





# Blood banks on verge of drying up

Thalassemia patients suffer as blood donation rate dips due to shutdown

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Dwindling blood donation due to the Covid-19 related shutdown is taking a heavy toll on thalassemia patients, who need frequent blood transfusions depending on their condition.

Blood banks across the country are almost running dry. While regular donors are unable to reach the banks, blood collection through camps in educational institutions are also suspended.

“Usually, I contact ‘Blood Network’ [an organisation that connects patients with donors] for a bag of B-positive blood but this time they failed to help. I finally got the blood from one of my relatives,” the father of a thalassemia patient told The Daily Star yesterday, wishing anonymity.

He fears that he may not get lucky again in finding a donor, lest the pandemic continues.

Another thalassemia patient’s mother said her son developed serious complications when they could not arrange A- negative blood on time.

He had to receive treatment at a government hospital for about a week, before a hospital staff helped collect the blood, she said, wishing anonymity.

Sayed Bodurn Nesa, publicity secretary of Bangladesh Thalassemia Samity Hospital in the capital’s Green Road area, said their blood collection has reduced by 50 percent from that of regular times.

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Scores of fishermen busy drawing their nets, which they had cast to gather freshly laid eggs of carp, on Chattogram’s Halda River. This photo was taken from Hathazari’s Amtua Machuaghona area yesterday morning.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

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## Biggest haul of eggs from Halda in a decade

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

Egg collectors in the Halda river have been delighted by what is this decade’s record haul of eggs in the lone natural breeding ground of carp-like fish in South Asia.

Around 25,536 kgs of eggs were collected from the river yesterday. The number was just 7,000 last year.

The eggs will be hatched in fisheries. The local administration buys a portion of the hatched fry which are then released in the Halda every year to increase the fish stock.

Ruhul Amin, upazila nirbahi officer of Hathazari upazila, told The Daily Star that he released one lakh fries into the Halda last year, adding they planned to do the same this year.

Broodfish started laying eggs early today and a full spawn occurred at 7:30 am at five points along the river.

Around 616 egg collectors took position at various point of the river since Thursday night

## DIGITAL SECURITY ACT Journo held over reports on AL MP in Habiganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have arrested Sushanta Dasgupta, editor and publisher of local newspaper Dainik Amar Habiganj, in a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

Sushanta also runs a platform called Amarp. com that provides contact information about parliamentarians, and allows constituents to communicate with their representatives. The platform was developed with support from the government’s ICT Division.

Rabiul Islam, assistant superintendent of Habiganj police, said the journalist was picked up from the office of his newspaper in Chirakandi area of Habiganj town on Thursday.

Sayeduzzaman Zahir, general secretary of Habiganj Press Club, lodged the case against Sushanta and three other journalists of the newspaper, said Masuk Ali, officer-in-charge of Habiganj Police Station.

Asked about the reason for filing the case, Sayeduzzaman said, “The lawmaker from Habiganj-3, Abu Zahir, is a respected person. He is also the district Awami League president and a lifetime

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## FALLOUT FROM COVID-19

# Left high and dry

87pc of 558 returnee migrant workers have no income opportunities amid shutdown, says Brac report

JAMIL MAHMUD

Some 87 percent of 558 returnee migrant workers do not have income opportunities amid the shutdown enforced to contain coronavirus spread, said a Brac Migration Programme report.

The report said the rest 13 percent are either dependent on family members or have small income from farming.

And some 10 percent returnees have taken loan from formal and informal sources.

The Brac Migration Programme launched the report, “The Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on the Life and Livelihoods of Returnee Migrants”, during a virtual programme yesterday.

It conducted a telephonic survey in April in 13 districts – Dhaka, Munshiganj, Shariatpur, Tangail, Narshingdi, Cumilla, Noakhali, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Siraiganj, Rangpur, Jashore and Khulna.

The respondents, including eight percent female workers, returned between January and March. They aged from below 30 to over 50.

Eighty-six percent respondents returned in March and the others in January and February.

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Forty-five percent of the workers returned from Gulf Cooperation Council countries -- Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait. Of the others, 17 percent returned from Italy, 12 percent from Malaysia and nine percent from Singapore. The rest were from other countries including the UK and the US.

Nearly five lakh people returned from abroad between mid-February and mid-March. They include over 2,00,000 expatriates, the report said, citing home ministry data.

It said 34 percent of the respondents already spent their savings, 33 percent could depend on savings for next three months, and 19 percent for one to two months. Others did not share information to this end.

It added 69 percent returnees could manage their expenses from savings, while the rest depended on others or took loan.

According to the report, 84 percent returnees were uncertain about their future plan, six percent wanted to go back to their workplaces abroad and others thought about small scale agro-based business or groceries at home.

Fifty-two percent returnees were in dire

## Improve business environ, services to draw investment

Japan’s trade body comes up with advice for Dhaka in post-coronavirus times

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Japan has asked Bangladesh to have a blitz on the business environment and services to the existing Japanese companies as preconditions to come by fresh investments from the far-east Asian country.

Many Japanese companies have been looking for new destinations to move their investments from China after the Covid-19 fallout.

To attract these investors, Bangladesh needs to extend all-out support to the existing investors, Yuji Ando, representative of Japan External Trade Organisation (Jetro) in Bangladesh, said in reply to an email sent by The Daily Star.

He recommended that Bangladesh should immediately launch special flights to bring back around 500 Japanese investors and high officials who returned to their country in April after the Covid-19 outbreak and extension of their visas.

“...We need supports in this regards to fully restart the operation in Bangladesh. It will contribute to increasing employment

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## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU’S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

# Reconstruction efforts making good progress



May 23, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

## CONSTRUCTION OF KURMITOLA AIRPORT WILL RESUME IN JUNE

The construction work of the Kurmitola International Airport will resume in June. France will provide technical support for the project. A two-member French team headed by the chief engineer of French civil aviation is currently visiting Bangladesh. They have submitted a survey report to Bangladesh civil aviation authority. The Tk 22-crore project will be completed within four years. The delegation also

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Renowned German journalist, writer and activist Gisela Bonn calls on Bangabandhu at Bangabhaban on 23 May, 1972.



A crowd of people seeking relief materials forcing open the collapsible gate at BNP’s Naya Paltan head office in the capital yesterday morning. The opposition party was handing out relief goods to eligible card-holders as aid to the underprivileged to ease economic hardships during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The relief-seekers were asked to line up outside the office to collect the materials, but their sheer volume and desperation caused them to rush inside.

PHOTO: SHEIKH ENAMUL HAQ

# Coronavirus roils world economy

Chinese premier warns of immense challenges; job losses mount from shutdowns in US

AGENCIES

China warned yesterday that its huge economy faces an immense challenge from the coronavirus, as the ongoing pandemic and national lockdowns caused massive job losses in the US and Latin America.

As Beijing’s communist rulers failed to set an annual growth target for the first time in decades, Asian markets fell, further battered by Chinese moves to crackdown on Hong Kong’s treasured autonomy.

New coronavirus infections have begun to dip in much of the world, but the economic damage from the pandemic is only just beginning, and the disease is continuing its deadly march in Latin America and Russia.

Governments are still struggling to balance measures to prevent the virus -- and head off a feared possible second wave of infections -- with moves to reopen their battered economies.

Britain confirmed yesterday that it would impose a 14-day quarantine on international arrivals in addition to its ongoing social distancing rules, but US President Donald Trump is pressing to reopen his country’s economy.

Russia meanwhile, reported its highest ever daily coronavirus death toll of 150, suggesting the novel coronavirus is not yet under control in the world’s biggest country by area.

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**PRAYER TIMING MAY 23**  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 3-43 12-45 5-00 6-42 8-00  
JAMAAT 3-53 1-15 5-15 6-52 8-30  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



MILK GOODNESS FROM EUROPE

**SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING**

RAMADAN	MAY	SEHRI	IFTAR
29	23	6:42	8:00
30	24	3:42	6:42