

Zebunnessa no more

CITY DESK

Zebunnessa Khatun, wife of late Dr Jamshed Bakht, a renowned physician of Sylhet, and mother of Dr Zaid Bakht, chairman of Agrani Bank, died at a city hospital on May 29. She was 90, says a press release.



She left behind sons Dr Shamsher Bakht, Dr Zaid Bakht, Dr Shoaib Bakht, daughter Rokeya Islam, grandchildren and many relatives to mourn her.

She was laid to rest at Banani graveyard in the capital.

Imamul Kabir Shanto passes away

CITY DESK

Imamul Kabir Shanto, a freedom fighter and Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology (SMUCT) founding chairman, died from coronavirus at the Combined Military Hospital in the city yesterday morning. He was 66, says a press release.

He established Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology, Sundarbans Courier Services (Pvt) Ltd and Shanto-Mariam Foundation.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque yesterday expressed profound shock at the death of Imamul Kabir Shanto, the release adds.

In a condolence message, the minister prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to the bereaved family.



Wearing masks and maintaining a fairly spaced-out queue, people collect launch tickets at a counter in Barishal city's Fazlul Haque Avenue yesterday, ahead of the resumption of public waterways transport operations in a limited manner from today.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Railway selling

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"All we are doing now is on trial basis. We will take further decisions about operation of trains following government decision after June 15," he said.

The minister also said all the passengers have to wear face masks and maintain all health guidelines. All tickets for visitors and month tickets have been suspended, Sujan further added.

He said no trains would stop at Airport, Joydebpur and Narsingdi stations. None would be allowed to

travel without tickets, he added.

People will be able to buy tickets five days ahead of their journey date, Sujan said.

The eight trains which would start operation from today are: Chattogram-bound Subarna Express and Sonar Bangla Express; Sylhet-bound Kalni Express; Panchagarh-bound Panchagarh Express; Chapainawabganj-bound Banalata Express; Lalmonirhat-bound Lalmoni Express; Khulna-bound Chitra Express; and another train Paharika/Udayan express which

operates between Chattogram and Sylhet.

The trains which would start operation from June 3, are Teesta Express, Benapole Express, Nilsagar Express, Rupsha Express, Kapotakho Express, Modhumoti Express, Meghna Express, Kishoreganj Express, Upakul Express, Brahmaputra Express, and Kurigram Express.

Railways Ministry Secretary Salim Reza and Bangladesh Railway Director General Md Shamsuzzaman, among others, were present at the press briefing.

Call for green

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yielding varieties of seed and fertilizer to farmers on easy terms. **CONTROL ROOM TO MONITOR FOOD PRICES**

The government has set up an emergency control room to monitor food prices and distribution of food aid across the country. A senior government officer has been appointed to lead the team. The team will collect information about stock, transportation, distribution and prices of essentials such as rice, wheat, edible oil, sugar and kerosene oil from local administrations and keep the prime minister and cabinet members updated on a regular basis. The government has also formed a seven-member cabinet sub-committee to tackle the problems of exorbitant price hike and poor food distribution system.

SURPRISE VISIT TO GOVT OFFICE

Bangabandhu today pays a surprise visit to Agricultural Development Corporation. He inquires officers of regular activities of the office, listens to various demands of the employees and assures them of addressing those issues soon. He also asks the authorities to take immediate action against those who are absent during his visit. The prime minister holds a meeting with the senior officials of the organisation and reviews their plan on agricultural development. He also gave them some instructions on increasing agricultural production across the country.

DRUGS IMPORT ON EMERGENCY BASIS

The government is going to import essential drugs worth Tk 2 crore on an emergency basis to tackle the acute shortage of pharmaceutical products in the market. Besides government agencies, registered private entities will be allowed to import drugs from abroad.

SOURCE: June 1, 1972 issue of Dainik Bangla

Jamuna swells rapidly

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danger level, WDB sources said.

"The water level was recorded at 8.02 meter at the hard point of the Jamuna at the district headquarter on May 22. The water level is now 12.25 meter at the same point," KM Rafikul Islam, deputy divisional engineer of Sirajganj WDB, told the Daily Star.

Due to the immense pressure of water, the 20-meter flood protection embankment was damaged yesterday, as the spars of the embankment have eroded in the river. Rafikul said, adding that water development workers are trying to restore the affected area.

The water level will be increasing over the next two or three days, after which it will decrease again, he said, adding that there is nothing to be worried about.

"After Amphan, water level has increased in the upstream of Jamuna and Brammaputra at the hill slopes of Assam. Due to the onslaught water from upstream, water level is increasing in Jamuna in Sirajganj," he said, adding, "This, however, is a temporary problem. The flood forecasting centre has assured that the water level would start decreasing in a day or two."

Due to the increasing water level, paddy, jute and other crops in over 20 unions of the five upazilas have been inundated.

Low laying areas of Sonatani, Jalalpur, Koujuri of Shahzadpur upazila, Kawakola, Mechra of Sirajganj Sadar upazila, Khasrajbari, Maizbari, Tekani, Natuarpara, Char-Girish and Nishchintapur of Kazipur upazila, Sthal, Ghorzan and Sadiachandpur of Chowhali upazila have been submerged.

The Agriculture Extension Department (AED), however, said the cultivated land have been submerged but the extent of the damage could not yet be confirmed.

"Jute land of about 90 acres, 50 acres other crops, and 580 acres of vegetable field have reportedly been damaged. But the total loss will be found after the water recedes," said Md Habibul Haque, deputy director of Sirajganj AED.

On the 1.41 lakh hectares of land on which Boro is being cultivated, 71 percent of the paddy was harvested last week, he said, adding that the sudden increase in water level is nothing to worry about as the farmers are harvesting in the water.

If the water decreases within a week, there will be no harm caused to the Boro crop, Habibul said.

Take care of embankments

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300 metres inland from the original location, at many places.

As a result, about 50 bighas of land along the rivershore will be inundated permanently.

Bithika Mondol, who lost her home in the cyclone, said her family is going to lose three bighas of land lying on the outer boundary of the dam built by the locals.

"The river would gradually devour the land," she explained.

Although the local administration so far distributed 50 tonnes of rice, 500 packets of dry food and Tk 75 lakh among the cyclone victims in the upazila, many are yet to receive any relief.

"Nobody came to give us food yet as it is very hard to reach our village," Debobroto alleged.

He said the water resource minister visited the area on Thursday but only gave a speech from a speedboat.

'LACK OF COORDINATION'

People of Koyra alleged that dams, first damaged badly on May 25, 2009 from cyclone Aila, have not been repaired properly in the last 11 years.

The Water Development Board (WDB) of Satkhira district is the custodian of the dams that fall under the Khulna district.

According to Water Development Board sources, on May 25, 2009, 60km of dams in Koyra were completely destroyed by Aila.

After the damage, locals were trapped in salt water for three years.

Although WDB repaired the dams, locals alleged that the custodian used more sand than soil while repairing the structures on 13/14 and 14/2 polders along the Kopotakho and Shakbaria rivers. Thus, the embankments were left in poor condition.

Imtiaz Uddin, general secretary of Koira Unnayan Sangram Samiti, complained of irregularities and lack of transparency in the repair works.

Tk four crore in 2018-2019 and Tk three crore in 2019-2020 were allocated for embankment renovation but no signboard was displayed during the development work, he said.

"Although the site of the embankment is in Khulna, the maintenance is the responsibility of Satkhira Water Development Board. As a result, local MPs and upazila chairmen are not able to supervise the work properly."

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shimul Kumar Saha of Koyra admitted that there was a lack of coordination.

"We don't get them [Satkhira WDB officials] at the coordination meetings. So,

we cannot discuss the possible solutions of the problem with anyone," he said.

"I have informed the higher authorities about the prevailing situation."

GM Mohsin Reza, president of Koyra Upazila Awami League and former upazila chairman, said the main contractor for the repair work was never seen in the area whenever the embankments were built.

"After he got the job, he sold the work to another contractor on a fixed commission. The second contractor divided the work into smaller parts and handed it over to other contractors. After this change of hands, only 40 to 45 percent of the [government] allocation was left to do the work at field level. People of the Water Development Board were also involved in this," he alleged.

Noting that the people of Koyra upazila have suffered more from Amphan than Aila, Akhtaruzzaman Babu, MP of Khulna-6 constituency, said he did not get enough time to take up the embankment renovation issue since he took office early last year.

Executive Engineer of Khulna Water Development Board Satkhira-2 Md Arifuzzaman said 40km of dams have been destroyed in Koyra and locals are repairing

it voluntarily.

He denied allegations of irregularities in dam construction and repair.

When asked about using more sand than soil in the dams, the engineer said, "We hand over and accept the work from the contractor as per the tender and schedule, so there is no scope for any irregularities."

Arifuzzaman blamed natural calamities and high salinity in the local soil for the weak structure of the dams.

Food officer

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a case accusing the three of stealing the rice. Wahid Munjour Sohag, deputy assistant director of Bogura ACC, said a local court sent the arrestees to jail yesterday afternoon after they were produced before it.

Meanwhile, two probe committees were formed on Friday to investigate the incident, said Bogura Food Controller SM Saiful Islam.

The committees were asked to submit their reports to the authorities concerned within three working days, he added.

Saiful said they recommended that the officer-in-charge of Sabeckpara LSD should be suspended.

Month-long wait for getting tested!

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but I'm not sure whether I have Covid-19 infection," he added.

Like Anisur, many people in Savar have been asked by the Upazila Health Complex authorities to wait a couple of weeks or a month to go for Covid-19 test.

Authorities say they have no option left as a huge number of patients are turning up daily, but the authorities have a limited capacity.

People have to queue at Savar Adhar Chandra Govt High School, near the health complex, to enlist their names and other information first. The authorities there later ask them to go for tests on specified dates

to give samples.

Only 10 from the queue can directly go for test daily, officials said.

Visiting the school compound yesterday, this correspondent found another garment worker Soni Rahman who has been coming to the school since May 18 to have his wife tested for Covid-19 as she has been showing symptoms.

His wife's name was included in the list yesterday but he did not know when she could go for test as authorities could not give a specific date.

Thirty-two year old Roni Ahmed said that he went there to get tested on May 27 with high fever.

"They asked me to give samples on June 27 for Covid-19 test... I am very sick. Who will take the responsibility if I die by then?" he said.

Roni said he called the IEDCR hotline number, after failing to get tested, but they only gave him a number of the upazila health complex.

"They did not say anything... What should I do in this situation?" he asked.

RMG worker Ruma Akter has had fever for 15 days but she is doing well now. Her employers have asked her not to join work unless she can show a Covid-19 test report.

She also lined up for test but the hospital

authorities asked her to visit the health complex one and a half month later, Ruma said.

Contacted, Dr Saemul Huda, upazila Health and Family planning officer, said they have the capacity to collect 60 samples daily.

Savar is an overpopulated area and many are coming daily to get tested. That's why they are maintaining a serial, he said, adding it would be better if they could collect 500 samples a day.

The doctor said they have already consulted with local garment factory owners and another PCR lab will be set up soon to test workers.

Pandemic grips LatAm, US

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has the second highest number of cases in the world after the United States.

"In 26 years, I've never seen so many people living in fear, so many people going hungry," said Alcione Albanesi, founder of charity Amigos do Bem, which distributes supplies to communities in the impoverished Sertao region of Brazil's northeast.

"Everything has ground to a stop. But hunger doesn't stop."

Chile also logged another record number of deaths on Friday, pushing its total to almost 1,000.

POSITIVE SIGNS

In European countries that seem on the other side of their outbreak peak, there has been pressure to lift crippling lockdowns despite experts warning of a possible second wave of infections.

Tourism-dependent Greece said it will restart its two main airports for arrivals from 29 countries from June 15. But some European nations hard hit by the virus are not on the list, including France, Spain, Britain and Italy.

In Austria, hotels and cinemas were allowed to take in customers again on Friday under special guidelines, provided masks are worn.

"It is very important that things return to normal, because I am a person who lives alone and is very interested in culture," film buff Roderic Turanitz said at Vienna's Admiral Kino cinema.

Hotels and shopping centres in Ukraine's capital Kiev also reopened yesterday.

Turkey too has moved ahead with easing its restrictions as mosques opened for the first time in months, drawing hundreds of worshippers in masks for mass prayers in Istanbul.

And Denmark said it would reopen its border to visitors from Germany, Norway and Iceland from June 15, although Britain and the rest of the EU will have to wait a few more months.

Across the Atlantic, the US capital Washington DC resumed outdoor dining with social distancing precautions in place, while Los Angeles restaurants and hair salons also reopened.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo said the state was "on track" to begin reopening in the week of June 8, even as the death toll in the US spiked by 1,225 on Friday.

Disney World in Florida said it will be up and running again from July 11.

China even welcomed its first Europeans since suspending visas in late March, with a plane carrying 200 mainly German workers landing near Beijing.

ECONOMIES SHATTERED

The economic damage from weeks of lockdowns continues to pile up, with Chile taking out a two-year \$24 billion credit line with the IMF.

India's economy grew at its slowest pace in two decades in the first quarter, and Canada and Brazil also said their GDP figures shrank.

As the lockdowns finally lift, some people are revelling in the return of long-missed creature comforts.

In Japan traditional bathhouses have begun to open again, much to the delight of businessman You Sasaki, who told AFP he had been counting down the days to his next soak in the warm pools of Yumominosato onsen, just outside Tokyo.

"This feels good. Feels great," the 50-year-old said as he sat in a tub.

"The last time I came here was the end of March. The onsen is always special. It's hard to explain in words."

Buried WWII plane found

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and spent 45 minutes exploring it and taking photographs before identifying it, Hartley told CNN.

After they returned home to begin researching it they discovered the plane dated back to World War II.

Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) Museum confirmed to CNN it believed the plane to be a Bristol Beaufighter TFX, with the aircraft serial number JM333, from the 254 Squadron RAF.

Ian Thirsk, RAF Museum head of collections, said in a statement to CNN that the aircraft crashed on April 21, 1944 soon after take-off from nearby North Coates in Lincolnshire after both engines failed.

"The crew were uninjured and escaped to safety," Thirsk added.

Speaking to CNN, Hartley said she had been surprised to stumble across the "amazing" wreckage, given that she and her partner had walked on that stretch of beach many times before.

"(I had) never seen anything like it before in my life," she said.

"We took the dog on her usual walk and all of a sudden we saw this wreckage," she added. "It was an amazing find."

"My partner has lived in Cleethorpes for 30 years and he's walked that same walk (all that time) and never come across it before."

She said that before the unique discovery she "wasn't interested in history at all" but now she would like to find out more about those who flew the aircraft.

However, because of the danger posed by unpredictable tides at Cleethorpes beach, people have been warned not to look for the wreckage.

Writing on Facebook Thursday, Cleethorpes Coastguard said: "We know there will be interest by many people but

Man sent to jail over rape in Narayanganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'GANI

A Narayanganj court on Friday sent a man to jail on the charge of raping a mentally challenged woman.

The accused -- Alamgir Hossain (40) -- is a resident of old Syedpur area in Sadar upazila of the district.

Police said the 60-year-old woman used to roam around the streets by herself quite often. Taking advantage of the situation, Alamgir took the woman to a quiet place and raped her on Thursday night.

When the woman started screaming, locals rushed to the spot and caught Alamgir. Later, he was handed over to police, said the law enforcers.

On Friday morning, the woman's daughter filed a case with Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station. Then, the accused was shown arrested in the case, said Shamim Hossain, sub-inspector (SI) of the police station.

The accused was produced to a court that sent him to jail.

The woman was sent to a hospital for treatment, said Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge of the police station.

ADB provides

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washing stations and screening booths, provide WHO standard PPE suits to about 2,700 doctors and health workers working under the project, launch awareness programmes about Covid-19 prevention and management, and provide training on Covid-19 detection and treatment to health workers and doctors.

The grant assistance is sourced from ADB's Urban Climate Change Resilience Trust Fund, under the Urban Financing Partnership Facility.

ADB has a strong track record of responding rapidly to provide targeted support to Bangladesh in times of emergencies. On May 7, ADB approved \$500 million to strengthen Bangladesh's efforts to mitigate the socio-economic impact of Covid-19.

On April 30, ADB approved a \$100 million concessional loan to support the government in its efforts to address the immediate public health requirements of combating the pandemic.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
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