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Thousands of people left Dhaka for the second straight day yesterday to celebrate Eid in their village homes, violating travel restrictions imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19.

Desperate to be at home with their loved ones, they ignored the risks of contracting novel coronavirus and spreading it to others.

It happened at a time when the country's coronavirus situation has been deteriorating every day. The authorities yesterday reported the total number of Covid-19 cases crossed the 25,000 mark while the death toll hit 370.

Police, which stepped up measures to curb people's movement, claimed that they tried to stop the home-goers, but failed since so many of them descended on roads at a time.

In the absence of public transport amid the ongoing shutdown, the home-goers travelled by pickups, motorcycles and battery-run three wheelers, ignoring social distancing rules. When they came near check-posts set up by the law enforcers at the

exit points of the capital, they crossed them on foot.

Ferry services on Shimulia-Kathalbari and the Paturia-Daulatdia routes remained suspended like the previous day. Many remained stuck at the ferry ghats while many others crossed the Padma river by trawlers, risking their lives when super cyclone Amphan was approaching.

Besides, vehicles remained stuck in tailbacks on the Dhaka-Tangail highway, said witnesses.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Benazir Ahmed yesterday urged those stuck at the ghats not to go home.

"Stay where you are," he said while addressing a briefing on law and order ahead of the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr and the coronavirus situation, at the Police Lines Auditorium in the capital's Rajarbagh.

He said many were crowding the ferry terminals although warning signal number 3 was raised before the storm. "Many others are trying to cross the river risking their lives, but we've instructed the authorities to curb the movement."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

THE BUSINESS



ROBI SUBSIDIARY TO LAUNCH GAME CHANGING ONLINE VIDEO-ON-DEMAND SERVICE

Red Dot Digital, a subsidiary of Robi, is set to roll out a device that can change the way people view television. Called Binge, it provides online video service. Red Dot claims Binge has one of the widest entertainment catalogues, including more than 100 live HD TV channels both in local and international, web series, latest web films, exclusive originals.

STORY ON B1

HEALTH GETS THE BIGGEST BUMP IN DEVELOPMENT BUDGET B2

CONSTRUCTION SECTOR SHOULD RESTART IN PHASES B2

UBER EATS TO WRAP UP BANGLADESH OPERATIONS B2



Vehicles are caught in long tailbacks on Dhaka-Mawa highway in Munshiganj's Kuchiamara area yesterday morning after police enforced a ban on entering and leaving Dhaka ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr to contain the spread of Covid-19. Failing to move towards Mawa, a truck carrying poultry makes a U-turn.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Burden now HEAVIER

What 'work-from-home' means for women

ZYMA ISLAM

As the lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus continues to have an impact on people from all walks of life, a generation of working women is learning that their "work-from-home" is not quite the same as that of men.

This generation is highly educated. They hold tertiary degrees, and are often the first women in their families to have jobs -- and they are dependent on domestic staff to help them with household chores, because the men in their lives do not.

The abundance of cheap, exploitable labour has always meant that whatever domestic chores working women were not able to do could be passed off to the hired help. This arrangement allowed them to spend eight hours or more a day at office. This arrangement also paved the way for men not to do their part at home.

Now, with domestic staff being given leave and women confined at home, they are suddenly back to where society has always stereotypically told them they "belong" -- in the kitchen.

And many, for the first time in their marriages, or family lives, are having to confront the fact that the men in their lives do not practise equal distribution of work at home.

Nadia (not her real name) jotted down the daily routine of her and her husband's day. Her routine, titled "An Architect's Day" starts with making breakfast for the family at 10:00am, followed by feeding their two-year-old daughter, followed by doing the laundry and "occasional" bathroom cleaning.

Her afternoons are taken up with making lunch, feeding the baby once again, folding clothes, then making tea and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Saudi attacker on US base had al-Qaeda ties: US

The Saudi military student who killed three Americans at a US naval base in December had longstanding ties to al-Qaeda and planned an attack before he arrived in the United States, US justice officials said Monday.

The December 6 attack by Mohammed Alshamrani, a Royal Saudi Air Force flight student at the Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida, "was actually the culmination of years of planning and preparation," said FBI Director Christopher Wray. Evidence discovered on an encrypted cell phone shows he was radicalized at least as far back as 2015, and had since been associating with "dangerous" operatives from the Yemen-based Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Wray added.

Rocket hits near US embassy in Baghdad

One rocket hit near the US embassy in Baghdad early yesterday morning, security sources told AFP, the first to land in the high-security zone in weeks. The blast could be heard across the Iraqi capital and triggered security sirens at the US embassy compound but did not cause casualties, the sources confirmed. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. It follows more than two dozen similar attacks against American interests in Iraq since October that the US has blamed on Iran-backed factions among Iraq's security forces. Tensions reached boiling point in January when the US killed Iranian general Qasem Soleimani and Iraqi commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in a drone strike on Baghdad.

China offers farmers cash to give up wildlife trade

Farmers in China are being offered cash to quit breeding exotic animals as pressure grows to crack down on the illegal wildlife trade that has been blamed for the coronavirus outbreak. Authorities have for the first time pledged to buy out breeders in an attempt to curb the practice, animal rights activists say. China has in recent months banned the sale of wild animals for food, citing the risk of diseases spreading to humans, but the trade remains legal for other purposes — including research and traditional medicine. The deadly coronavirus — first reported in the central Chinese city of Wuhan — is widely believed to have passed from bats to people before spreading worldwide.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



A policeman disperses migrant workers gathered outside a railway station intending to board a special service train without valid tickets to return back to their home towns during a nationwide lockdown imposed as a preventive measure against the COVID-19 disease, in Mumbai, yesterday. The dire economic situation caused by lockdown has sparked a migrant worker crisis, as many businesses shut down when the it was imposed.

PHOTO: AFP

New drug can stop pandemic

Claim China scientists, say world may not have to wait for vaccine

AFP, Beijing

A Chinese laboratory has been developing a drug it believes has the power to bring the coronavirus pandemic to a halt.

The outbreak first emerged in China late last year before spreading across the world, prompting an international race to find treatments and vaccines.

A drug being tested by scientists at China's prestigious Peking University could not only shorten the recovery time for those infected, but even offer short-term immunity from the virus, researchers say.

Sunney Xie, director of the university's Beijing Advanced Innovation Center for Genomics, told AFP that the drug has been successful at the animal testing stage.

The drug uses neutralising antibodies — produced by the human immune system to prevent the virus infecting cells — which Xie's team isolated from the blood of 60 recovered patients.

A study on the team's research, published Sunday in the scientific journal Cell, suggests that using the antibodies provides a potential "cure" for the disease and shortens recovery time.

He said he hopes that the drug will be ready for use later this year and in time for any potential winter outbreak of the virus, which has infected 4.8 million people around the world and killed more than 315,000.

Scientists have also pointed to the potential benefits of plasma — a blood fluid — from recovered individuals who have developed antibodies to the virus enabling the body's defences to attack it.

More than 700 patients have received plasma therapy in China, a process which authorities said showed "very good therapeutic effects".

"However, it (plasma) is limited in supply," Xie said, noting that the 14 neutralising antibodies used in their drug could be put into mass production quickly.

Ebola drug Remdesivir was considered a hopeful

early treatment for COVID-19 — clinical trials in the US showed it shortened the recovery time in some patients by a third — but the difference in mortality rate was not significant.

The new drug could even offer short-term protection against the virus.

The study showed that if the neutralising antibody was injected before the mice were infected with the virus, the mice stayed free of infection and no virus was detected.

This may offer temporary protection for medical workers for a few weeks, which Xie said they are hoping to "extend to a few months".

More than 100 vaccines for COVID-19 are in the works globally, but as the process of vaccine development is more demanding, Xie is hoping that the new drug could be a faster and more efficient way to stop the global march of the coronavirus.

"We would be able to stop the pandemic with an effective drug, even without a vaccine," he said.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

UPDATES

DEATH TOLL NEARS 320,000

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 318,517 people so far, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT yesterday. At least 4,816,040 cases of coronavirus have been registered in 196 countries and territories. Of these, at least 1,755,700 are now considered recovered. The United States has the highest number of deaths with 90,369. Britain has recorded 34,796 deaths. It is followed by Italy with 32,007 deaths, France with 28,239 deaths and Spain with 27,709 fatalities.

INDIA CASES TOP 100,000

Coronavirus cases in India reached 100,000 yesterday, matching its number of intensive care beds, and the rate of increase of new infections showed little sign of slowing. India reported 4,970 new cases over the previous 24 hours, taking its total to 101,139. Deaths rose by 134 to 3,163. New cases in India have risen by an average of more than 4,000 a day over the past week, according to a Reuters tally based on official data, despite a severe week-long lockdown.

TRUMP TAKING MALARIA DRUG

President Donald Trump on Monday made the surprise announcement that he is taking hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malaria drug that his own government experts say is not suitable for fighting the novel coronavirus. Trump, noting that he has tested negative for the virus and shows no symptoms, said he'd been taking the drug as a preventative measure for about a week and a half.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

TODAY IN HISTORY

(May 19)

- 1906: The Simplon Tunnel opened, connecting Italy and Switzerland through the Alps.
- 2001: Arab foreign ministers, meeting in Egypt, recommended the suspension of political contacts with the Israeli government until it halted military assaults against the Palestinians.
- 2004: The world's first embryonic stem cell bank opened in Britain.
- 2015: Pipeline rupture spills some 21,000 gallons of oil along California coastline.



A civilian raises his hands as he moves past India's Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel standing guard near the site of a gun battle with suspected militants, in Srinagar, yesterday. Two Kashmir militants including a key rebel leader were killed in a rare 12-hour gun battle in the main city Srinagar yesterday, officials said, sparking clashes between locals and police.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Afghan forces repel Taliban attack on key city

UN expresses alarm as April civilian casualties jump

AGENCIES

Afghan security forces yesterday repelled a fierce Taliban attack on Kunduz, a strategic city in northern Afghanistan that had briefly fallen to the militants twice in the past, officials said.

Taliban fighters attacked several government posts on the outskirts of the city at around 1:00 am, a defence ministry statement said, triggering fierce fighting.

"With the support of air force their attack was repelled," it said, adding the fighting lasted for several hours.

Both sides have clashed repeatedly in rural areas in recent months, but an attempt to enter a city as large as Kunduz is seen as a serious escalation.

The latest violence follows a declaration by President Ashraf Ghani last week to resume offensive strikes against the insurgents, after a string of brutal attacks. The Taliban responded by vowing to increase assaults against Afghan security forces.

During yesterday's fighting, the insurgents managed to briefly capture an Afghan army post, killing one soldier, but it was quickly retaken by security forces. Hadi Jamal, an army spokesman in northern Afghanistan told AFP.

The defence ministry said 40 Taliban fighters were killed and 50 others wounded in the Kunduz assault.

In a separate incident, a bomb placed on a bicycle detonated near a market in the city, killing two civilians and wounding 18, Kunduz police said.

The Taliban briefly captured Kunduz, a strategic city not far from the Tajikistan border, twice before — in September 2015 and again a year later. An attempt last year failed.



in April, expressing alarm about a "striking deterioration" in respect for international humanitarian law as the United States withdraws troops and attempts to usher in a peace deal.

Civilian casualties attributed to the Taliban in April rose by a quarter from the same month a year earlier to 208, while casualties attributed to Afghan security forces rose 38% to 172, according to provisional data from the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

"I call for a halt to the fighting and for parties to respect humanitarian law that is there to protect civilians," said Deborah Lyons, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan.

Nepal unveils new map amid row with India

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal has drawn-up a new political map that includes strategically important territory it disputes with India, officials said yesterday, as the Himalayan country takes a tougher stance against its giant neighbour.

Protests have been staged in Nepal since India earlier this month inaugurated an 80-kilometre road in Uttarakhand state leading up to the disputed Lipu Lekh pass.

Nepal claims the pass under an 1816 treaty that sets the boundary with India along the Kali River, but disputes have arisen because neither side can agree its source.

A cabinet meeting on Monday decided to publish a new map that includes Lipu Lekh and zones in Kalapani and Limpiyadhura, Law Minister Shiva Maya Tumbahangphe told AFP.

The zones form a region of more than 300 square kilometres considered important because it is where the Nepalese and Indian borders touch China.

India and Nepal had both shown Kalapani and Lipu Lekh in their political maps, but Nepal had not previously shown Limpiyadhura.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer
Banshkhali, Chattogram.
E-mail: banshkhali@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Date: 18.05.2020

Memo no- Uhc/Sec-Accounts/MSR/Tender/2019-2020/483

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from experienced Importers / Contractors / Suppliers / Distributors to supply MSR goods for Uhc, Banshkhali in the fiscal 2019-20. As per PPA-2006 & PPR-2008 (Including all corrigendum); Terms and conditions are as follow(s):

KEY INFORMATION				
1 Ministry / Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.			
2 Agency	50 Bedded Upazila Health Complex, Banshkhali, Chattogram.			
3 PE Name, Designation & Contact details	Uhc/fpo, 50 Bedded Upazila Health Complex, Banshkhali, Chattogram.			
4 Procuring Entity Code & District	GOB, Chattogram.			
5 Invitation for	Procurement of MSR goods for 50 Bedded Upazila Health Complex, Banshkhali, Chattogram in the fiscal year 2019-20.			
6 Tender Ref. No & date	Uhc/Sec-Accounts/MSR/Tender/2019-20/483 Dated: 03-01-2019.			
7 Procurement Method	Open Tender Method (National). Item-by-item.			
8 Budget and Source of Funds	GOB in Bangladeshi Taka.			
9 Tender Publication Date	20-05-2020.			
10 Tender Schedule Selling Starting Date and Time	28-05-2020 During office hours.			
11 Tender Last Selling Date and Time	04-06-2020 During office hours.			
12 Tender Dropping & Closing Date and Time	Dropping date: 06-06-2020, Dropping time: from 09:00 AM to 12:00PM, Closing time: 12:01PM			
13 Tender Opening Date and Time	06-06-2020 at 12:30 P.M.			
Name and address of the Office's				
(a) Selling Tender Documents	1 Store Keeper, Office of the Uhc/fpo, 50 Bedded Upazila Health Complex, Banshkhali, Chattogram.			
(b) Receiving Tender Documents	1 Office of the Uhc/fpo, 50 Bedded Upazila Health Complex, Banshkhali, Chattogram. 2 Officer in-charge, Banshkhali Thana, Chattogram.			
(c) Tender Documents Opening Place	Office of the Uhc/fpo, 50 Bedded Upazila Health Complex, Banshkhali, Chattogram.			
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
All Bidders must submit Tender through "Tender Booklet" prepared by procuring entity and abide by the terms and conditions stated in the "Tender Booklet".				
The Bidder must enclose the following documents with the Tender:				
1 The bidder must be a Bangladeshi Citizen and must submit attested photocopy of National Identity Card.				
2 02 (Two) Passport size photo of the bidder / representative.				
3 Electronic Tin (E-TIN) registration certificate.				
4 Valid Trade License.				
5 Up-to-date BIN (Business Identification Number) certificate & Vat Clearance Certificate.				
6 Income Tax Clearance Certificate & Acknowledgement Receipt Of Return Of Income of current Fiscal Year.				
7 Bank Statement (Original Computer Sheet) from 01-07-2019 to 31-12-2019. Where minimum balance of the account for the whole month of December 2019 is not less than 5 lac. Bidder bidding for different groups should attach the original copy of the bank statement with one group and attested photocopy of the same with other groups.				
8 Bank Solvency Certificate(Original Copy) stating amount from any scheduled Bank with the bidder holding an account (The Statement should be issued after 31-03-2020). Solvency certificate should be based on Bank Statement attached. Certificate Stating "Sound & Solvent" is not acceptable and bidder submitting that type of certificate will be rejected.				
9 The Bidder should be experienced in supplying MSR Goods worth at least total BDT 3,00,000.00 (Three Lac only) to any Tertiary level Hospital / Specialized Government Hospital / Civil Surgeon Office / Any Government Hospital within any of the last 01 (one) fiscal years. Experience certificate and respective work order must be submitted.				
Description of Groups, Price of Tender Document, Tender Security etc.				
Sl. No.	Group No.	Description of Groups	Price of Tender Document in BDT by treasury challan Code no-I-2711-8000-2366	Tender Security in BDT (in the form of Pay Order / Demand Draft)
16	1	A Medicine (Without EDCL)	BDT 750.00 (Seven hundred fifty Only) for group: A, B, E, F & BDT 400.00 (Four Hundred Only) for group: C, D	BDT 70,000.00 (Seventy thousand) for group: A, BDT 30,000.00 (Thirty thousand) for group: B, BDT 10,000.00 (Ten thousand only) for group: C & D & BDT 15,000.00 (Fifteen thousand) for group: E, F
	2	B MSR Instrument(Medical)		
	3	C Chemical, Re-agent etc. (Including X-Ray Film, ECG Paper)		
	4	D Furniture & Kitchens Material		
	5	E Surgical Gauge, Bandage, Cotton etc.		
	6	F Linen Goods		
17	Description of Related Services			Detailed description in Tender Booklet.
Note:				
(a) Corrigendum if necessary in future will be a part of this notice. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.				
(b) If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.				

(Dr Md Shaifur Rahman Mazumder)
UHC/FPO
Upazila Health Complex
Banshkhali, Chattogram.

GD-874

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	CNY
Closed	Closed	\$1,731.80 (per ounce)	\$35.16 (per barrel)	0.56%	1.49%	1.66%	0.81%	BUY TK 83.95	90.50	101.39	11.65
				30,196.17	20,433.45	2,581.33	2,898.58	SELL TK 84.95	94.30	105.19	12.24

Star BUSINESS

DHAKA WEDNESDAY MAY 20, 2020, JAISHTHA 6, 1427 BS • starbusiness@thedailystar.net

Robi subsidiary brings the future of video entertainment to Bangladesh

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

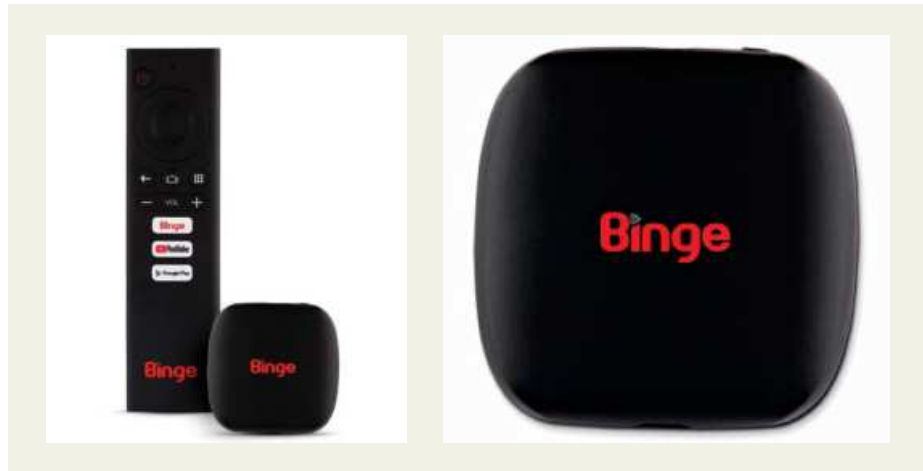
Red Dot Digital, a subsidiary of Robi Axiata, the country's second-largest mobile operator, is set to roll a device on Friday that can possibly change the way Bangladeshis consume video content.

Called the Binge, it is a mixture of internet protocol TV, which is rather popular in the US, and online streaming platform.

By way of a set-top box one would be able to play one of the widest entertainment catalogues, including more than 100 live HD TV channels, both local and international, web series, latest web films, exclusive originals -- but over the internet.

With cable or satellite TV, broadcasters send out signals and viewers receive them, meaning one is only able to watch what's being broadcasted. Unless there is some sort of recording device, one does not get to dictate what's on when. You just tune in when you can and watch what's available.

IPTV is different. Instead of transmitting content via light pulses in fibre-optic cable or radio waves from a satellite, IPTV sends shows and movies through the standard internet connection.



Instead of broadcasting a range of shows on a specific schedule, most IPTV uses video on demand (VOD) or time-shifted media.

The service comes at a time when the demand for video content has hit the roof as people stay at home to flatten the curve on coronavirus that is tearing through the country at a breakneck speed.

Yesterday, the country saw 21 more deaths from the novel virus and 1,251 new cases of infection to take the death toll from the deadly virus to 370 and caseload to 25,121.

"A viewer can watch any type of content through Binge. There is something for everyone: thriller, drama, comedy, romance, action and what not," said Ahmed Armaan Siddiqui, director of Red

Dot Digital, which owns the service.

The digital generation has entered into a new era of entertainment where viewers would decide what they watch. In this era, they won't need to wait for a particular TV channel to watch a movie or series.

The service would be available both on Android smartphones and big screens and would change the way people in Bangladesh consume entertainment contents.

"Binge is Bangladesh's first Google-certified online video-streaming service along with an android device that offers endless entertainment," he added.

Red Dot Digital, an associate company of Robi Axiata, the second-largest mobile phone operator in Bangladesh, has other businesses in the digital service segment in the country.

Binge has been developed by Genex Infosys, a local business process outsourcing company.

"With the largest number of content, Binge is going to bring in a revolution in the Bangladeshi entertainment media," Siddiqui said.

Subscribers can enjoy the service both on small and big screens with higher definition. They can access Binge directly on their Android smartphones as well as by purchasing a Binge-branded Android smart device.

Even if there is no smart TV at home, customers can still have full HD TV experience using Binge, Siddiqui said.

The price of the Binge-branded Android smart device is Tk 3,499.

Users can avail the service for Tk 399 in subscription charge if they already have a broadband internet connection.

Red Dot Digital is currently importing the devices and plans to assemble them locally in partnership with Genex Infosys, said a senior executive of the project.

The company is partnering with an internet service provider, which will ensure broadband connectivity if a consumer does not have internet connections.

Using the connection for Tk 1,099 per month, customers can also get Wi-Fi service at home and multiple device access.

To enjoy the content of Binge through smartphones, three packages are available. Users will be charged Tk 10 for a daily package, Tk 30 for a weekly package and Tk 99 for a monthly package, excluding value-added tax, supplementary duty and surcharge.

Customers will have to download the Binge mobile app from Google Play store to enjoy the service on smartphones.

For all the plans, Red Dot Digital will offer a one-month free trial period.

No more Uber Eats in Bangladesh from June 2

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

In a rather surprising move, Uber Technologies yesterday announced that it is closing down the operations of its food delivery platform Uber Eats in Bangladesh from June 2 as Chief Executive Dara Khosrowshahi attempts to steer the ride-hailing giant through the coronavirus pandemic.

Uber Eats arrived in Bangladesh in April last year and soon gained popularity with its solid service. The food delivery platform was one of the few to be offering its services during the countrywide general shutdown since March 26 to flatten the curve on coronavirus.

"After a year of partnering with local restaurants to offer convenient and reliable food delivery, we have made the difficult decision to discontinue Uber Eats in Bangladesh, on June 2nd 2020," read a notice on the Uber Newsroom yesterday.

The notice did not articulate the reasons for leaving Bangladesh.

But as per global media, Bangladesh is not the only market in which Uber Eats is shutting shop; it is doing so in other markets where it saw no clear route to becoming the number one or number two online food delivery operator.



On Monday, in an email to staff, Khosrowshahi said Uber was closing 45 offices and laying off some 3,000 more people and re-evaluating big bets in areas ranging from freight to self-driving technology.

Khosrowshahi's latest restructuring plan comes less than two weeks after the company said it would eliminate about 3,700 jobs and planned to save more than \$1 billion in fixed costs. Monday's decision means Uber is shedding roughly a quarter of its workforce in under a month.

Stay-at-home orders have ravaged Uber's core ride-hailing business, which accounted for three-quarters of the company's revenue before the pandemic struck. Uber's rides business in April was down 80% from a year earlier.

However, Uber will continue its ride services in Bangladesh, which has been going from strength to strength since entering the country in 2016.

"Our number one priority now is to do everything possible to minimise the impact on our valued employees, restaurant partners, delivery partners and consumers who have supported us," adds the notice.

The notice though took the local startup industry by surprise.

About the Uber Eats exit declaration from the market, AD Ahmad, chief executive and co-founder of HungryNaki, Bangladesh's first food delivery platform, said the San Francisco-based company had burnt a huge amount of cash and already created a handsome customer base in the country.

"It is true they have brought a good number of customers who were not using the food delivery service before."

This was good for the overall food delivery industry in Bangladesh.

"But in my personal view, burning a huge amount of cash to gain customers is not a decent business model to continue."

A few days ago they also announced the closure of operations in some other markets as they could not create much impact there despite shelling out a pretty sum.

"Burning money is not an acceptable model anymore and that is why they have been criticised in different markets," Ahmad added.

Soon after launching the service in Bangladesh, Uber Eats have been offering huge discounts like Tk 300 to Tk 600 per order.

According to a report of Reuters, Uber Eats is also closing down operations in eight markets including the Czech Republic, Egypt, Honduras, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Uruguay.

In the UAE, it will wind down the Eats app and transition operations to Careem. About 50 full-time roles would be affected, Reuters reads.

Uber said the discontinued and transferred markets represented 1 per cent of Eats gross bookings and 4 per cent of Eats adjusted core earnings losses in Q1 2020.

However, in the US, Uber is in talks to acquire its rival food delivery platform GrubHub, a deal that would help stem losses from the cost-intensive business of building out delivery operations and give Uber an edge in competing with industry leader DoorDash Inc.

After its founding in 2009, Uber quickly became one of the world's hottest start-ups, transforming how millions of people get around. Co-founder Travis Kalanick envisioned a future in which robotaxis roam streets and delivery drones fly overhead -- with Uber at the centre of it all.

As the company grew, it spent big to expand into areas beyond ride-hailing, amassing billions in losses along the way.

Investor enthusiasm started to wane even before the pandemic. Uber had one of last year's most anticipated stock market debuts. The result disappointed, with Wall Street increasingly wanting to see a path to profitability for Uber and other high-profile tech companies.

BTRC, GP now see solution in talks as the operator pays another Tk 1,000cr

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Officials of Grameenphone and the telecom regulator will meet soon to work out an amicable solution to the ongoing tussle over an audit claim, according to Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission.

Grameenphone's Chief Executive Officer Yasir Azman said they were not on the same page with the regulator over the amount of money claimed in the BTRC audit but there was still much scope to find a way out by sitting at the negotiating table.

Both made the remarks while briefing journalists after the top mobile phone operator deposited another Tk 1,000 crore to the BTRC yesterday as per an order of the apex court.

Earlier on February 23, Grameenphone had handed in Tk 1,000 crore to the regulator following the Appellate Division's order to pay the amount within February 24.

"We want dialogue and thus we can move forward," Azman said.

As the operator has complied with the order of the apex court, the telecom regulator can now sit with them in presence of representatives from the finance division of the government to find a solution, Haque said.

"If there were any flaws in the audit, we can fix them," he said, adding that measures are underway to audit the other operators within a short time.

Earlier, the telecom regulator through two separate audits found that the market leader owed it Tk 12,579.96 crore and Robi, the second-largest operator, Tk 867.23 crore.

The audits that looked into the accounts of Grameenphone and Robi since their inception in 1997 until 2014 claimed that the carriers owed the amounts in revenue shares, taxes and late fees.

On November 24 last year, the Supreme



BTRC Chairman Md Jahurul Haque, second from right, receives the pay order of Tk 1,000 crore from Kazi Ehsanul Haque, a general manager of Grameenphone, at the commission office in Dhaka yesterday.

Court ordered Grameenphone to give the BTRC Tk 2,000 crore by February 23 this year as an advance payment against the overall claim.

In January, the operator expressed its intention to the court to pay Tk 575 crore in 12 equal instalments but the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court turned down the plea.

The court asked Robi to pay Tk 138

crore in five instalments against the total claim and the operator will deposit the last instalment of Tk 27.60 crore by May 31.

Replying to a query of the journalists, the BTRC chairman said they were not 'extorting' anyone by dint of regulations.

At a press briefing on November 11 last year, Grameenphone's then CEO Michael Patrick Foley had told reporters that the telecom regulator was forcing the mobile

operator to pay an "illegal audit claim of Tk 12,579.96 crore".

"We don't want to be extorted, we don't want to remain under pressure, we don't want to be on the front page of the newspapers globally," Foley had said.

When his attention was drawn to the remarks of Foley, Haque yesterday said: "The BTRC is not an extortionist; we only claim according to the law."

BKMEA seeks 10pc cash incentive on exports



STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) has demanded a 10 per cent cash

incentive on export receipts for the next two years.

If a garment exporter uses locally made yarn and fabrics in making garment items, they would be eligible for the cash incentive on export earnings, according to the BKMEA's budget proposal fiscal 2020-21 to the National Board of Revenue last week.

It also called for 4 per cent cash incentive if export-oriented garment items



are made from imported raw materials.

Mohammad Hatem, vice-president of the BKMEA, urged the government to retain the tax at source at 0.25 per cent.

Alot of small and medium entrepreneurs may be driven out of businesses because of the global coronavirus pandemic. So, the government should chalk out an exit plan for this category of businesses in the upcoming budget, he said.

TAMING CORONAVIRUS RAMPAGE

Health sector gets biggest bump up in next year's development budget

FBCCI forms sector-wise councils to help businesses borrow from stimulus packages



REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

The government appears to have paid heed to the growing calls for a bigger health budget, with its allocation from the annual development programme soaring 28.92 per cent next fiscal year, the highest amongst the 12 sectors.

Next fiscal year, some Tk 13,033 crore has been allocated to the health sector that is bursting at the seams with the escalating caseloads from the Tk 205,145 crore ADP approved by the National Economic Council (NEC) yesterday.

Of the money going to the health sector, Tk 4,282 crore would come from the external sources. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have each approved \$100 million to aid the government to meet the growing expenditure in the sector. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is also providing finances for the health sector.

The agriculture sector saw the second-highest allocation growth of 26.43 per cent. The government set aside Tk 8,382 crore for fiscal 2020-21, up from Tk 6,524 crore this year.



RASHED SHUMON

The highest allocation went to the transport sector, which received Tk 52,183 crore, or 25.44 per cent of the ADP.

"The prime minister has said if the health and agriculture ministries seek more funds, the government would be ready to provide," Planning Minister MA Mannan told reporters yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa

Kamal and Mannan attended the NEC meeting through video-conferencing from Gonobhaban, the official residence of the premier, because of the social-distancing measures put in place by the government to stop the spread of the virus.

The rest of the members of the cabinet took part from the auditorium of the NEC in Agargaon.

The ADP came as Bangladesh

continues to face significant health care challenges in combating the coronavirus pandemic.

The health system is underdeveloped and underfunded, with only 9.9 doctors, nurses and midwives and 8.8 hospital beds per 10,000 people, while current health expenditure is only 2.4 per cent of GDP, said the Asian Development Bank recently.

The physical planning, water

supply and housing sector received the second-highest allocation of Tk 25,795 crore, or 12.57 per cent of the ADP.

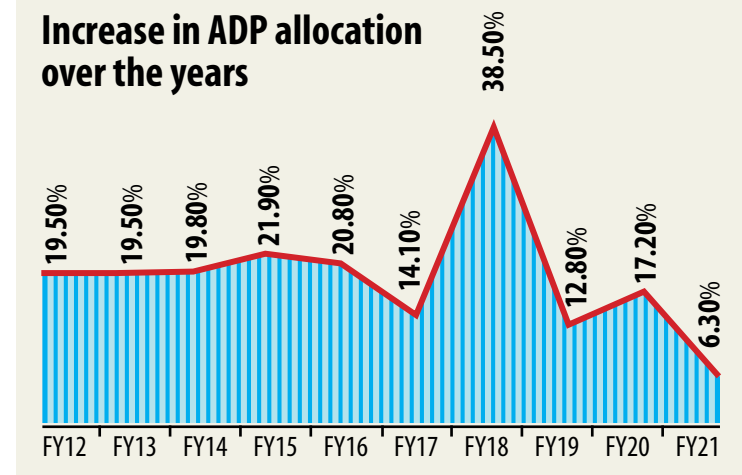
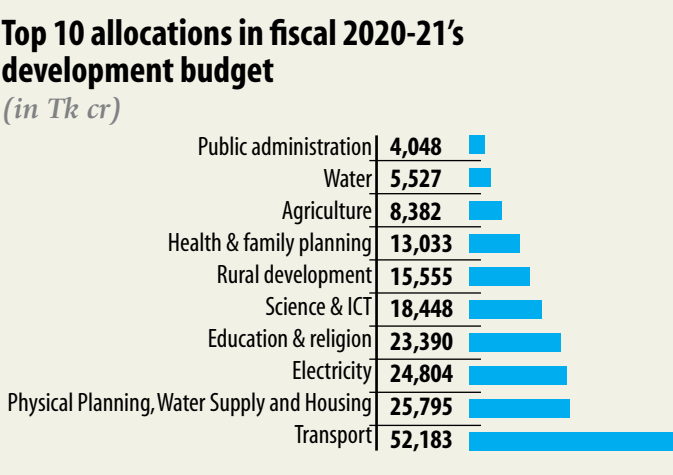
The electricity sector accounted for 12.09 per cent of the allocation, the education and religion sector 11.40 per cent, the science and ICT sector 8.99 per cent and the rural development sector 7.58 per cent.

The top 10 sectors account for 93.19 per cent of the allocation.

The next ADP is only 6.34 per cent higher than the current one to record the lowest growth at least since fiscal 2011-12, as the government directs resources to jumpstart the economy battered by the global pandemic.

The NEC approved the ADP for 1,584 projects. Besides, it gave consent to 89 projects of state-run enterprises and corporations involving Tk 9,466 crore.

Of the ADP, Tk 134,643 crore would be financed through own resources, up 2.84 per cent from the revised ADP for this fiscal year. The remainder Tk 70,502 crore would be funded by external sources, up 13.71 per cent.



About time construction sector restarts in phases: experts

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Work in the construction sector should resume in phases with proper safety measures for the sake of the country's infrastructure development, according to experts and industry insiders.

The last quarter of a fiscal year is very important for the construction sector as many infrastructure projects under the government's annual development programme (ADP) come close to completion during this quarter, said SM Khorshed Alam, president of the Bangladesh Association of Construction Industry.

"But there has been no progress in the implementation of the projects because of the pandemic," he said at a virtual discussion on 'sustainable solutions to overcome the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the construction sector', organised by The Daily Star yesterday.

About 30 per cent of the raw materials bought for the projects will remain unutilised because of the slow progress in execution, he said, adding that 80 per cent of the ADP implementation target could hardly be met.

All the construction activities have been put on hold for the last two months due to the ongoing pandemic leaving about 65 lakh workers in the sector jobless, said Alamgir Shamsul Alam, president of the Real Estate & Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB).

"Now we should take those up again gradually following the safety guidelines."

The real estate sector will need a huge amount of cash to recover from the losses inflicted by the pandemic, Alam said, adding that they will not be able to hand over about 30,000 apartments under construction to the customers on time.

The government should allow investment of undisclosed money in purchasing apartments in the upcoming fiscal year to help revive the real estate sector, he said.

However, Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute, was not in accord with Alam, saying that the idea of investing black money in the housing sector goes against ethics.

"It's not a sustainable solution to the problems of the real estate sector,"

Mansur said, while advising the realtors to seek incentive from the government to shore up the industry in a transparent manner.

He also called for devising short and long-term strategies and removing the weaknesses from the existing policies for the advancement of the sector.

The novel coronavirus will not go away anytime soon, so people have to learn how to live and deal with the crisis,

begin at the construction sites with proper safety measures and maintaining social distancing, said AFM Saiful Amin, a professor at the civil engineering department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

Banks can help the real estate sector by providing low-interest loans as the developers incurred huge losses in the last two months, said FR Khan, managing director of Building Technology & Ideas,



said M Firoze, adviser for marketing and product development at BSRM, a leading steel manufacturer.

"Already people are getting used to some behavioural changes while fighting the virus. This is a new reality and we have to adopt the new norms," he added.

The government should allocate adequate funds for the healthcare sector in the upcoming budget such that people from all strata of society, especially workers, get access to healthcare at affordable cost, said Md Abdur Razzak, general secretary of Imarat Nirman Sramik Union Bangladesh, a platform of construction workers.

Construction workers are finding it hard to make ends meet as the ongoing shutdown in the country has squeezed their earnings.

"We have already applied to the government for help, but no response is yet to come," he said.

At least 50 per cent work should

begin at the construction sites with proper safety measures and maintaining social distancing, said AFM Saiful Amin, a professor at the civil engineering department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

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Memo No. 35.01.9162.473.09.000.20/..... Date:19/05/2020

e-Tender Notice-22(Twenty Two)/2019-2020
(Open Tendering Method)

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Sylhet Road Division, Sylhet. For the procurement of following work.

Tender/ Proposal ID No & Package No.	Name of work	Tender/ Proposal Document last selling / downloading Date and Time	Tender/ Proposal Closing Date and Time	Tender/ Proposal Opening Date and Time
461921 eGP-68/2019-2020/EE/RHD/Sylhet	Supplying of Asphalt Materials for maintenance of different Roads under Sylhet Road Sub-Division of Sylhet Road Division During the year 2019-2020.	02/06/2020 15:00	03/06/2020 14:00	03/06/2020 14:00
461922 eGP-69/2019-2020/EE/RHD/Sylhet	Supplying of Stone Chips Pea Gravels Sand 1st Class Bricks and Fire Wood for maintenance of different Roads under Sylhet Road Sub-Division of Sylhet Road Division During the year 2019-2020.	02/06/2020 15:00	03/06/2020 14:00	03/06/2020 14:00
461923 eGP-70/2019-2020/EE/RHD/Sylhet	Supplying of Stone Chips Pea Gravels and Fire Wood for maintenance of different Roads under Bashwanath Road Sub-Division of Sylhet Road Division During the year 2019-2020.	02/06/2020 15:00	03/06/2020 14:00	03/06/2020 14:00
461924 eGP-71/2019-2020/EE/RHD/Sylhet	Providing & Installation of Road Directional Overhead Gantry at 1st Km. of Sylhet Town Bypass N210 including Supplying Fitting Fixing Road Directional Traffic Signs and Sign Post on Rashidpur-Biswanath-Rampasha-Lamakazi Road Z.2016 Vadeshwar-Mirganj-Manikona-Fenchuganj Road Z.2831 Daudabad-Daudpur-Vadeshwar Dhaka Dakhin Road Z.2832 Darbast-Kanaighai-Shahbag Road Z.2011 and Supplying and Installation of Reflecting Sticker for Bridge/ Culver Railing & Guide Post with Lettering and Bordering on DhakaKatchpur-Bhairab-Jagadishpur-Shaistaganj-Sylhet-Tamabil-Jallong Road N-2 From I.R.P. 191210 to 229888 under Sylhet Road Division Sylhet during the year 2019-2020.	02/06/2020 15:00	03/06/2020 14:00	03/06/2020 14:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System portal (<http://eprocure.gov.bd>)

The fee's for downloading the e-tender documents from the national e-GP portal have to be deposited on line through any member of schedule bank for e-GP.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Ritesh Barua)
ID No-601999
Executive Engineer, RHD (c.c.)
Sylhet Road Division, Sylhet.

GD-877

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

What to salvage from Covid-19

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA WEDNESDAY MAY 20, 2020, JAISHTHA 6, 1427 BS

Outrush of Dhaka leavers is worrisome

Govt should take strict measures to implement lockdown

THE news of large numbers of people leaving Dhaka ahead of next week's Eid-ul-Fitr festival, flouting all social distancing regulations, is everything we dreaded might happen in the midst of a poorly-managed pandemic. A report by this daily on Tuesday shows how people were crowding into exit points and causing long tailbacks. The Dhaka-Chattogram highway on Monday witnessed a 25-km tailback in Daudkandi, caused mainly by thousands of cars leaving the capital. Elsewhere on the Shimulia-Kathalbari and Paturia-Daulatdia routes, there were so many people that ferry authorities had to suspend their services for hours. In the absence of public transport because of the ongoing shutdown, many people travelled by pickups, motorcycles and battery-run three wheelers. These images of reckless travel are disturbing, to say the least, and add to the burgeoning list of failures of the administration to contain the situation.

Such unchecked movement, which will no doubt further spread the deadly coronavirus and consequently delay the reopening process, has made a passenger welfare association call for a 10-day curfew around Eid to slow the spread of the outbreak. We think this suggestion merits consideration. The government has so far largely failed to restrict people's movement even though, in a circular on May 14, it stressed that no one would be allowed to leave the city where they work during the Eid festival. The local administration and law enforcers were supposed to enforce the restrictions during the period. Initiatives by the police—setting up check posts across the country to prevent people from travelling from one district to another—were also expected to bear some fruit. But as reports show, lax enforcement of the directive has rendered all efforts meaningless. One may recall that similar curbs on people's movement, implemented in the beginning of the lockdown period and at different stages subsequently, were also met with frustrating results.

Thus, the time has come for tougher measures—whether in the form of a curfew or other means. The priority is to check people's movement any way possible during this Eid, and the government must do everything in its power to ensure that. With the numbers of infections and deaths from the virus growing every day, the price of a failure to act decisively will be expensive.

Perennial volunteers in public hospitals

Should they not be absorbed permanently?

IN an instance that betrays an abysmal indifference of the authorities, as we are informed through a report in this paper yesterday, as many as 36 men and women who have been working as voluntary staff at Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital for years, are doing so without any recompense for their work. They are passing through a severe state of pecuniary privation, since they have received virtually nothing for their service, albeit "voluntary". Understandably, there are no provisions for such volunteer service in government service manuals, but these volunteers had stepped forward on their own volition since the hospital was severely understaffed, as many public hospitals and health care centres are. It seems that the authorities have taken these "volunteers" for granted, since they are yet to put them on the regular payroll. Some are getting a laughable amount of Tk 1000 or 1500 per month, and that too after being many years in that position—some of them have been working for a decade or more.

To their credit, they have not discarded their patients and continue to attend to them, risking their lives during this pandemic. They are working at different sections of the hospital including the emergency department, operation theatre, surgery ward, paediatric ward and doctors' chambers to help patients, distribute medicine and manage crowds.

A voluntary service is *pro bono*, and generally such service is provided by those who can afford the time and their own resources to provide a public good. But some offer their services, particularly public service, out of their own volition, and, most often moved by fellow feeling to meet the shortage of adequate personnel. And when it relates to government healthcare services, it assumes a special significance. All the more so when these persons are people of meagre means, which deserves the serious attention of the authorities.

We feel that these 36 volunteers should be absorbed into service and given their full remuneration, antedated if possible. It was their hope and should be fulfilled, especially given that all of them have required educational qualifications (some have Masters' degrees) and the experience of on-the-job training as well. Given that there is also an acute shortage of trained hospital staff all over the country, which is all the more obvious during this crisis, absorbing these volunteers should not be too difficult.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Replicate One Minute Bazar

A few days ago, this newspaper reported on the Bangladesh Army's brilliant initiative to set up "One Minute Bazar" on the playground of Agrabad Government Colony School in Chattogram. In these precarious times, it is very important to maintain social distancing. With that in mind, the Bangladesh Army tried to form a model market for lower-income groups where they can get their essentials safely. The vegetables were bought from root-level farmers in Chattogram for fair prices, with an aim to kickstart economic activity at the grassroots. Based on the list prepared by army officials, the poor and physically challenged were given the food items for free. I feel the authorities and other NGOs can replicate this concept and implement it nationwide. Besides, the affluent people should also come forward to help put a smile on the faces of the distressed.

Akash Hossen, Pabna



AN OPEN DIALOGUE

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

ONCE the Covid-19 pandemic is under control, and the world economy is back on its tracks, the status and fate of the 2030 Agenda, also known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

needs to be reassessed. The year 2020 was supposed to kick-off the Decade of Action. With just 10 years to go, plans were made to undertake "ambitious global efforts" to deliver the 2030 promise—by mobilising more governments, civil society, businesses, and calling on all people to make the Global Goals their own.

Before the worldwide lockdown began in March, various stakeholders of the SDG movement were planning to undertake a full-scale five-year evaluation. Fifty-one countries had signed up to conduct voluntary national reviews (VNR) by May 2020, a process through which countries assess and present progress made in achieving the 17 goals. The process came to a complete halt with the current pandemic crisis.

The "pandemic pause" is a blessing in disguise. It gives all the stakeholders a chance to undertake a thorough review of where we stand as well as what needs to change. Are all the 17 goals equally important? A partial answer was provided by Nobel Laureate Abhijit Banerjee. "Think of the bureaucratic capacity it takes to achieve these things. How are countries going to keep track? We need to go back to the drawing board," he said.

The next question is, how do we reprioritise and revamp the SDGs? While advances made in some SDG indicators have been eroded, this should not deflate our energy. However, a few SDG targets now assume greater priority. The health aspect of SDGs is more important and can be used as an entry point. Experts suggest that the experience of Covid-19 can be used to redesign the food supply chain. Furthermore, there is an urgent need for engagement with the private sector and civil society to chart the path that lies ahead and to cope with future pandemics.

Even before Covid-19 hit us, concerns were voiced in SDG progress review meetings as evidence mounted about the slow progress and lack of scale required to reach the targets before the decade ends. Earlier this year, the UN reacted by sending out a clarion call for action. "Today, progress is being made in many

places, but, overall, action to meet the Goals is not yet advancing at the speed or scale required. 2020 needs to usher in a decade of ambitious action to deliver the Goals by 2030," it cautioned. According to one estimate, more than five billion people will lack access to essential health services by 2030. Those services include the ability to see a health worker, access to essential medicines, and running water in hospitals.

Covid-19 thus poses a real challenge, to



put it mildly, and some have gone as far as to warn the developing countries that the looming crisis threatens to devastate employment gains, food security and equity in education. The World Bank also raised a low-level alarm when it declared that the coronavirus is a serious obstacle for 240 million Asians trudging along on the road to poverty elimination.

If things had gone as planned, by end-May, each of the 51 countries was expected to submit its SDG voluntary national review report describing its experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned during the five years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Bangladesh had signed up for its second VNR. All this will now cease.

Concurrently, on pause is the next meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

(HLPF), the central global platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Council. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was scheduled to convene the 2020 session of HLPF in New York from July 7-16, and receive a progress report in the completion of the 2020 targets: responsible consumption and production (SDG12), biodiversity (SDG15) and some selected indicators of SDG13 and SDG14.



Turning to Bangladesh, after the hiatus period forced by Covid-19 ends, the Prime Minister's SDG Directorate needs to evaluate two key metrics: the impact of the pandemic on the poor and the status of SDGs. All economic crises adversely affect the poor and the present crisis is no exception. From all accounts, the short-run impact of the pandemic and the lockdown is being felt very strongly by low-income people. In line with its SDG commitment, the government's immediate goal ought to be to facilitate the re-employment of workers (SDG8), feed those who lost their sources of income (SDG2) and strengthen healthcare and provide medical support (SDG3).

Apart from lost jobs, hungry mouths and deteriorating health conditions, other collateral damages will emerge due to the interlinkages between the SDGs. Poverty

(SDG1) will take a hit and so will the quality of education (SDG4). Other goals to assess are water and sanitation (SDG6), reduced inequalities (SDG10) and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG16). One should not be too surprised if our post-pandemic review shows that it has not only devastated the economy, but also wiped out many of the SDG gains.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics' provisional estimates, GDP growth this year will be 5.5 percent, in contrast to the 8.2 percent projected earlier. This is higher than the 3.8 percent and 2-3 percent forecast by the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, respectively. On the positive side, we have already seen an increase in the budget allocation on health and an improvement in the environment.

Recovery is a complex and non-linear process. The pandemic has exposed fundamental weaknesses in our global system. It has shown how the prevalence of poverty, weak health systems, subpar education, and a lack of global cooperation exacerbate a health crisis. In our effort to return to normalcy, we must not lose sight of the lessons gained from the pandemic.

Globally, the pandemic has exposed the widening SDG needs gap. The world currently (pre-pandemic) spends approximately USD 7.5 trillion on health each year or 10 percent of global GDP. While spending has increased steadily, dangerous public health gaps exist, especially in rural or conflict-ridden areas where access is difficult and infrastructure is lacking.

This access is complicated by a shortage of trained healthcare workers. The 2020 State of the World's Nursing report found that the world would need six million more nurses by 2030 to reach global health targets. Shortages of healthcare workers are felt most acutely in low- and middle-income countries.

As cities and societies start emerging from the crisis, governments should focus on key factors that contribute to the spread of epidemics and other public health risks: inadequate infrastructure, lack of services, and substandard housing.

In a sense, the process of recovery might strengthen our SDG efforts if the government of Bangladesh, in collaboration with civil society, NGOs, and the private sector, look afresh at the 17 goals and focuses its attention and resources on those that need reinforcement.

Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and works in information technology. He is Senior Research Fellow, International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI), a think-tank in Boston, USA.

Micro-enterprises can help us combat the economic downturn

Md Abdul Karim

THE current Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in huge suffering and devastation for humanity, with almost five million people infected worldwide and experts fearing a deep global recession. The economy of Bangladesh is set to face serious setbacks during the pandemic. Although Bangladesh had achieved lower middle income country status in 2015 and fulfilled all three eligibility criteria for graduation from the UN's Least Developed Countries (LDC) list by 2024, 20.5 percent of its population was still living in poverty in 2019. This is a huge number given the total population of Bangladesh, and the impact of the pandemic may make this poverty rate increase further. The 8.15 percent GDP growth achieved in Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 will dive below three percent in FY20 and two percent in the next FY, according to the World Bank. South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) revealed that Bangladesh's poverty rate may rise to 40.9 percent due to the pandemic.

One of the important ways to handle the possible economic downturn will be to appropriately mobilise the millions of micro-enterprises (ME) scattered all over the country by addressing their financing requirements. MEs are powerful job creators, agents of inclusive growth and drivers of productivity. MEs' economic activities begin with small amounts of capital investment, often financed by Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). The Bangladesh Industrial Policy 2016 defines micro-enterprises as small businesses having fixed asset values between half a million to five million Taka and 10-24 workers. Bangladesh Bank defines ME as a firm/business which is not a public limited company; they may be service or business ME with fixed assets of Tk 50,000 to 50 lakh (25 employees), or industrial ME having fixed assets of Tk 50,000 to 1.5 crore and maximum 50 employees. The return on investment is higher in micro-enterprises than in small, medium and large enterprises. The employment share of micro-enterprises is greater in developing countries compared to the developed world. Ethiopia's MEs contribute more than 95 percent of the country's total employment, compared to about 35 percent for Vietnam. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of

Statistics (BBS) Census 2013, 89 percent of Bangladesh's 7.8 million economic establishments are micro-enterprises (including the cottage industry). These MEs employ 13.76 million people, which represent around 56 percent of total employment in all enterprises of the country.

Micro-enterprises employ significant numbers of women and can adapt very quickly to evolving market demand and supply situations; showing flexibility and dynamism in diversifying economic activities and contributing to the country's economic growth by promoting competition, resilience, entrepreneurial talent etc. Our transition to middle

One of the important ways to handle the possible economic downturn will be to appropriately mobilise the millions of micro-enterprises (ME) scattered all over the country by addressing their financing requirements. MEs are powerful job creators, agents of inclusive growth and drivers of productivity.

income country status after the current pandemic will significantly depend on promoting inclusive growth. MEs can contribute towards such growth and the achievements of some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by leaving no one behind.

Access to formal finance for micro-enterprises is a fundamental challenge. Most of the MEs are in rural areas, informal in nature and employ family members in productive activities. Access to finance in Bangladesh is relatively limited compared to other South Asian countries. A study (2016) by the Institute

for Inclusive Finance and Development suggests that in most cases, formal financial institutions do not extend loans because of lack of bankable collateral, and lack of confidence in such small business ventures. Most MEs depend on MFIs for loans, which are generally individual-based instead of group-based (unlike traditional microcredit). The study estimates that there is an excess demand of Tk 437 billion—which is about one and a half times higher than current disbursement. A recent report published by the World Bank and PRI shows that micro-enterprise financing gap (cottage and micro) is around Tk 237 billion (USD 2.8 billion). Estimating the actual demand for credit of MEs is difficult due to data constraints. Higher interest rates of MFI loans is an obstacle to growth potential. Given that MEs have significant production and consumption linkages, MFIs can work as intermediaries to create links between credit and savings for ME financing.

A number of ME business clusters of different activities have grown in various geographical locations of Bangladesh. Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) has identified more than 6,700 business clusters of 77 economic activities in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, manufacturing etc. Micro-enterprises consist of value chain components for forward and backward linkages. Interventions are often necessary to address the problems that may be faced at different sub-sectors of the value chains. A number of ME development projects have been funded by the World Bank, ADB, IFAD and DFID in Bangladesh. BRAC also provides loans to the micro-enterprises through its Progoti programme.

The World Bank's Doing Business Survey 2018 ranks Bangladesh at 159 (out of 190 countries) for the "getting credit" criterion. It is a measure of credit information sharing and the legal rights of the borrowers and lenders. The Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA) is going to establish a credit information bureau with the support of DFID for the microcredit borrowers. Movable collateral is not yet accepted for secured lending. The enactment of a secured transaction law is considered essential for the inclusion of movable collateral. A small claims court could also ensure faster adjudication for cases relating to MEs. Operationalisation of mediation via money loan courts and

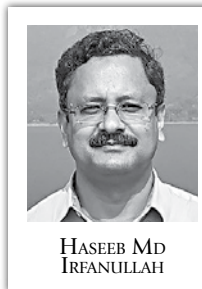
the establishment of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms for commercial dispute settlements are also considered appropriate. Alternative and innovative financing options need to be explored, including warehouse receipt finance, risk sharing facilities, start-up capital etc. Digital financial services should be expanded through increased use of technology for reducing transaction costs.

Apart from financial constraints, MEs suffer from low productivity and lack of marketing facilities of their products. Product diversification, quality improvement, technological innovation, knowledge transfer, skill and capacity development of MEs are essential to ensure future growth. MRA and Bangladesh Bank should issue appropriate instructions to commercial banks to relax conditions of collateral and personal guarantee while sanctioning ME loans. Women entrepreneurs should be given loans at lower rates of interest and for longer periods. The Prime Minister's Tk 20,000 crore special credit/ investment package in response to Covid-19 will be of immediate relief for cottage, micro, small and medium entrepreneurs (CMSME).

The pandemic has threatened millions of livelihoods in Bangladesh. The RMG sector has already received work order cancellations of nearly USD 3 billion. Foreign remittance will come down from USD 20 million and foreign exchange reserves will be affected. At the moment, more than one crore people are without jobs. Government borrowing has soared to Tk 57,900 crore in 10 months. The financing gap of USD 1 trillion, calculated earlier for SDG implementation, will increase significantly. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has announced a total of 18 packages worth around Tk 1 lakh crore, equivalent to about 3.3 percent of GDP, to salvage economic sectors. The rescue package for the CMSME sector is timely and necessary, but not sufficient. Further support is essential to combat the pandemic's impact on our economy. By leveraging their creativity and ingenuity to harness market opportunities, the micro-enterprises of Bangladesh can help achieve economic prosperity, which can ultimately lead the way towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Md Abdul Karim is Former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Will nature conservation remain a priority in post-corona Bangladesh?



HASEEB MD IRFANULLAH

THE coronavirus pandemic has revealed three alarming connections between us and nature. First, viruses like the one causing Covid-19 often jump into people from wild animals. Ebola, Nipah, SARS, Yellow Fever, and Zika are the same, to name

take drastic actions. Subsequently, 2020 was named a "super year for biodiversity and nature", which called for desperate measures to halt catastrophic biodiversity loss. As a part of that, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has already drafted a "Global Biodiversity Framework" with ambitious goals and targets to be met by the countries by 2050. The framework was supposed to be approved by all countries in a conference in October 2020, in Kunming, China, but has now been postponed.

As the governments press the restart button and the paused global economy starts gaining its momentum, will nature conservation remain a priority in the post-coronavirus era?

We are already seeing billions of dollars of stimuli being sanctioned by governments to stabilise their economies. We may therefore see significant budget cuts in global development assistance in many sectors, including nature conservation. We saw similar reductions a few years ago when the refugee influx hit Europe. We may see major budget revisions in ongoing conservation projects and programmes to meet increasing livelihood demands from local people. This may allow less resources for restoring degraded habitats, protecting important ecosystems, and conserving threatened plants and animals.

The pandemic may further highlight the relationship between poverty and over-dependency on nature. Through a country-wide survey, BRAC has recently shown that extreme poverty increased in Bangladesh by 60 percent, accompanied by increased food insecurity. These are disappointing numbers for a country which reduced its poverty from 56.7 percent in 1991 to 20.5 percent in 2019. Nevertheless, a loss of livelihoods and food insecurity would push old and newly poor people to depend more on harvesting natural resources, leading to over-exploitation of biodiversity and further degradation of ecosystems.

but a few. So, hunting, selling or eating wildlife or destroying their habitats must be stopped, if we do not want to see such pandemics again.

Second, while we enjoy the pleasant photographs of wildlife roaming around human settlements under lockdown, the pandemic could not stop us from destroying nature. According to the National Space Research Institute of Brazil, more than 1,200 square kilometre of the Amazon rainforest—an area 10 times larger than Dhaka city—was destroyed in January to April this year during the pandemic. This deforestation is 55 percent more than that in the same period of 2019. A recent Greenpeace report has already warned that the Amazon may become the source of the next zoonotic pandemic.

Third, nature-based industries have been hit hard due to the pandemic. In Africa, wildlife tourism is a USD 30 billion industry employing about four million people. As safari tourism is now closed due to Covid-19, unemployment and food insecurity are on the rise in many African countries, leading to a significant increase in wildlife poaching as a source of income and food.

However, before the "corona crisis", we were alerted about the unprecedented global "biodiversity crisis". Last May, the United Nations reported that one in every eight plant and animal species of the world would be extinct in the next few decades unless we



Dolphins spotted in Istanbul, coming further up the Bosphorus than usual.

PHOTO: AFP

When it comes to nature conservation, Bangladesh took some amazing actions over the last 50 years. The country, for example, passed the Bangladesh Wild Life (Preservation) Act, 1974 soon after its independence, which was later updated in 2012. In 2011, the constitution was amended to make biodiversity conservation a responsibility of the state. And last November, the Bangladesh Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution on "Planetary Emergency" considering the dire climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

So, as the Government of Bangladesh allocates resources to tackle the pandemic and its aftermath, and continues reviving its economy, we expect its visionary leadership also in protecting biodiversity. Bangladesh can do so by taking immediate major actions to

plan, manage and fund nature conservation.

First, a quick analysis of relevant strategic and planning documents of Bangladesh show that we have widely embraced nature-based activities to ensure people's well-being and resilience to climate change—be it the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2009), the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, or the Seventh Five-Year Plan (2015–2020). We plan to harness benefits from nature in numerous ways—sustainably managed forests and wetlands give us food, water, fuel, medicines, and a liveable environment, while coastal plantation protects us from cyclones and storm surges. In the post-corona era, we must continue putting nature at the centre of our development, as we prepare the Eighth Five-Year Plan (2020–2025)

US military drawdown in Saudi Arabia threatens to fuel arms race

The Trump administration's decision to withdraw Patriot anti-missile defence batteries from Saudi Arabia is likely to fuel an already brewing arms race as the kingdom attempts to catch-up with Iran's nuclear development as well as its space, ballistic missile, and drone capabilities



JAMES M DORSEY

ONE thing is certain, the recent US military pullback from Saudi Arabia will fuel a brewing arms race in the Middle East at a time when the region, struggling with the public health and devastating economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic, can least afford it. Saudi Arabia is likely to see the withdrawal, despite a seemingly reassuring phone call between Saudi King Salman and President Donald J Trump, as further evidence that it cannot fully rely, for its defence, on the United States.

The drawdown involves two US Patriot anti-missile systems that were sent to the kingdom last year to bolster its defences in the wake of alleged Iranian watershed attacks on Saudi oil facilities and oil tankers off the coast of the United Arab Emirates. The withdrawal came on the heels of the successful launch of Iran's first military reconnaissance satellite that not only catapulted the Islamic Republic into an elite group of about a dozen countries capable of orbital launches, but also signalled its capabilities despite crippling US economic sanctions and a public healthcare crisis.

The satellite "will play a role in identification missions and in providing strategic assistance to the armed forces in identification, communication, and navigation missions... We must use these satellites and provide services to the armed forces," said Iranian General Ali Jafarabadi, the commander of the Revolutionary Guards' space division. Iran hawks in the United States and Israel worry that the satellite will enhance the Islamic

Republic's ballistic missile capability, a pillar of its defence strategy, as well as the ability of Hezbollah, the pro-Iranian Shiite militia in Lebanon, to convert its rocket and GPS-guided weapons stockpile into smart munitions.

The Trump administration's drawdown decision was announced amid estimates that Iran's gradual backing away from a 2015 international agreement—that curbed its nuclear programme in response to a US withdrawal from the accord in 2018—had

warning, at the time that Trump was gearing up to withdraw from the nuclear agreement, that "without a doubt if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible."

A report last week by the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) suggested that talks with the kingdom on US help to create a Saudi civil nuclear programme had stalled because of Saudi reluctance to agree to enrichment and reprocessing restrictions and signing of an Additional Protocol with the

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which would allow IAEA to obtain expanded information about Saudi nuclear activities and grant it access to facilities. The development of a local defence industry

is a pillar of Prince Mohammed's troubled Vision 2030 plan, designed to streamline and diversify the Saudi economy that has been thrown into doubt by the global economic depression. The kingdom this week tripled sales taxes from five to 15 percent and suspended cost-of-living allowances for government employees to cope with a fiscal crunch.

Anthony Cordesman, a Washington-based Gulf military analyst, warned that the Saudi plan to build a defence industry was not the best way to diversify the kingdom's economy, even if it would create some jobs and boost its technology sector. There is "virtually no way to waste money more effectively than trying to create an effective technology base or fund a weapons assembly effort in an area of industry and technology which is so demanding, offers so few real-world benefits in job creation, and where there often is so little ability to use the technology needed for specific weapons or purposes—particularly civil ones," Cordesman said.

"Such an effort would involve other problems—the domestic needs for such weapons is limited and Saudi Arabia would likely be unable to compete in selling these weapons on the international market," Cordesman went on to say. Iran's satellite launch is the latest building block in an arms race that Iran, like the UAE, is ironically better placed than Saudi Arabia to compete in, given its already existing defence industry and more diversified industrial base. Ballistic missiles and drones are other building blocks. Satellite images revealed last year that Saudi Arabia had a facility deep in the desert designed to test and possibly manufacture ballistic missiles that potentially would be capable of delivering nuclear warheads to targets thousands of kilometres from their

launch point. The facility is believed to be intended to counter Iran's far advanced ballistic missile programme.

The kingdom is similarly set to begin next year producing military drones that would match Iran's bomb-carrying unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that reportedly have a range of 1,500 kilometres.

China agreed in 2017 to build a facility in Saudi Arabia to produce UAVs, the People's Republic's first overseas military manufacturing site.

"The Middle East has become a drone warfare theatre," said Alessandro Arduino, a drone warfare researcher at Singapore's Middle East Institute. "Their deployment has ushered in a new era of post-coronavirus deterrence and turned conventional military doctrine on its head. From Yemen to Libya and Syria, warring parties resist calls for a truce, emboldened by the role of armed UAVs."

The reality on the ground, however, is neither of these countries can presently afford the extraordinary financial and technological cost of such militaristic endeavours when their economies are battered by a far-reaching global depression, a collapse of oil prices, and a health pandemic. Iran, moreover, is struggling to grope with US sanctions while Saudi Arabia faces painful fiscal problems and structural reforms.

This story was first published in Inside Arabia. A podcast version of this story is available on Soundcloud, iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, TuneIn, Speaker, Pocket Casts, Tumblr, Podbean, Audible, Patreon and Castbox.

Dr James M Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and a senior fellow at Nanyang Technological University's S Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore. He is also an adjunct senior research fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute and co-director of the University of Wuerzburg's Institute of Fan Culture in Germany.



PHOTO: SEBASTIAN APEL-U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE VIA AP

In 2019, the US sent Patriot missile batteries to Saudi Arabia to bolster its defences in the wake of alleged Iranian watershed attacks on Saudi oil facilities.

cut in half the time it would need to produce enough weapons-grade fuel to build a nuclear weapon.

The risk of an arms race was explicit in Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's

QUOTABLE Quote

JOHN STUART MILL
(1806-1873)
British philosopher and economist.

One person with a belief is equal to ninety-nine who have only interests.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Tie
- 5 Acid's opposite
- 9 Michelangelo work
- 10 Smooths out
- 12 Raring to go
- 13 Showed over
- 14 Jail, in slang
- 16 Thurman of "Kill Bill"
- 17 -- Aviv
- 18 Unpopular mailer
- 20 Folk-blues singer
- 22 Land in the sea
- 23 Roulette bet
- 25 Movie pooch
- 28 Basswood tree
- 32 Fraud

perpetrator

- 34 Genesis name
- 35 Sandy color
- 36 Speak haltingly
- 38 Annoyed
- 40 Located
- 41 Prefix with surgeon
- 42 Two score
- 43 Relaxing places
- 44 Seine seasons

DOWN

- 1 Used a rotary phone
- 2 Entertain
- 3 "Up and --!"
- 4 Grows fond of
- 5 Hall of Fame catcher
- 6 Broad st.

- 7 Virus fighters
- 8 Paint type
- 9 Trattoria sauce
- 11 Catch
- 15 Shoulder ornament
- 19 Bearing
- 21 Trolley's kin
- 24 Tall grazer
- 25 Sean of "The Lord of the Rings"
- 26 Frightens
- 27 Knock back a few
- 29 Coy
- 30 History makeup
- 31 Bookish, perhaps
- 33 Precursor of Windows
- 37 Irrelevant
- 39 Stretch of years

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

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

S	O	P	S	E	R	P
T	R	I	A	D	E	X
U	N	C	L	E	S	A
B	A	T	P	R	O	M
S	T	U	D	I	O	S
E	R	E	C	T	P	E
E	A	T	C	O	D	S
L	A	P	D	C	O	O
E	R	A	B	A	U	H
M	A	L	T	E	D	S
O	M	A	H	A	I	R
N	I	C	E	R	N	O
S	E	N	D	B	E	S

BEETLE BAILEY BY MORT WALKER

WHEN I LET THEM HAVE "CASUAL FRIDAY" I DIDN'T MEAN THIS!

YOU SHOULD BE MORE SPECIFIC

NEXT WEEK, IT'S "FORMAL FRIDAY"

BABY BLUES BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

MOM, CAN I HAVE A SLEEP-OVER WITH MY FRIEND BROOKLYN THIS WEEKEND?

SURE!

BWAA-HA-HAAAA

AND CAN I HAVE A SLEEP-OVER WITH MY FRIEND BROOKLYN THIS WEEKEND?

SORRY, WE'S PART OF THE PACKAGE.

Shops, markets closed indefinitely again

Pabna district administration stepped in as shop owners and public failed to comply with precautionary measures aimed at containing the spread of Covid-19 pandemic

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The district administration on Monday again shut down all shops and markets in Pabna for an indefinite period after finding gross violations of safe physical distancing and health safety measures that it made prerequisites for reopening the shops and markets on May 10.

The decision came around 4:00pm on Monday when people thronged the markets and shops in Pabna town and elsewhere in the district, ignoring all precautionary measures being recommended by the authorities to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

However, shops selling daily essentials and medicines will be out of the purview of the decision.

Kabir Mahamud, the deputy commissioner of Pabna, said, "The shops and markets were allowed to resume operations on a small scale from May 10, on the condition that social distancing measures would be maintained. But nobody seems to care about it."

"We asked business owners and the general public to maintain social distance, but no one complied. Therefore, we have decided to close the markets again. We already made announcements about the closure of the shops and markets."

There are hardly any people seen on streets in an ordinary morning during the month of Ramadan in the country. However, around nine o'clock in the morning this Monday, hoards of shoppers crowded the shops in Pabna town to buy popular items on the occasion of the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr, one of the largest festivals for Muslims.

During a visit that day in New Market area, this correspondent did not notice any safety measures taken by any shop owner or market authorities.

The shoppers were also found least concerned about the looming threat of the highly contagious pandemic that has been wreaking havoc all over the world for the most part of this year.

Since the shops were to close by 4:00pm, the crowd of shoppers continued to grow till the last minute.

When asked, Nasrin Mita, an Eid shopper, said like most other shoppers, she and her family members came to the market in the morning because shopping hours were restricted till 4:00pm.

Shopkeeper Abul Bashar, in Natun Goli area of the town, said the markets were crowded as all the shoppers were rushing to finish their shopping within 4:00pm.

He also said the shop owners will incur huge losses due to the sudden decision of closure of the shops.

Contacted, ABM Fazlur Rahman, director of Pabna Chamber of Commerce and Industries, said before reopening their businesses, shop owners and market authorities had agreed to the condition that they would ensure physical distancing and health safety measures for shoppers as well as for their employees.

But after they failed to ensure the measures amid a huge pressure of shoppers, the district administration had to close them down again, he added.



A section of the people gathered in New Market area of Pabna town. The photo was taken on Monday morning.

PHOTO:
STAR



Facebook page of Patuakhali Basir Doktor (Doctors for the People of Patuakhali) that includes lists (one of them in picture) of doctors available for telemedicine services.

PHOTO:
SOHRAB HOSSAIN

FREE TELEMEDICINE SERVICE IN PATUAKHALI

Facebook-based initiative benefits general patients during Covid-19 shutdown

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

A team of doctors under the banner of "Patuakhali Basir Doktor" (Doctors for the People of Patuakhali) are providing telemedicine services to the people of the district, facilitating treatment for general patients during the adverse situation amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The organisation, comprising doctors hailing from Patuakhali, started its activities in mid-March, allowing the general patients to receive free treatment by joining their Facebook page.

Patients can call the doctor concerned on his mobile phone and seek suggestion for their problem.

The doctors, who are working in various organisations at home and abroad, are spontaneously serving the people of the district through the Facebook page, often

giving required advice after seeing the report through Messenger.

They include specialists in medicine, cardiology, kidney, liver, skin and sex, dentistry, physiotherapy, gynaecology and paediatrics as well as those who have recently passed from different departments of famous medical colleges of the country.

Entering the group, one will find lists of doctors, with mobile numbers and information about when they will be available for consultation.

Many of the beneficiaries have posted status, expressing gratitude and hailing the noble initiative of the

ডাক্তারদের তালিকা	
Dr. Nurun Nigar BBA D-50 (Haram) Bazar, Dhaka Dhaka-1000 (Phoneline) Dhaka-1000 (Mobile) Mobile: 0171-600000	Dr. Mubashir Khan MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558
Dr. Md. Masud Rahman MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558	Dr. Md. Masud Rahman MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558
Dr. Shafiqul Islam MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558	Dr. Anisul Hossain MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558
Dr. Masud Hassan MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558	Dr. Masud Hassan MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558
Dr. Masud Hassan MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558	Dr. Masud Hassan MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558
Dr. A. M. Siddiq MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558	Dr. Masud Hassan MBBS, DNB General Physician Mobile: 0171-3481558

doctors for their benevolent services during the crisis period.

"My nine-year-old daughter was suffering from constipation, but I failed to arrange treatment for her in any hospital or clinic. Then I contacted Dr Chandan Kumar Saha,

a paediatrician in the Facebook group. My daughter is now well with his treatment," said Mokhlesur Rahman, a resident of Sabujbagh area of Patuakhali town.

"The initiative to bring medical services to home through telemedicine is encouraging for ordinary people like us in this difficult time," he said, adding that there should be more publicity about this service.

Arif Sohag, a resident of Pura Bazar area of the district town, said he recovered with treatment from the doctors of this group from home after he got a slight fever with some other ailments.

Sumon Zahid, one of the founders of the Patuakhali-based group, said more than a hundred doctors have already joined the group and over 6,000 members have been enlisted to get telemedicine services.


The service will be gradually extended to the grass roots level of Patuakhali district, he said.

"This is our humble attempt to provide emergency medical services to the people at such a bad time. We have plans to expand the scope of telemedicine services in future," said Faizul Haque Zurich, another member of the group.



Litchis in different areas of Akhaura and Bijoyagar upazilas under Brahmanbaria see cracks and dropping before maturity due to a drought-like situation, much to the worry of farmers who had expected bumper yield following good flowering of the popular summer fruit this season. The photo was taken from an orchard in Akhaura's Azampur village on Saturday.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY



Dhaka Tannery Industrial Estate Waste Treatment Plant Company Ltd.
Tannery Industrial Estate, Savar, Dhaka
E-mail : info@bscic.gov.bd , web-site: www.bscic.gov.bd

Vacancy Announcement
Invitation of application for the position of Managing Director

Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) under Ministry of Industries established Tannery Industrial Estate at Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh with a land area of 200 acres (80 hectares). The estate comprises 155 tannery industries with facilities of a Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP), a Water Treatment Plant and Solid Waste Management System. For smooth operation of the facilities of the Tannery Industrial Estate (CETP, Water Treatment Plant and Solid Waste Management etc.) a company was formed under Company Act, 1994 (Act XVIII of 1994) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The company has planned to get 'Leather Working Group (LWG)' certificate as soon as possible. Thus, the Estate, including tannery industries, has to qualify for LWG certificate. Taking all these into account the Company has planned to recruit a Managing Director for smooth operation and maintenance of the CETP, Water Treatment Plant, Solid Waste management and related issues in the Tannery Industrial Estate, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Managing Director has to plan, design and implement activities related to CETP, Water Treatment Plant and Solid Waste Management in the tannery industries to such standard position that will help to get LWG Certificate in a sustainable manner. Therefore, the Managing Director has to deliver services in such a way that the tannery industries of the Estate can achieve LWG certificate as soon as possible.

2. The position is opened for qualified candidates from home and abroad.

Position: Managing Director

Dhaka Tannery Industrial Estate Waste Treatment Plant Company Limited is going to hire an experienced Managing Director.

Vacancy Details

Post Title	Managing Director (MD)
Post Level	Fixed-Term Appointment
Company Title	Dhaka Tannery Industrial Estate Waste Treatment Plant Company Limited
Duty Station	Tannery Industrial Estate, Dhaka (TIED)
Closing Date	18 June, 2020

Duties and Responsibilities
Subject to the supervision, control and decision of the Board of Directors of the Company, the Managing Director shall perform the following duties:

- To prepare, monitor and implement the budget of the Company
- To appoint requisite manpower
- To operate, maintain and upgrade CETP
- To obtain and acquire assets, rights, licenses and membership for the Company and to pay the cost incurred
- To buy and sell assets and properties of the Company with the approval of the Board of Directors and Extra Ordinary General Meeting
- To delegate any power to any director or officer of the Company or any other competent person
- To dispose of any demand, compromise out of court and can withdraw or revoke for arbitration and signed and execute any deed
- To appoint one or more representative and to take active role in the criminal, civil, and revenue court, in the cases where the company is implicated
- To assist the development, promotion and implementation of new waste disposal schemes
- To ensure compliance with legislation in the transportation, handling and disposal of waste
- To collect statistics and compile reports
- To monitor the quality and performance of waste services, including contract management of external providers
- To meet 5R (Reduce, Re-use, Refuse, recycle and recover) waste management principles
- To deal with enquiries and complaints from members of the public both in person and by phone or email
- To investigate and follow up claims of the illegal dumping of waste and work with other waste regulation enforcement staff
- To consult with residents, community groups, representative of Local Government, housing associations and traders' associations about waste management issues, identify their requirements and provide appropriate solutions
- To develop research projects and contribute to the activities of national groups concerned with waste disposal
- To attend meetings with MoI, MoC, BSCIC, DoE, and other Government Department/Agencies/NGOs and others
- To Practice results-Based Management System
- To report to the Board of Directors about the condition, operation of Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP), Water Treatment Plant as well as other waste treatment facilities and activities on a regular basis and also to inform the Board about any development regarding the above-mentioned issues as soon as possible.

Core Values/Competencies

- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Planning & Organizing
- Accountability
- Commitment to Continuous Learning
- Technological Awareness
- Client Satisfaction
- Commitment to Continuous Learning

Education

- Masters in Environmental science/ Environmental Engineering or similar from internationally recognized University

Experiences

- 10 Years of working experience of which:
 - 5 years in tannery management
 - 5 years in company management
- Knowledge and experiences of best practices of solid, liquid waste, gas and sound pollution management
- Working experience with UNIDO in waste management

Skills

- Ability to grasp complex and dynamic legislation
- Capacity to explain, apply and monitor such legislation
- Patience and resilience
- Analytical, problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Leadership and management qualities
- Good organizational and administrative skills
- Interest in, and understanding of, environment and sustainability issues
- Good IT and general office skills

Language

- Effective communication skills (both oral and written) in English

Age and Fitness

- Age is between 45-55 years
- Physically and mentally sound
- Hardworking
- Capable of handling tough situation

Working hours

- 9am to 5pm
- Facilities are open seven days a week, so weekend work is a possibility

Compensation Package

- Basic Salary, House Rent allowance, Medical Benefits, Bonus, other Fringe Benefits and other allowances (Negotiable)
- Income Tax to be paid by the employee

Duration of the service

- The initial contract period of the service shall be 01 (One) year. Further contract is renewable based on satisfactory performance subject to approval of the company's Board of Directors

Submission of Applications

- Interested candidate shall have to submit application along with the following documents via E-mail: info@bscic.gov.bd
 - CV with a cover letter signed by applicant
 - Scanned copies of all educational certificates and experience certificates including training and other activities
 - Scanned copies of National ID card & Nationality certificate from competent authority
 - Two copies of recent PP size photograph
 - Submission deadline: 18 June 2020.
- Dhaka Tannery Industrial Estate Waste Treatment Plant Company Limited** reserves the right to accept and cancel any or all application or this appointment process without assigning any reason.

(Md. Mostaque Hassan, ndc)
Chairman
Dhaka Tannery Industrial Estate Waste Treatment Plant Company Ltd.
&
Chairman,
Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC)
137-138, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

GD-875

SPORT

BOLT BECOMES A FATHER

Jamaica's Olympic sprint legend Usain Bolt has become a father for the first time after welcoming the birth of a baby girl with partner Kasi Bennett, reports said Monday. Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness appeared to confirm the birth of Bolt's daughter in a social media post. "Congratulations to our sprint legend Usain Bolt and Kasi Bennett on the arrival of their baby girl!" Holness wrote on Twitter. Local media reports said the couple's daughter was born on Sunday. Bolt, 33, had revealed he was expecting a daughter with Bennett on social media in March, jokingly warning any future suitors to steer clear of his daughter. —AFP



No Serie A before June 14: FIGC

AFP, Milan
The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) announced on Monday that all competitions will be suspended until June 14. The Serie A had hoped for a return on June 13 but the FIGC has pushed back the date in line with a government decree that all competitions be suspended until next month.

The FIGC said the choice was made "pending any further... decision by the authorities", suggesting the possibility of a restart on June 13 might still exist. The Italian season has been on hold since March 9 but Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte on Saturday said he needed "more guarantees" before the green light could be given for football to resume.

ICC suggests ban on saliva

REUTERS
The age-old trick of using saliva to shine a cricket ball could be a thing of the past when cricket resumes, with the ICC on Monday recommending a change to the sport's laws. "We are living through extraordinary times and the recommendations the committee have made today are interim measures to enable us to safely resume cricket in a way that preserves the essence of our game," Anil Kumble, who chaired the meeting, said. The ICC added that it would be presented to its Chief Executives' Committee for approval in June.

Kohli bares his secrets

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

India's batting maestro Virat Kohli is known for his steady resolve and endurance in the most difficult of chases. During a live Facebook chat with Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal, he talked about that 'pure intent' from childhood which helped him build his vast reserve of mental stamina and gave a glimpse of many of his secrets. While Tamim had meant for the talk between the two to be an entertaining one, with people across the country in lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, it turned out to be an educational one for any



You do it in practice but more importantly try and do them in one or two matches. If you execute in matches then your confidence goes up. You have to keep your mind open. Many players have a mindset that they will only play a certain way. But if an opposition figures you out, you have to stay ahead and that is how you remain consistent.

Virat Kohli
INDIA CAPTAIN

serious cricketer out there. If Kohli's resolve is stone-cold, his mindset is more versatile and adaptable than what most would anticipate. He does not focus on one true formula in order to improve his game. Many established cricketers define and confine themselves to a certain way. Kohli understood early

that what works for one person does not necessarily work for another. But he is the most successful run-getter of modern era and thus he must be doing something right. So, the Bangladesh cricketers had their questions lined up for the Indian maestro. "They want to know some things about you and they are all cricket related," Tamim began. Like any other batsman, functionality was in Kohli's mind but he admitted that natural talent is not what everyone can rely upon. Asked about how he started shuffling in the crease after having stayed still during the beginning of his career, Kohli revealed an innate desire to remain ahead of the game. "I felt I needed to play all over the ground and the static position somehow made my options limited. It didn't work for me but for many it does. Sachin Tendulkar used to remain static and he never had a problem as his hand-eye coordination and technique was much superior. "I had to bring changes little by little during different points in time. I don't understand until I try and if you ever feel that you need to try something then you should do it. You do it in practice but more importantly try and do them in one or two matches. If you execute in matches then your confidence goes up. You have to keep

your mind open. Many players have a mindset that they will only play a certain way. But if an opposition figures you out, you have to stay ahead and that is how you remain consistent. Any batsman should remain open to positive change and if it doesn't work you can get back to what you used to do," he told Tamim. It revealed much about what one needs to do to be successful in the modern game. Kohli said that he does not have a set pattern for preparation with the only exception being diet and fitness. "Everyone has a different template [for preparation]," he pointed out. "You can't remain intense all the time. If you have a good mental state then you go to matches with a good feeling and with confidence. We can all play cricket but sometimes we overcomplicate things and pressure ourselves." Kohli's understanding of the game is an example for everybody but while talking about various issues, he gave a peak into where it all emanates from -- the urge to compete and win. "While young, I would watch matches on TV and when India didn't win while chasing, I always used to think I could make the team win if I was there. That joy and intent comes out when I chase," Kohli said, and his intent is something that any cricketer can learn from.

Leverkusen thrash Bremen

REUTERS, Bremen



BUNDESLIGA

Bayer Leverkusen stayed in the hunt for a top-four finish in the Bundesliga after two goals by striker Kai Havertz as well as one each by Mitchell Weiser and Kerem Demirbay helped them to a 4-1 win at struggling Werder Bremen on Monday. The result left Bayer fifth on 50 points from 26 games, one behind fourth-placed Leipzig and eight adrift of leaders Bayern Munich. Werder, who suffered a record-extending seventh straight home defeat, stayed 17th on 18 points from 25 matches.



Leverkusen's Kai Havertz (C) scores the opening goal during his side's Bundesliga clash against Werder Bremen on Monday. The German midfielder scored twice as Leverkusen ran out 4-1 winners.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Cristiano Ronaldo rejoined Juventus for training yesterday after an absence of 72 days, including the past two weeks in quarantine, prompting fans to turn up for a glimpse.

Babar wants to emulate Imran as captain

ICC

Having been recently handed the reins of the ODI side in addition to T20I leadership, which he took over in later 2019, Babar Azam has already set himself targets. Top on his priority list is to help Pakistan scale back up the ODI charts after they slipped to No.6 in the team Rankings. "I've captained the U19 as well as the T20I team in the past," Azam reflected during a media interaction. "When I look at our rankings in the formats, it is not acceptable for me and my task is to bring that up to the top three. PCB thought I was ready and they gave it to me. I'm ready." Azam said that he wants to evolve into an attacking captain in the mould of Imran Khan, who led Pakistan to World Cup glory in 1992. "When you are captaining, you need to have a bit of a cool mind, you've to carry your team along, you've to be methodical with your plans against the opposition to get them out," he said. "You have to be a little controlled, inside you may feel angry but you have to be in control. I learnt this in U19. In the ground,



you may have to tone down the aggression and give the players confidence. If you back your players 110%, they'll do that well. I want to be an attacking captain. I want to adopt the Imran Khan style." Azam is confident the added responsibility of captaincy will not have an effect on his batting. "I'm a fan of challenges. Captaincy and batting are a little different. When you are batting, you are just focussing on batting and not thinking about captaincy. It's only when you are done with batting that you start thinking about team performance. My aim is to continue performing the same way even as captain."

Tigers, India delay call on SL tour

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's cricket board (BCCI) will wait for more clarity on international travel restrictions before making a call on the tour of Sri Lanka in July, an official told Reuters. "Nothing has been decided as yet, because we are not sure what would be the travel restrictions then," BCCI treasurer Arun Singh Dhumal said. "There is no clarity. So we'll wait for that and accordingly take a call." Bangladesh are being similarly cautious for their three-test series in Sri Lanka in July and August. "We have to look at travelling restrictions in Bangladesh, and the quarantine protocols in both countries," Bangladesh Cricket Board chief executive Nizamuddin Chowdhury told ESPNcricinfo. "We have to be mindful of the players' readiness."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Statistics and Informatics Division
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
National Household Database (NHD) Project
Parishankhyan Bhaban (9th Floor, Block-I)
E-27/A, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207

Memo No. 52.031.011.100.01.448.2020-738 Date: 18/05/2020

Request for Expression of Interest (Re-REOI) for Individual Consultant

1	Ministry/Division	Statistics and Informatics Division.
2	Agency	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
3	Name of procuring entity	Project Director, National Household Database (NHD) Project.
4	Title of service	Selection of Database Management Specialist (DMS) (National).
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Individual Consultant (Time Based).
7	EOI Ref. No.	52.031.011.100.01.448.2020-
8	Date	18-05-2020
KEY INFORMATION		
9	Procurement sub-method	Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC).
FUNDING INFORMATION		
10	Budget and source of funds	Development, Aid Grant/Credit.
11	Development partners (if applicable)	IDA.
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	1631-5013 (Credit No. 5281-BD & 6137-BD).
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)	National Household Database (NHD) Project.
14	EOI closing date & time	Date: 04 June 2020. Re-EOI shall be submitted in sealed envelope marked with "Expression of Interest for Database Management Specialist". Time: 03:00pm
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
15	Brief description of the assignment	The DMS will be responsible for the overall database development and management activities of the project, develop and document an MIS development plan based on the project objectives, develop a concrete action plan to roll out the system taking into consideration of data entry strategy, data collection and training, plan the data migration mechanism from BBS to Department of Disaster Management (DDM) and other organizations, ministries, etc., closely work as a member of joint technical pool (BBS and DDM) to supervise and monitor the overall MIS development activities and progress, support storage and analysis of data collected during surveys using automated tools like Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) techniques, identify training and capacity building needs for BBS staffs and relevant users at central and local levels to ensure long-term system sustainability.
16	Qualification and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should have at least Bachelor degree in ICT/CSE/CST/EEE/ECE or related discipline (Master degree in relevant field preferred). Advanced academic/professional qualifications in relevant field from recognized institutes will be added advantage. Minimum 05 (five) years' work experience in the related field in any government/semi-government/autonomous organization/reputed private sector enterprise. Skills in programming in PHP, HTML and RDBMS as backend. Sound understanding on data management, analysis and migration using MS Access, Oracle, VB, net framework, SPSS, Stata, open sources like MySQL and other related software. Experience in the area of design and implementation of MIS. Strong communication skills in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues. Excellent spoken and written skills in Bangla and English.
17	Other details	Duration of the consultancy is initially for one year. Interested applicants may obtain the Terms of Reference (ToR) downloading from the website: www.sic.gov.bd or www.bbs.gov.bd
CLIENT DETAILS		
18	Name of the official inviting EOI	Kazi Tofail Hossain.
19	Designation of the official inviting EOI	Project Director (Add'l Charge) & Deputy Project Director.
20	Address of the official inviting EOI	National Household Database (NHD) Project, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Parishankhyan Bhaban (9th Floor, Block-I), E-27/A, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.
21	Contact details of the official inviting REOI	Phone: 02-55007001 E-mail: pd_bpd@yahoo.com
22	The client reserves the right to accept or reject any/all Expression of Interests.	

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SHAH CEMENT

Nitor struggles with bike crash victims

Empty roads amid shutdown lead to high-speed crashes

SHAHEEN MOLLAH AND RAFIUL ISLAM

Abul Hashem was going to his betel leaf field in Kushtia's Daulatpur upazila as a pillion passenger of his son's motorcycle on May 10.

To avoid a possible clash with a locally made three-wheeler, his son lost control over the bike.

The three-wheeler, which suddenly appeared from a brick kiln, ran over and crushed Hashem's right hand.

The 65-year-old man was taken to the capital's National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor) where his right hand had to be amputated to save his life.

"We were carrying a sack of oilcake on the motorcycle for the betel leaf field, around seven kilometres away from home. We go to the field on motorcycle as a small number of vehicles ply the road due to the shutdown," said Hashem lying on a sickbed at the hospital's emergency ward.

"Doctors first wanted to save my hand by conducting two surgeries, but they were forced to amputate during the third one," he said.

Like Hashem, many people are taking motorcycle ride as their means

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Rokeya and Kohinoor heading out from the city's Mugdapara to search for work. For over a month, the two labourers ventured out every day but mostly in vain. Like them, many in the lower-income group are struggling to find work due to the ongoing shutdown. The photo was taken yesterday morning.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

RMG workers demonstrate for work, pay, bonus

STAR REPORT

Several thousand workers of at least 10 garment factories in Ashulia, Dhamrai, Gazipur, Narayanganj and Chattogram industrial belts demonstrated demanding to reopen their factories, salaries for May and Eid bonus.

Of the factories, five were in Ashulia and Dhamrai, three in Gazipur and one each in Narayanganj and Chattogram.

The agitating workers vandalised a few cars. Police used water cannons and tear gas.

The workers demanded partial salary for May and full payment of Eid bonus, instead of 50 percent announced by the government.

The government on Saturday asked the factory owners to pay the full bonus to the workers, but 50 percent before Eid and the rest later.

Some 1,000 workers of Momo Fashions Ltd in Dhaka's Dhamrai upazila and took to the streets demanding to reopen the factory.

Police said as the workers protested for their salaries inside the factory on Monday, the authorities announced the closure of the factory yesterday, to the dismay of the workers.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Shab-e-Qadr tonight

STAR REPORT

Muslims across the country are set to observe the holy Shab-e-Qadr or Lailatul Qadr tonight.

The night marks the revelation of the first verses of the holy Quran to Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).

According to the holy Quran, Lailatul Qadr or the Night of Decree is better than a 1,000 nights as the angels and the spirits descend therein with the permission of Almighty Allah.

Muslims traditionally observe the occasion through nightlong prayers, milad mahfils, Quran Khwani, and religious discussions at homes and mosques.

Devotees also visit graveyards to seek eternal blessings for the departed souls of near and dear ones.

Newspapers publish special articles while the state-run radio and television, and other private TV channels air special programmes to highlight the significance of the night.

Thursday will be a public holiday.

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Ensure peace in industrial areas



Bangabandhu speaking at the inaugural session of Jatiya Sramik League's two-day convention on May 20, 1972 at the premises of Dhaka Cotton Mill.

May 20, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S MESSAGE TO WORKERS

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today calls upon workers to maintain peace in the industrial areas and devote themselves to the task of reconstruction of the country's war-ravaged economy. Speaking at the inaugural session of the two-day convention of Jatiya Sramik League the prime minister says that a lot of sacrifice is required to establish socialism.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

4 die after showing Covid-19 symptoms

STAR REPORT

At least four people with Covid-19 symptoms died in two districts since Monday evening.

Of them, three were from Cumilla's Muradnagar and Nangolkot upazilas while the other was from Noakhali's Begumganj upazila.

One of the deceased -- a 70-year-old man -- had been suffering from fever and diarrhoea for the last couple of days.

Locals said some of his relatives from Narayanganj visited his home a few days ago and he started showing Covid-19 symptoms since then.

He died on Monday night at his residence which has been put under lockdown after the death, said Avishek Das, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Muradnagar.

Another deceased aged about 50 returned his village home in Nangolkot

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Baul Ranesh's music room torched

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The music room of Baul Ranesh Thakur of Sunamganj's Derai upazila -- a notable disciple of Baul Shah Abdul Karim -- has been burnt down allegedly by unidentified miscreants.

The fire started at the room adjacent to Ranesh's house at Ujandhal village on Monday around 1:40am, said KM Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Derai Police Station.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING MAY 20

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	3:44	12:45	5:00	6:40	8:00
JAMAAT	3:54	1:15	5:15	6:50	8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MAY	SEHRI	IFTAR
26	20	6:40	
27	21	3:44	6:40
28	22	3:43	6:41



Lychee traders sorting out the fruit while buyers examine the quality of this year's harvest in Rangamati's Samataghat area. Growers and traders in the district have been frustrated by the falling prices amid a shutdown in force to slow the spread of coronavirus.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

COVID-19 RESPONSE

WHO states agree to probe

China accuses US of smear

AFP, Geneva

World Health Organization member states yesterday agreed to an independent probe into the UN agency's coronavirus response as US criticism mounted over its handling of the pandemic.

Countries taking part in the WHO's annual assembly, being held virtually for the first time, adopted a resolution by consensus urging a joint response to the crisis.

The resolution, tabled by the European Union, called for an "impartial, independent and

comprehensive evaluation" of the international response to the pandemic, which has so far infected more than 4.8 million people and killed over 319,000.

It said the investigation should include a probe of "the actions of WHO and their time-lines pertaining to the Covid-19 pandemic".

The United States did not disassociate itself from the consensus as some had feared after Washington chastised the WHO on the first day of the assembly Monday and lashed out further against China over its role in the outbreak.

US President Donald Trump threatened late Monday to pull the United States out of the WHO, accusing it of botching the global coronavirus response and of being a "puppet of China".

His comments, which drew a harsh rebuke from Beijing, came after his health secretary Alex Azar earlier in the day insisted the WHO's "failure" to obtain and provide vital information on Covid-19 had proved deadly.

"We must be frank about one of the primary reasons this outbreak spun

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

কোভিড-১৯ থেকে বাঁচতে হলে ঘরেই থাকি, সুস্থ থাকি

- করোনায় সারা বিশ্ব আছ বিপর্যস্ত।
- মানুষ বাসা-বাড়ি থেকে বের না হলে সংক্রমণের ঝুঁকি কমাতে হবে।
- মনে রাখবেন, অসাবধানতায় যে কেউ যে কোন সময় করোনা ভাইরাসে আক্রান্ত হতে পারে।

কাজেই ঘরেই থাকুন, সুস্থ থাকুন

- সামাজিক দূরত্ব বজায় রাখুন, পরস্পরের মধ্যে কমপক্ষে তিন (৩) ফুট দূরত্ব বজায় রাখুন।
- একান্ত প্রয়োজনে বাইরে গেলে অবশ্যই মাস্ক পড়ুন।
- স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সব স্বাস্থ্যবিধি অবশ্যই মেনে চলুন।
- বারবার সাবান পানি দিয়ে কমপক্ষে ২০ সেকেন্ড হাত ধোবেন। অপরিস্কৃত হাত নিয়ে মুখ, নাক ও চোখ হবেন না।
- বাচ্চাদের স্বাস্থ্য বিধি শিখান এবং তাদেরকে ঘরে রাখতে খেলাধুলা, গল্প, ছুঁড়া, শিক্ষা ও বিনোদনমূলক কাজের সাথে সম্পৃক্ত রাখুন।
- নিয়মিত কুসুম গরম পানি, আদা চা এবং গরম স্যুপ পান করুন। লবণ মিশ্রিত কুসুম গরম পানি দিয়ে দিনে ৩-৪ বার গড়গড়া করুন, নাকে মুখে গরম পানির ডাল দিন।
- জ্বর, সর্দি, কাশি, গলা ব্যথা হলে বাড়িতেই আলোচনা থেকে চিকিৎসা নিন।
- জ্বর কমানোর জন্য প্যারাসিটামল ও সর্দি-কাশির জন্য এন্টিহিস্টামিন (হেমন ফেন্ডোফেনাজিন, প্রোরফেনিরাইন ইত্যাদি) খেতে পারেন।

প্রয়োজনে করোনা বিষয়ক হটলাইনগুলোতে ফোন করুন: ১৬২৬৩; ৩৩৩; ১০৬৫৫; ০১৯৪৪৩৩৩২২২ অথবা নিকটস্থ স্বাস্থ্যকর্মী বা হাসপাতালে যোগাযোগ করুন।

মনে রাখবেন আপনার সুরক্ষা আপনারই হাতে

স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর
স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়