The Daily Star

Buy paddy, not rice

A study on govt's Boro procurement suggests this will increase market price of paddy

PINAKI ROY

To ensure fair prices for Boro farmers, the government under its procurement programme should only buy paddy from the growers instead of rice from millers, a study suggested.

It showed that last year the market price of Boro paddy could have increased by 45 percent had the government purchased only paddy from farmers for its rice stock.

Analysing last year's data, the research, titled "Boro Rice Procurement in Bangladesh: Implications for Policy" revealed that rice procurement from millers accounted for 81.1 percent of total government procurement.

The remaining 18.9 percent of the procurement was purchased in the form of paddy from farmers.

In 2019, the government bought four lakh tonnes of paddy from farmers at Tk 26 per kg and 11.5 lakh tonnes of rice from millers at Tk 36 per kg.

Only 1.34 percent of all farmers, who sold Boro last year, could supply their produce to the government depots.

Others sold Boro paddy for an average of Tk 15.4 per kg in the open market.

This prompted the Ministry of Agriculture to commission the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to conduct a research on the government's Boro paddy procurement, said Akhter Ahmed, country representative, IFPRI Bangladesh.

Last week, the study, funded by the United States Agency

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Farmers carrying the Boro harvest that was submerged under collected rainwater in a field in Sylhet's Companiganj yesterday. Heavy rainfall over the past few days has inundated the farmlands of the area. This photo was taken in Companiganj's Khagail area.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

India's virus death toll tops that of China

The Americas, Russia see surge in deaths

AGENCIES

India's coronavirus death toll passed neighbouring China's yesterday, with 175 new fatalities in 24 hours taking the total to 4,706, according to official data.

India, home to some of the world's most packed cities and a creaking healthcare system, is emerging as a new hotspot with record jumps in new cases in recent days.

Figures from India's health ministry showed 165,799 infections, with western Maharashtra state -- home to the finance hub of Mumbai -- accounting for 36 percent of cases and 42 percent of deaths.

China, where the deadly virus emerged late last year, reported no new deaths or new suspected cases yesterday, with the toll still at 4,634 and a total of 82,995 infections.

Even though the number

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH
BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

First treaty with the US inked

A French delegation calls on Bangabandhu at Bangabhaban on 30 May, 1972.

May 30, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

JUTE EXPORT NATIONALISED

The government has taken a decision to nationalise export of jute, informs Commerce Minister MR Siddiqi today at a meeting organised by the Bangladesh Jute Association. A Jute Export Corporation will be set up soon, he adds, which will handle all the exports of jute abroad. It will also explore new markets for Bangladeshi jute products. Existing jute exporters can work as agents of the Corporation. The main reason behind this government move, says the minister, is to check corruption in the jute sector and ensure fair price for jute producers.

TK 66 CR AMERICAN AID FOR BANGLADESH

Donald G MacDonald, deputy director of USAID, today informs

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Zia's death anniversary today

UNB, *Dhaka*

The BNP will observe the 39th death anniversary of its founder and former president Ziaur Rahman today.

The BNP and pro-BNP socio-political organisations have drawn up different programmes, including online discussions, and distribution of food and clothes among the destitute, to mark the day.

Zia founded the party in 1978. He was assassinated by some army officers at Chittagong Circuit House on May 30, 1981.

Born on January 19, 1936, in Bogura's Bagbari, Zia was a sector

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TREATING COVID-19 PATIENTS

Expand scope for plasma therapy

Health experts urge govt, say this could save lives

POROMOL PALMA

Medical experts have urged the government to undertake a national programme to expand the scope of convalescent plasma therapy for treating Covid-19 patients as the method has been gaining traction for its effectiveness.

The technical sub-committee on Covid-19 diagnosis and laboratory observed that there is a huge demand for the therapy and recommended that the government take action so that the people can have better access to the treatment.

The committee said public and private hospitals with necessary equipment can collect plasma and administer the therapy.

But there should be a regulatory body to guide and monitor the whole process, said a member of the sub-committee that made the recommendations at a meeting on May 20.

"Plasma of 21 people who recovered from Covid-19 has been collected at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. So far, 18 patients have received the therapy," said Prof MA Khan, haematologist at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

He said it was not possible for DMCH alone to meet the increasing demand for the therapy and recommended that the other hospitals be involved.

He also encouraged the initiatives of some private hospitals that have been collecting, supplying and administering the therapy.

Gonoshasthaya Kendra Founder and Trustee Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, who tested Covid-19 positive on May 24, has also received the plasma therapy.

The 79-year old physician, also a kidney patient, said he found plasma therapy very effective and that his organisation had decided to establish a plasma bank.

"Plasma therapy works like magic. I have realised it after receiving the therapy. I felt much energised after the therapy [on Thursday]. All patients should have access to this therapy," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Convalescent Plasma therapy can quickly develop a passive immune system in a patient's body which helps the person to fight against the virus, said Prof Khan, who is also the head of the technical

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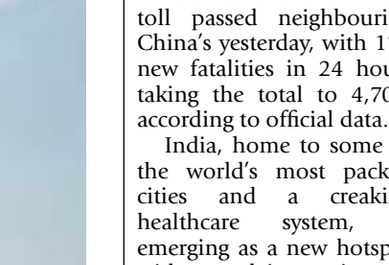
Mammoth skeletons found at airport site in Mexico City



REUTERS, *Zumpango*

Alongside construction crews racing to build the Mexican capital's new airport, skulls and curving tusks of massive mammoths peek through the dirt as archaeologists dig up more and more bones belonging to the ice age's most famous mammal.

The latest discoveries include two huge skulls, along with scattered ribs and limbs, found just inside the perimeter of where a new civilian airport is being built, about 30 miles (50km) north of downtown Mexico City.

To date, some 70 individual

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Three more die with Covid-19 symptoms

STAR REPORT

At least three men died in the last two days with what appeared to be Covid-19 in Madaripur and Noakhali.

In Madaripur town, a 40-year-old man of Housedi area died at the isolation ward of Madaripur General Hospital yesterday morning.

He was admitted to the hospital on Wednesday with fever and breathing difficulties, but the symptoms kept getting worse afterwards, said

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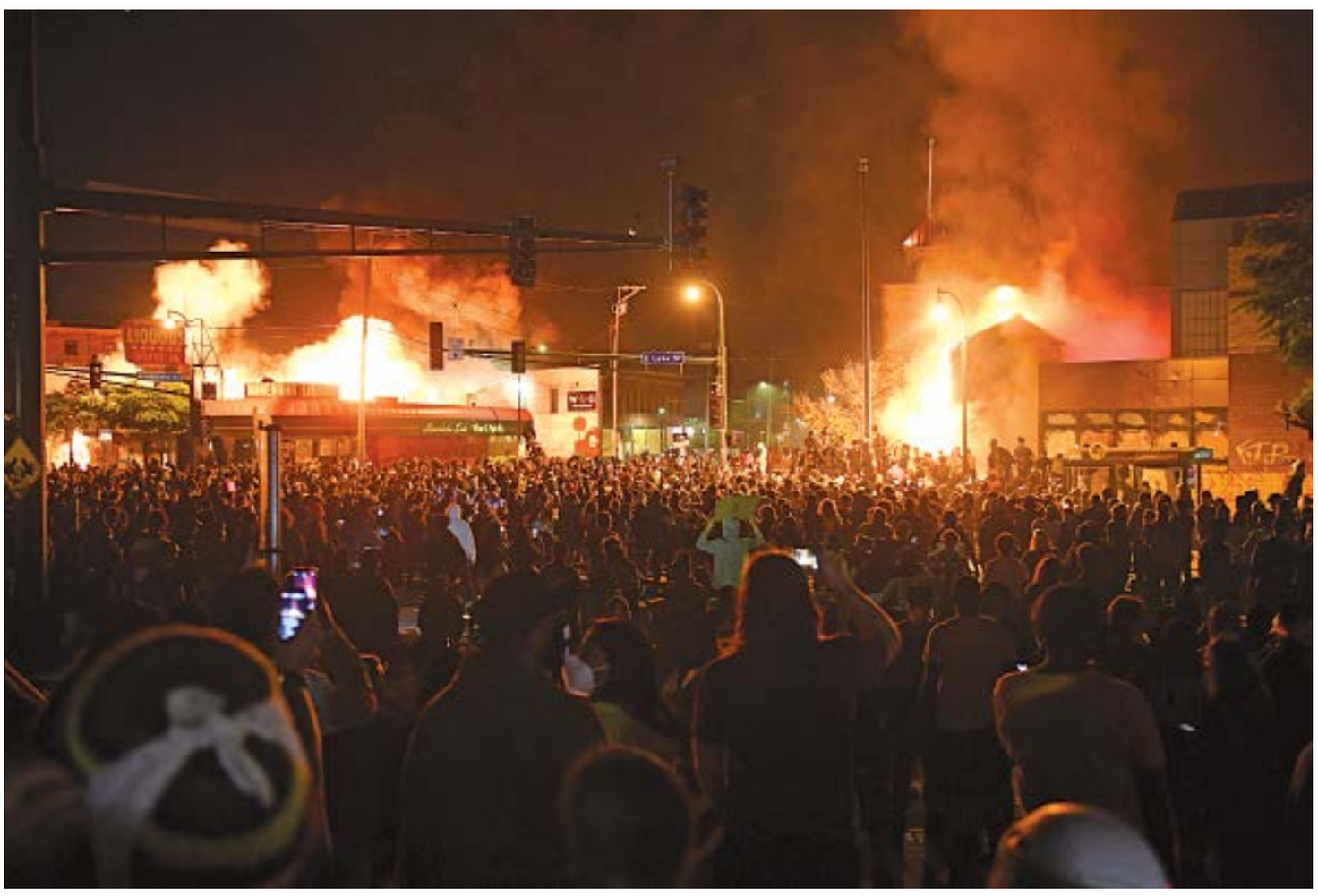
PRAYER TIMING MAY 30

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-05	12-45	5-00	6-43	8-05
JAMAAT	4-40	1-15	5-15	6-47	8-35

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Hundreds of demonstrators gather near the Minneapolis Police third precinct during the third day of demonstrations in response to the death of African-American man George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, US, on Thursday night.

PHOTO: REUTERS

POLICE BRUTALITY IN US

Troops deployed amid raging riots

Police station set on fire in Minneapolis, shops looted as anger over killing of Afro-American man spread across the country

AGENCIES

Hundreds of troops deployed to the streets of Minneapolis and St. Paul early yesterday after a third night of rioting over police brutality against African Americans left hundreds of shops damaged and a police station on fire.

After the angry demonstrations spread overnight to multiple US cities, from New York to Phoenix, President Donald Trump blasted local officials and labelled the protestors "thugs" and threatened a harsh crackdown.

Black leaders continued to express outrage over the videotaped death of George Floyd, 46, while handcuffed on the ground and in custody of Minneapolis police on Monday. He died after one officer kneeled on his neck for more than five minutes.

"People are angry they are frustrated because this is not the first police killing they have seen around the country," Al Sharpton, a prominent black rights activist, told MSNBC.

Trump indicated he would counter more street violence with more troops on the streets.

"These THUGS are dishonoring the memory of George Floyd, and I won't let that happen," Trump tweeted.

"Just spoke to (Minnesota) Governor Tim Walz and told him that the Military is with him all the way. Any difficulty and we will assume control but, when the looting starts, the shooting starts."

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