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Your Right to Know

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**BANGLADESH UPDATE**

**2,635**  
New cases in 24hrs

**63,026**  
Total cases

**846**  
Deaths

**13,325**  
Recoveries

**399,542**  
Deaths

**6,906,343**  
Total cases

## Some hotspots go into total lockdown

Govt today starts zone-wise containment on pilot basis in Dhaka, 3 others dists; city's Rajabazar, Wari marked red in first phase

➤ Zoning systems to be introduced from today on pilot basis

➤ Rajabazar, Wari in Dhaka to be locked down

➤ "Several areas" in N'ganj, Gazipur, Narsingdi to come under the system

➤ "RED ZONE" WILL BE WHERE POSITIVE CASES ARE MORE THAN 40

➤ "YELLOW ZONE" WILL BE WHERE POSITIVE CASES ARE LESS THAN 40

➤ "GREEN ZONE" WILL BE AREAS WITH NO RECORDED COVID-19 CASE

RASHIDUL HASAN, PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

In the wake of rising Covid-19 deaths and infections across the country, the government today starts enforcing containment zones on a pilot basis in some areas of four districts, including Dhaka.

The aim is to stem the spread of the virus by putting all those infected in isolation centres and conducting contact tracing effectively, said officials.

In the first phase, two areas of the capital -- Rajabazar and Wari -- would be placed in the "red zone" with severe restrictions as the city remains to be the worst hit.

Some urban areas of Narayanganj, Gazipur and Narsingdi would also be put under strict lockdown, said the officials,

adding that these districts are the most affected after Dhaka.

The decision came in a high-profile meeting held at the secretariat yesterday. The meeting was attended by health, home, LGRD ministers, two mayors of Dhaka and top officials of different ministries concerned, one of the meeting participants told The Daily Star last night.

Earlier in the day, Habibur Rahman Khan, additional secretary (administration) of Health Service Division, told this daily that the containment zones would be introduced from today on a pilot basis. "If it proves to be successful, we will implement it elsewhere."

Based on the severity of infections and

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**STARING AT UNCERTAINTY:** Eighty-one-year-old Zayeda Begum, who gets by on alms, gazes blankly into the distance from her wheelchair at the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station. Most people do not go near her because of fears of coronavirus and her income has drastically fallen these days, she said after the photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

### COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

## Some 900 dead in three months

Says report based on data gathered from news portals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 900 people died after showing coronavirus symptoms across the country between March 8 and May 31. Of them, 72 people died in March, 319 in April and 509 in May, according to a report.

A team of Bangladeshi students of local and foreign universities, researchers, IT developers and freelancers prepared the report, analysing contents of news portals and online versions of different national dailies. A copy of the report was sent to this newspaper yesterday.

The report said the media outlets reported about "coronavirus symptoms" in case of 390 deaths without mentioning any specific symptoms.

As many as 382 had at least two of the symptoms; fever, cough, respiratory problem, and cold. Besides, 214 people showed at least three of the symptoms, it said.

The report also said samples of 497 were collected for the coronavirus test while samples from 96 were not. There was no mention of sample collection in case of the others.

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## Rapid test kits the only answer

Experts say as daily testing figure is not increasing

MOUJID AHMED SUJAN

With people struggling to get tested in time and new cases rising sharply, experts said rapid test kits are now the only answer to the testing crunch.

As the deadly disease has spread to all districts, the 50 Covid-19 testing laboratories have been struggling to ramp up daily tests.

The number of tests taken every day has been stuck at a little more than 12,000.

After testing 12,486 individuals' samples, the Directorate General of Health Services yesterday reported 2,635 new coronavirus cases, taking the total to 63,026.

Experts said daily testing needs immediate ramping up, and rapid testing is the only way to ease the pressure on the pathology services.

"Due to inadequate PCR testing facilities, almost 90 percent of the people who need testing are being deprived of the service. Now, rapid testing is the only solution to immediately detect and isolate patients. A delayed decision will lead to things getting out of control," Prof Ridwanur Rahman, a medicine and infectious disease specialist, told The Daily Star.

He said rapid test kits will make detection easier, despite giving partially false results. "Such false results can later be validated through further PCR testing."

According to the World Health Organization, rapid test results are based either on detection of proteins in the Covid-19 virus from respiratory samples (e.g. sputum, throat swab), or detection in blood or serum of human antibodies generated in response to an infection.

Recently, the use of rapid test kits started in the US and the UK.

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## Ride-hailing services not resuming soon

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The ride-sharing services are unlikely to resume anytime soon as the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has taken a hard line on the vehicles that had been providing the popular service without having been enlisted with the BRTA.

According to the BRTA officials, although there are some 1.23 lakh vehicles registered with 12 ride-sharing companies, only 1,300 of them are enlisted with the BRTA.

Enlistment with the BRTA is a must for both the companies and the vehicles in order to operate the service.

Two major ride-sharing companies -- Uber and Pathao -- recently wrote to the BRTA, requesting it to allow them to resume operations like other public transports.

The BRTA, in a reply on Thursday, asked them to inform it the number of owners and riders of enlisted vehicles (with vehicle registration number and driving licence number) were interested to resume operation given the current situation and how they would ensure health safety

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### GOVT'S INCREASED BORROWING

## Interest payment may rise by 14pc

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Thanks to increased domestic borrowing in recent years, the government's interest payments will rise by 14 percent in the coming fiscal year.

Rising interest rates in the banks over the last one and a half years are also why the government will have to spend more in debt interest payments. Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal has plans to allocate Tk 65,000 crore for the purpose in the budget for 2020-21, said an official of his ministry. The current year's allocation was Tk 57,068.

About 94 percent of the amount might go to domestic lenders in the coming fiscal year and the rest to foreign ones.

Domestic lenders in the country are banks and saving certificate buyers. Interest payment expenditure has been steadily increasing for 10 years.

In the 2010-11 budget, the government earmarked Tk 14,578 crore and in 2015-16 Tk 33,113 crore.

The minister is set to unveil his second budget on June 11 in parliament. As of May this year, the government borrowed from banks Tk 82,000 crore, almost twice the amount it planned at the outset.

The coming year's borrowing from banks will be around Tk 80,000 crore, officials said.

Interest rate in banks almost doubled in the last one and a half years, thanks to rising demands. Now, the rates range between 7 and 9 percent, up from 3-4.5 percent in December 2018, according to Bangladesh Bank statistics.

In the current fiscal year, government borrowing from the savings certificate sales declined due to measures taken to reduce interest payments burden.

From July 2019 to January 2020, the government sold saving certificates worth around Tk 7,673 crore, a 76 percent drop compared to the sales in the same period the previous year.

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A policeman holding his baby talks to a colleague while waiting to be tested for coronavirus at Central Police Hospital in the capital's Rajarbagh. The man with his baby arrived at the hospital from Ashulia around 7:00am and was still waiting for his turn around 11:30am yesterday. What's worrying is that the man on the left has pulled down his mask while child has no face covering.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## ATTEMPTED BRIBERY DMP chief asks IGP to transfer joint commissioner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Shafiqul Islam has sought transfer of a joint commissioner of the unit on charge of offering him bribe.

The DMP chief asked for transfer of Joint Commissioner (logistics) Md Imam Hossain in a letter send to Inspector General of Police (IGP) on May 30.

In his letter, the DMP commissioner termed the joint commissioner "a corrupt officer" and said that there were graft allegations against Imam Hossain over various purchases.

"Imam even offered the commissioner a percentage from procurement. And, that is why, he should not be working in DMP," the DMP chief said in the letter.

The DMP commissioner further requested the

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## OBITUARY



Dr. Naseem K. Rahman (1943 - 2020)

Prof. Dr. Naseem K. Rahman was finally reunited with his beloved wife Guliana de Biasio - greatly missed for two decades - in the hereafter on 31st May in Treviso, Italy. A physicist of international repute with a Chair in the Dept. of Physics at Trieste University, his academic career spanned St. Gregory's, Notre Dame College, Dhaka University and a PhD in the U.S. His many publications include 'Photons, Continuum States and Molecules' and 'Universality and Diversity in Science'. He leaves behind his cherished daughter Michelle Rahman, granddaughter Victoria, family and friends in five continents to mourn his passing.

Faisal, Faruq's wife Khuku Saqi, Rita & Urmee.

# Six-point demand 'Charter of Freedom'

Says PM in article marking the historic day

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has written an article marking the historic Six-Point Day today. Following is an abridged version of the article:

We observe June 7 as the Six-Point Day. The year 2020 has appeared as a unique year in the life of the Bangalees. This year is very important for us -- meaning the people of Bangladesh. Massive programmes were taken up to celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Not only in Bangladesh, the Bangalees around the globe had also taken preparations to this end. The Unesco had decided to observe the day, while the UN member states had taken necessary preparations too. The UN has already released a commemorative postage stamp in this regard.

When such massive preparations were going on, a pandemic emerged across the globe. An infectious disease named novel coronavirus has infected people around the world. The economic, social and cultural operations of almost all the countries have come to a stalemate. Bangladesh, too, is not free from this virus. Under the circumstances, we have suspended all kinds of activities in the areas where there can be mass gathering, considering public interest and thus observing various programmes through radio, television, and digital media.

The Father of the Nation had declared the six-point demand in 1966 which is regarded as the "Charter of Freedom" for the Bangalees. I recall with deep respect Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, show my respect to my mother Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib as she played a unique role in making the June 7 programmes successful. I remember my beloved family members who embraced martyrdom on August 15, 1975. I also pay my profound respect to the four national leaders, all the martyrs of the Liberation War and my oppressed mothers and sisters.

## UNVEILING OF SIX-POINT DEMAND

At the residence of Chowdhury Mohammad Ali in Lahore, the conference of the opposition party began on February 5, 1966, with then Muslim League president Syed Mohammad Afzal in the chair. Bangabandhu placed the Six-Point Demand at a subject committee meeting. But the proposal was not adopted.

The six-point demand had proposed to give self-autonomy to every province of Pakistan. The six-point demand was passed at the working committee of Awami League. **WHY SIX-POINT DEMAND?** During the Indo-Pak war in 1965, the people of East Bengal or East Pakistan remained totally unprotected as there was no importance to the central government of Pakistan for protecting this region and East Bengal was left at the mercy of India.

After the Indo-Pak war, an agreement was signed between India and Pakistan which is also known as the Tashkent Treaty. The interest or security of East Bengal was ignored in the deal.

When the six-point demand was placed in the wake of torture and oppression by Ayub Khan, public support started to grow fast in favour of it.

Bangabandhu then started visiting the entire East Bengal. He was arrested for eight times in a span of just two months.

Bangabandhu returned to Dhaka on May 8, 1966 after joining a public rally in Narayanganj. He was arrested from his Dhanmondi residence on the same day. He was sent to jail the



following day.

Cases were filed one after another against Bangabandhu, and the party leaders and workers were also arrested during that time.

On May 13 in 1966, Awami League organised a public rally to observe the protest as the people extended their full support to the Six-Point Demand. A hartal (strike) was called for June 7 across the East Pakistan and all-out efforts were made to make the strike a success.

My mother, Begum Fazilatunnesa, had played a special role in making the strike a success. Holding secret meetings with student leaders, she gave necessary instructions to this end.

Pakistani military junta and then president Ayub Khan bestowed the full responsibility on East Pakistan governor Monem Khan to resist this movement in any way.

But the people of Bangladesh had extended their support to the Six-Point Movement by enforcing the hartal on June 7, ignoring all the oppressions. But it was a matter of regret that police opened fire on the people without any instigation. Labour leader Monu Mian and 10 others were killed.

On June 10-11 in 1966, a meeting of the Awami League executive committee thanked students-workers and general people for lending their support to the Six-Point Demand by observing the hartal.

Different programmes, including meetings, rallies, protest processions and distribution of leaflets, were taken up to spread the autonomy movement across the country. Steps were initiated to mobilise public opinion in support of the demand. **AGARTALA CONSPIRACY CASE** On January 18 in 1968, Bangabandhu was brought to the detention centre at Dhaka Kurmitola Cantonment from Dhaka Central Jail. A seditious case was filed against him, widely known as the Agartala Conspiracy Case. Bangabandhu was made the number one accused in the case.

The proceedings of the case were initiated by setting up a court inside the cantonment. Besides, the Ayub government was unleashing torture and repression on the people.

The general people spontaneously began to build resistance against the torture, oppression, and repression by the Pakistani government. They took to the streets.

On February 21, Ayub Khan was compelled to withdraw the Agartala Conspiracy Case in the face of a severe mass movement.

**SUCCESS OF SIX-POINT DEMAND** The Ayub government was overthrown due to the mass movement. Army chief Yahya Khan grabbed the power. Based on the Six-Point Demand, election was held on December 7 in 1970. Awami League, led by Bangabandhu, secured a majority in the election in the entire Pakistan.

On December 5 in 1970, Bangabandhu declared that the name of East Pakistan would be "Bangladesh".

On March 7 in 1971, the Father of the Nation proclaimed, "This time the struggle is for our freedom. This time the struggle is for our independence."

Bangabandhu called for a non-cooperation movement. The people of Bangladesh strictly observed it.

On March 25, the Pakistani military junta launched genocide. In the first hours of March 26, Bangabandhu declared the independence (of Bangladesh) and instructed all to continue the war.

After the nine-month war, Bangalees achieved the final victory. The Bangalees have got the status as a nation in the world, got the nation-state -- independent, sovereign Bangladesh.

## UN extends mandate to inspect Libya-bound ships for arms

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council on Friday unanimously extended for a year a resolution authorizing the inspection of ships suspected of breaking a 2011 arms embargo on Libya.

The renewal had already been unanimously decided upon last year by the 15 members of the Security Council, but Russia, which backs strongman Khalifa Haftar in his fight against the UN-backed government in Tripoli, had expressed doubts in talks at the beginning of the month, diplomats said.

For the past year, there have been constant violations of the embargo on both sides of the war, making it a "farce," one diplomat said.

The European naval Operation Irini, launched at the start of April using aerial surveillance and satellite tracking, aims to strengthen the UN resolution on controlling arms shipments to Libya.

Drafted by Germany, the resolution

"decides to extend the authorizations as set out in resolution 2473 for a further 12 months from the date of this resolution," and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council within 11 months of its adoption.

The authorization for inspections on the high seas is also linked to other resolutions, such as 2292 and 2146. The latter, which was renewed in March, aims to prevent the illegal import or export of oil to or from Libya.

After a French naval vessel recently intercepted a tanker seeking to load up at the eastern port of Tobruk without permission from Tripoli, as part of the Irini operation, Russia called for a meeting of the Security Council to demand an explanation.

Germany and France said at that session at the start of the week that Operation Irini was being carried out within the strict framework of the UN resolution.



Abdus Shahid, aged over 60, is sitting on a wall after waiting in the line for several hours to be tested for coronavirus in the capital's Muga General Hospital. He had travelled all the way from Laxmipur. There is no separate queue for the elderly people. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Some hotspots go into total lockdown

FROM PAGE 1

death rates, work on dividing the areas affected by the deadly virus into three zones -- red, yellow and green -- would go on simultaneously, said Habibur, also the chief of the health ministry's media cell.

No one would be allowed to enter or exit the "red zone". There would be restrictions on people and traffic movement in the "yellow zone". The "green zone" will have no such restrictions, but no one from the "red zone" and the "yellow zone" will be allowed to enter the "green zone", he said.

He, however, did not mention the name of any areas. "We will do the zoning based on recommendations of health experts."

Habibur said they would take help also from technology experts, city corporation mayors, councillors and police.

Asked about the issue, medical scientist and educationist Dr Liaquat Ali, a member of the eight-member government expert panel formed to supervise, monitor and support the coronavirus response, stressed the need for actively engaging community members, including local ward councillors and religious leaders, civil society members, NGOs and volunteers in the effort to make it a success.

"It can't be implemented only by issuing a government order," said Liaquat.

He said the containment zones could be implemented in rural areas as well.

The government decision came when the country is struggling to put the brakes on ever-increasing coronavirus cases.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 846 people have died of Covid-19 in the country, with 35 in 24 hours till 2:30pm yesterday. With 2,635 new

cases reported, the total number hit 63,026, it said.

On June 1, a high-profile government meeting, chaired by Health Minister Zahid Maleque and attended by mayors of three cities, discussed dividing the coronavirus-hit areas in the three zones.

The suggestion mainly came from health experts after the government on May 31 relaxed a coronavirus-driven nationwide shutdown, which continued since March 26. The authorities made the decision taking the country's economy and people's livelihood into consideration.

### 'THE ZONING'

The Daily Star has obtained a set of draft recommendations forwarded to the government by the eight-member expert committee.

Upon receiving the draft, the health minister gave some suggestions. The committee is expected to submit its final report within a day or two, incorporating those suggestions, a committee member said.

As per the draft recommendations, city areas would be marked as green, yellow and red zones on the basis of the number of cases detected in a ward, its population density and people's living standards. "Specific interventions will be needed to implement the containment zones," said the member, wishing not to be named.

An area with no recorded Covid-19 case would be marked a "green zone".

A ward area with less than 40 detected cases would be put in the "yellow zone". If the area is densely populated and the living standard of most of the people is low, the number should be 30.

Any ward area will be put in the "red zone" if it has more than 40 cases. If population density is high, the number considered should be 30, according to the draft recommendation.

### THE IMPLEMENTATION

The committee also gave a set of recommendations on how to implement the containment zones.

It said all positive cases should be identified and put in isolation centres, which could be built in local schools, colleges and community centres. The work should be done by local health officials with support from private facilities, including NGOs.

The committee also said those to be sent to the isolation centres and their family members must be provided with food and social support. Community kitchens can be set up with physical help from community organisations and financial help from government bodies.

The committee members emphasised on carrying out an effective contact tracing of all those who have come in contact with infected persons. Anyone found to be positive through contact tracing must be sent to the isolation centres as well.

Besides, they suggested setting up sample collection booths and deploying trained sample collectors to actively identify all Covid-19 cases. Local health officials with support from private facilities will carry it out, they said.

They added that local community members must be made aware of the plan for their active engagement in the process. Written and pictorial descriptions of health and hygiene instructions must be placed in visible places according to the zones.

The committee members said people should get treatment in any case and those who are extremely poor should get free ambulance services.

Other recommendations included ensuring use of masks, hand sanitizers and social, physical distancing.

## Ride-hailing services not resuming soon

FROM PAGE 1

guidelines, especially for motorcycle users.

It's also a hint that the BRTA would not allow any unlisted vehicles.

Although bus and other public transports hit the streets on June 1, operations of ride-sharing services are still suspended.

"We will make the final decision after getting their response," said Lokman Hossain Mollah, director (engineering) of BRTA and also the signee of the letter.

"As per the guideline [Ride Sharing Service Guideline-2017], there is no scope to allow any unlisted vehicles under rider sharing services," he told The Daily Star on Friday.

**UBER HAS 126 ENLISTED VEHICLES, PATHAO 118**

According to the BRTA letter, only 126 vehicles (15 cars and 111 motorcycles), operates under Uber, have the enlistment certificate while 118 (two cars and 116 motorcycles) runs under Pathao have the certificate.

But, according to the latest BRTA documents, a total of 20,637 vehicles operate under Uber and 20,000 under Pathao.

As per the Ride-Sharing Service Guideline-2017, each vehicle has to be enlisted with the BRTA after paying a certain amount of money.

## Libya govt says offensive launched for Sirte

AFP, Tripoli

Forces loyal to Libya's UN-recognised government said they launched an offensive yesterday for slain dictator Moamer Kadhafi's hometown Sirte, as rival strongman Khalifa Haftar backed a ceasefire following a string of military setbacks.

Government of National Accord forces have repulsed a 14-month offensive against the capital Tripoli by eastern-based Haftar and are now poised to drive on eastwards taking advantage of stepped up military support from Turkey.

"The air force has carried out five strikes in the outskirts of Sirte" -- the

last major town before the traditional boundary between Libya's western Tripolitania and eastern Cyrenaica regions -- GNA spokesman Mohamad Gnounou said.

"Orders have been given to our forces to begin their advance and to systematically attack all rebel positions," he added.

Sirte was taken by Haftar's forces virtually without a fight in January after one of Libya's myriad local militias switched sides.

Beyond Sirte lies the prize of Libya's main oil export ports, Haftar's most important strategic asset.

Some 450 kilometres (280 miles)

east of Tripoli, the town was where Kadhafi put up his last stand against NATO-backed rebel forces in 2011 and nostalgia for his ousted regime remains strong.

Haftar's forces have put a brave face on their precipitate fallback from the west, saying that it was a response to mounting international pressure for a lasting ceasefire.

"Heeding appeals from the major powers and the United Nations for a ceasefire... we pulled back 60 kilometres (40 miles) from the Greater Tripoli city limits," the general's spokesman, Ahmad al-Mesrari, said.

"We believe that once we're allowed to resume operations, and as drivers begin to earn a livelihood, they will be better positioned to pay the requisite fees to authorities and complete all enlistment certificate formalities."

Venezuelan authorities have detained three DirecTV executives after the US-owned television service's decision to shut operations in the South American country due to US sanctions, their lawyer said Friday.

"I hope there is justice in this country," Carlos Villamizar, vice president of strategy for DirecTV, told reporters before surrendering himself.

Villamizar said he was "very, very surprised," at the warrant issued against him and his former colleagues Hector Rivero and Rodolfo Carrano.

He was accompanied by lawyer Jesus Loreto, who said the other two managers had "voluntarily surrendered" to authorities and were being held at the intelligence service headquarters in Caracas, known as El Helicoide.

## Zafrullah's condition improves slightly

UNB, Dhaka

Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, who tested positive for Covid-19, was given plasma therapy for the third time on Friday night when he was on regular kidney dialysis.

"It seems Sir's health has improved slightly than yesterday [Friday] as the he was taken off the ventilator this [Saturday] morning. He has been given oxygen support," Gonoshasthaya Kendra Public Relations Officer Forhad Hossain told UNB yesterday.

He also said Zafrullah started taking normal food in the morning.

Forhad said doctors suggested the Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder undergo some medical tests to assess the improvement of his condition.

He said Zafrullah's fever has gone down, but he still has breathing problems. "He will be kept under close observation by doctors for the next two/ three days."

Zafrullah's condition deteriorated slightly on Thursday night after he developed breathing complications.

He has been receiving treatment at Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in the city's Dhanmondi area under the supervision of Brig Dr Mamun Mustafiz and Prof Dr Najib.

Zafrullah, also a freedom fighter, underwent coronavirus testing with the kit developed by Gonoshasthaya which found him to be Covid-19 positive on May 25.

Four days later, a RT-PCR test at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) also found him positive for novel coronavirus. Earlier, he was given plasma therapy twice.

## DMP boss

FROM PAGE 1

police chief for immediate transfer of Imam and take necessary steps regarding the issue.

Asked about the commissioner's letter, Sohail Rana, assistant inspector general of PHQ, told The Daily Star that the headquarters had not receive any correspondence from the DMP yet.

"Every organisation has some administrative issues and these issues are addressed with appropriate administrative and professional measures. The issue being discussed has not yet reached the headquarters," he said.

"However, police headquarters will deal with the issue with due professionalism [after receiving the letter]," added the AIG.

## Interest payment

FROM PAGE 1

Economists argue that increased utilisation of foreign aid now in the pipeline will reduce the burden of domestic borrowing.

Foreign aid in the pipeline stands at \$48.11 billion.

World Bank's former economist in Dhaka Zahid Hussain said interest payments grew rapidly in recent years primarily because of excessive reliance on expensive National Savings Certificates (NSC).

He said, "The Tk 8,000 crore projected increase in interest payment expenditure is bigger than the wage support package of Tk 5,000 crore given to export oriented industries."

"The best thing the government can do is to contain the growth of interest payments. The government must fully utilise the opportunities for external financing on concessional terms offered by donor agencies to help countries fight the pandemic. This will help, but not suffice since the bulk of the interest payment is for domestic debt."

Containing the growth of interest on domestic debt requires reforms in the management of NSC debt issuance and setting interest rates, Zahid said.

"The government tightened enforcement of eligibility rules since July 2019 [for NSC buyers]. This must continue. It should now link the NSC rates with bank deposit rates," he added.

## Venezuela arrests DirecTV executives after US firm pulls out

AFP, Caracas

Venezuelan authorities have detained three DirecTV executives after the US-owned television service's decision to shut operations in the South American country due to US sanctions, their lawyer said Friday.

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FIRST DAY OF DRIVE

## DNCC finds Aedes larvae at 131 spots

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday found Aedes mosquito larvae at 131 houses and establishments on the first day of its 10-day combined operation.

The drive, which started in all 54 wards of the city corporation simultaneously at 10am, covered 11,969 houses, establishments and under construction buildings and found the larvae at 131 places.

The DNCC teams also found breeding sources at 8,380 more houses, under construction buildings and establishments during the drive that continued till 1pm.

The DNCC teams fined Tk 69,000 to the owners of eight houses and under construction buildings and warned rest of the houses and buildings.

The drive will continue for nine more days (except Friday) from 10am till 1pm. Earlier, DNCC divided each ward into ten sectors and each sector into ten sub-sectors to conduct the combined operations.

During the drive, DNCC teams asked the dwellers to keep their house clean and use masks when they come out of their homes.

Nine entomologists of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), three entomologists of DNCC, and officials of health and garbage management of DNCC are taking part in the drive.



**A motorcyclist at New Market area travels with three pillion, including a child, none wearing helmets, while in Mugda, inset, five people crowd on a battery-run rickshaw, with little regard for social distancing or properly wearing masks. At a time when safety awareness needs to be heightened, some are walking in the opposite direction. The photos were taken yesterday.**



## Dedicated helpline for students in the offing

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government has started working on introducing a toll-free hotline for students so they can get assistance from teachers over phone.

The ministries of education; primary and mass education; and posts, telecommunications and information technology are jointly working to introduce the hotline -- 3336 -- as soon as possible.

They took the initiative to minimise the education loss incurred by students as schools remain closed due to coronavirus pandemic, and many fear that it might extend for several more months.

Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Director General Prof Syed Md Golam Faruk said if a student contacts the hotline, they will be instantly connected with teachers and the latter will give answers to any kind of questions via the hotline.

"Working hours of the hotline are yet to be finalised," said Faruk, adding, "We will launch the hotline soon."

The government started televised lectures for students amid the shutdown, while many schools on their own initiative also started online classes.

Officials said they have taken the initiatives for about 3.5 crore students of primary and secondary schools, as many of them still remain out of the purview any kind of education in absence of televisions and electronic devices.

"We are working on introducing the toll-free hotline 3336. About 2,500 teachers have already been connected," said State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak. "The government has started TV education; there is also online education but many students do not have access to those. We came up with the initiative to help them," he said.

All educational institutions in the country have remained closed since March 17 due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The government has now extended the closure till June 15 to stem the virus spread.

On April 27, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said educational institutions might remain closed until September if the situation does not improve.

The government started TV education through Sangsat TV for secondary

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## SBMCH orthopaedic dept locked down

*11 doctors, nurses test positive after two patients with Covid-19 got admitted hiding info*

UNB, BARISHAL

The orthopaedic department of Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) has been put under lockdown after 11 doctors and nurses tested positive for coronavirus.

Other doctors and staff of the department have been sent on isolation.

The hospital authorities yesterday said two coronavirus patients came for treatment there, concealing their condition and they were admitted to the department.

"They hid the fact that they tested positive for Covid-19 and underwent treatment for several days," said surgeon Sudip Halder of the department.

"After learning about the truth of their condition, samples of all doctors and nurses from the department were sent for tests and 11 of them tested positive," Halder said, adding that they have locked down the department.

Those two patients were sent to the coronavirus ward of the hospital.

Thirty-five people died with coronavirus infections in the last 24 hours in the country, taking the death toll to 846, Directorate General of Health Services said yesterday.

## LOWER COURT HEARINGS LAST WEEK 6,542 including 63 children secure bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The lower courts across the country have granted bail to 6,542 people including 63 children in five working days last week.

With these bail orders, a total of 27,480 people including 406 children, accused of criminal charges, have secured bail from lower courts across the country in last 15 working days.

More than 300 courts have granted bail to the accused after holding virtual hearings of the petitions filed by them seeking bail in the cases against them, Supreme Court sources said yesterday.

The subordinate courts have disposed of total 47,626 petitions filed by the accused seeking bail in the cases against them.

The courts have disposed of total 14,340 bail petitions and granted bail to total 6,542 accused in five days last week (May 31 to June 4) in connection with the cases filed against them, according to the sources.

Most of the accused who were granted bail have already got released from jail.

Supreme Court Spokesman Md Saifur Rahman yesterday told The Daily Star that the Supreme Court Special Committee for Child Rights have taken necessary measures in association with the Unicef, and the country's social welfare ministry to release the children, who were granted bail, from Shishu Unnayan Kendra (Children Development Centres).

More than 300 children have already got released from Shishu Unnayan Kendra and they were taken in microbuses to their guardians.

Justice Muhammad Imman Ali, a senior judge of the Appellate Division

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## Biman's 2nd charter flight to leave from London on June 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has arranged a second special flight from London to bring back Bangladeshi citizens stranded in the UK due to suspension of regular passenger flights.

On June 13, a charter flight of the national flag carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines will depart from Heathrow Airport, London around 10am (London local time) carrying the Bangladeshi citizens, Bangladesh High Commission in the UK said in a press release.

Seat arrangements in the flight will be made maintaining social distancing while ticket prices have been set at 600 pounds for economy class and 1,435 pounds for business class, added the release.

The high commission has urged all passengers to register through the Bangladesh High Commission link -- <https://forms.gle/qFXRvriFCLUUVV857> -- to secure their seats.

On May 11, the government brought back 114 stranded Bangladeshis from the UK by a special flight of Biman.

Apart from the UK, Bangladesh so far brought back stranded Bangladeshis from the USA, Canada, Australia, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.

Bangladesh suspended regular passenger flight operations on all international routes except for China since March 16 to contain the spread of Covid-19.

The government, however, resumed flights on three domestic routes from June 1.

## 55-yr-old man accused of raping sixth-grader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A sixth-grader was allegedly raped by a 55-year-old man in Homna upazila of Cumilla last Thursday morning.

The girl's mother filed a case on Friday accusing one Abdul Matin (55), son of Lalu Mia of the same village.

According to the case record, accused Abdul Matin was acquainted to the girl's family. On Thursday morning, he forcefully entered the family's house when the parents were outside for work, and the girl was with her younger brother at home.

He tied both children with a scarf and then raped the girl.

Hearing her screams, the girl's cousin came to see what happened, and Matin fled.

On Friday, the girl's mother filed a case with Homna police station.

Aminur Rasul, officer-in-charge of the station, said they are trying to catch the accused.

"Our drive will continue until he is arrested," the officer told this newspaper.

# Stronger together

100 families in Aftabnagar start community farming, kitchen to see out tough times

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Sacked from their jobs or facing loss in their small businesses, the families now collect, cook, and share meals together.

On top of that, as money became scarce and kitchen supplies got pricier, the families started cultivating vegetables in empty housing plots in the Aftabnagar area, which is working wonders in loading up their grocery basket.

What's more, the food is not distributed based on how much effort one family puts in, but is shared equally among the 320 members of the hundred families.

The arrangement was started around two and a half months ago. As mid-March hit, most earners of these families started losing their job as construction workers, rickshaw-pullers, day-wage workers, and household staff.

This deeply concerned Israt Shiuly, an activist of cultural platform Samageet, who is behind this initiative. Out of worry, she chalked up a plan to put everything together. After a couple of days planning, Samageet and Shiuly started taking the idea to the families in the area.

Members of the families along with Samageet members started the project by building a temporary kitchen in the area, called "Samageet Joint Kitchen".

They contacted owners of the empty housing plots in the area with the proposal to grow vegetables. Many agreed.

As the plan started taking shape, other parties stepped up in solidarity -- both organisations and individuals. They helped with food donations at various times of need.

Being out of work is not a pleasant experience. It's not just because of the economics, but also because people like to be active. After the kitchen was set-up, those who were laid-off and were tired of the inactivity, jumped right in, as everybody started helping out to maintain the kitchen, source supplies, and cook together.



Locals -- both men and women -- grow vegetables in empty plots and process chickens (below) together, soon to be cooked and shared.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Urban workers who usually work in environments made up of cement, concrete and ceramic, have now almost become full-fledged peasants. With their trusty garden tools, they cultivate the borrowed

land to their heart's content.

The list of vegetables they grow include red spinach, jute spinach, pumpkin, eggplant, chili and more. Freshly sown and freshly plucked, the herbs contribute a lot to the kitchen's stocks.

"The idea came out of socialist sentiments," Shiuly said. According to her, communities are much more necessary for survival than staying individualistic. Sure, some will win the race and get all the spoils, but for the many, coexistence is the way to go, especially during times of trouble, she said.

Things at Aftabnagar's joint kitchen gained a festive air during the month of Ramadan. Everyone ate sehri and iftar together, and shared whatever donations they received with each other. Eid was also special as they were all together, Shiuly told this correspondent.

FOUR YEARS OF MITU MURDER

## Case handed to PBI after 'frustrating' investigation

FM MIZANUR RAHMAN, Cg

The case filed in connection with the gruesome murder of Mahmuda Khanam Mitu, wife of former Superintendent of Police (SP) Babul Akter, has been handed over to the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) from Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP), after three years of investigation.

The case was silently transferred following a court order. However, the reason behind the transfer has not been disclosed.

CMP officials said they had almost wrapped up the investigation, but the victim's father was supposedly frustrated over CMP's handling of the case.

Even the family did not know about the transfer.

Yesterday marked four years since the brutal murder took place, in broad daylight.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, CMP Commissioner Md Mahabubur Rahman said, "We had almost completed

our investigation, but the case was handed over a few months ago following a court order."

"We had gathered several findings during our investigation, but now, PBI knows the case's last status," the commissioner added.

He, however, refused to disclose the findings when asked.

Contacted, PBI Chattogram Metro Unit Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Moin Uddin said, "We received the case documents shortly before the pandemic started, in February. We will find vital information through

analysing the documents and will conduct investigation in our own way."

"As the case is new to us, we will further interrogate the witnesses and plaintiff Babul Akter," the ADC added.

Earlier, Mohammed Kamruzzaman, ADC (prosecution) of CMP and immediate past investigation officer of the case,

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Mahmuda Khanam Mitu

Celebrating a Life  
**Rasul Shafi Chaudhury (Hilu)**  
July 1955 – May 2020

**Rasul Shafi Chaudhury (Hilu)** Managing Director of **Plastoccats Limited** and **ccats** passed on to his eternal abode on Saturday 16th May, 2020 at the United Hospital, Dhaka after braving his illness for over a year. He was laid to eternal rest in a serene setting beside his father, G. S. Chaudhury at their ancestral home at Joypara, Dohar the same day.

He left behind his mother Mrs. Anwara Chaudhury, wife Nafisa Chaudhury (Jhama), son Asaan Rasul Chaudhury (Asaan), sister Kishwar Sakhawat (Kishu), sisters in law Zinath and Shafina, brothers Ashfaq S. Chaudhury (Revol), Anwar S. Chaudhury (Evo) and Tahsin Siddique (Shomi), nieces and nephews Nashra, Inshra, Ariba, Rodita, Ahnaf, Zaryab, 4 grandchildren and many others to pray for his departed soul.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Shareholders, Officers, workers and all the members of Plastoccats Family.  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

**PLASTOCCATS**  
Plastoccats Limited

### It's like locking stable after the steed's stolen

#### Menon on plan for containment zone

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dividing Covid-19 containment zones after reopening everything, is like locking the stable door after the steed is already stolen, Workers' Party President Rashed Khan Menon said yesterday.

He made the comment while attending a virtual conference with his party leaders, commemorating recently-passed party leader Mustafizur Rahman Kabul.

He said the government seems to have taken the path of "herd immunity".

"It is not clear what the health ministry is doing about tackling coronavirus," Menon said.

The government is likely to start implementing zone-wise lockdown with criteria -- red, yellow, and green -- based on severity of the virus' spread. However, this is yet to be fully implemented.

Highly affected areas will be under total lockdown and instructions on health protocol in the zones will be given to prevent further spread of the virus.



At a time when the popular tourist destination is deserted, local children are having the time of their lives splashing amid the mighty waves of Kuakata beach. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## M'singh residents rally against 'beautification' of Circuit House ground

### Human chain protests admin's decision

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Various socio-cultural and civil organisations have protested the initiative taken by Mymensingh divisional administration for "beautification and development" of century-old Mymensingh Circuit House ground.

They said the development project of Tk 6 crore includes erecting wall surrounding the ground and establishments inside it.

As part of the protest, a human chain, maintaining social distance, was formed under the banner of "Aamra Mymensinghbari" on the spot Friday afternoon.

The speakers said the ground has a long history of political meeting, games and cultural events. If the site is enclosed in the name of development, it will lose its beauty and people's free movements, they said.

Hundreds of people throng the ground and its adjacent areas for morning walk every day and many of them enjoy playing football and cricket, said the speakers. Foundation stone of the development work was laid on June 1 without any meeting with locals, they said.

Termining the initiative unwise, they also said the ground situated on the bank of the river Brahmaputra will lose tourist attraction if the project is implemented.

Dr Prodig Chandra Kar, president of Udichi Mymensingh district unit and Progoti Lekhak Sangha, presided over the programme.

Cultural personality Shahadat Hossain Khan Hilu, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Mymensingh president Advocate Emdadul Haque Millat, poet Farid Ahmed Dulal, Poribesh Rakhha o Unnayan Andolon secretary Advocate Shibbir Ahmed Liton, Mymensingh Sahitya Sangsad former president Yazdani Quraishy Kajal, Jano-Udhog president Advocate Nazrul Islam Chunnun, Zila Mohila Parishad secretary Fahmida Yesmin Runa, Shiri Sangskritik Academy president Advocate Abdul Motalab Lal and social worker Ali Yusuf addressed the event, among others.

Contacted, Mymensingh Divisional Commissioner Md Kamrul Hasan, who took over charge several days ago, said the project is yet to be finalised. The sentiment of the local people will be considered, he said.

## Dedicated

FROM PAGE 3

students on March 29, for primary students on April 7, and for technical and madrasa students on April 19, so that students can make up for some of the losses due to closure of schools.

Many educationists and guardians said it was only partially fulfilling the objective, as about a half of the country's people -- many of them underprivileged -- do not have access to TV sets.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey-2019 of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics shows that 50 percent households of the country do not have television sets.

Many city-based schools have started online education. But maximum schools in rural areas are yet to begin the remote class system due to their students' unavailability of internet and device access.

The survey also said 37.6 percent of households have access to internet by any device from home. It also found 5.6 percent of households have a computer or tablet.

Telecom insiders said of the total mobile users, 30 percent are using smartphones and there are a total of 10 crore SIM cards.

"We have seen that many students remain out of education in absence of TV sets. So the toll free hotline will be able to connect all into education service," said Directorate of Primary Education Director General Md Fasiullah.

## Case handed

FROM PAGE 3

said Mitu was murdered due to personal vendetta but did not mention who was behind the incident.

Even after three years of investigation, officials have failed to identify whereabouts of the prime accused, police informant Kamrul Islam Musa alias Musa Sikdar, who reportedly led the mission to kill Mitu in front of her child.

Kamrul was an informant of Babul, who admitted this during his confession on December 27, 2017 at the CMP headquarters.

Talking to the newspaper, Mitu's father Mosharraf Hossain said, "We came to learn through newspaper reporters that the case was handed over to PBI recently."

"We are frustrated as police didn't inform us about the transfer. We've

provided information to them earlier, but there was no progress. PBI chief Banaj Kumar Majumdar knows the case's history, and we think we'll see progress through his fair investigation."

Mitu's father pointed his finger to Babul for his daughter's murder, as he did earlier.

Babul could not be contacted after repeated attempts, as his phone was switched off and social media accounts were deactivated.

On June 5, 2016, Mitu was stabbed and shot dead when she was walking her son to his school bus stop at port city's GEC intersection.

Following the murder, Babul filed a case against three unidentified men with Panchlailash Police Station.

Investigators so far arrested five persons -- Motale Mia Wasim, Anwar

Hossain, Ehteshamul Haque alias Bholu, Md Shahjahan and Saidul Sikder Shakur (Musa's elder brother).

Wasim and Anwar have given confessional statements before a court, implicating seven persons, including Musa, who, according to the two, directly took part in the killing.

Of the accused, Nurul Islam Rashed and Nur Nabi, whose names were mentioned by Anwar and Wasim, were killed in "gunfights" with police in July, 2016 in Chattogram, while Musa and another accused, Kalu, are still "on the run".

CMP issued a red alert for the two, with a bounty of Tk 5 lakh on Musa, on June 29, 2016.

Two others -- Md Shazaman alias Robin and Abu Nasar Gunnu -- had been arrested in connection with the killing, but their involvement could

not be substantiated.

Bholu, who reportedly supplied firearm for the murder, recently walked out of jail, after securing bail from the High Court in December, 2019.

Although police said Musa is on the run, his wife Panna Akhter had claimed that plainclothes police detained him and his brother Shakur in the port city's Bandar area on June 22, 2016.

However, only Shakur was shown arrested in the case.

Police also later brushed aside the allegation by Panna, saying they only managed to catch Shakur.

On June 25, Babul was picked up and interrogated in police custody for 15 hours.

He was relieved of his job on September 6 that year. He now works at a private company.

## 6,542 including

FROM PAGE 3

of the SC, and chairman of the Supreme Court Special Committee for Child Rights, has been monitoring issues regarding filing of bail petitions for detained children and their release, Saifur Rahman added.

The SC spokesman, however, could not specify the types of criminal cases in which 27,480 people were accused, and received bail in last 15 working days.

The virtual court functions started on May 11 after a gap of 46 days in order to deal with the urgent cases.

The regular activities of courts across the country including Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court remained closed since March 26 due to ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

The closure is scheduled to continue till May 30.

On May 10, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain issued some directives for the courts about dealing with urgent cases virtually during the ongoing closure.

## TURNED AWAY BY HOSPITALS 'Coffin procession' in Sylhet protests death of patients

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A group of youths from different walks of life brought out a procession in Sylhet city yesterday, protesting the deaths of patients after being turned away by hospitals.

Carrying a coffin covered with white sheets and placards, they paraded through many streets before arranging a rally in the Chowhatta area.

Miftah Siddiqui, chairperson of Public Voice of Sylhet, said, "The vulnerability of the country's health system became transparent during this Covid-19 pandemic. Many people are dying as hospitals are denying them treatment," he alleged.

"We're protesting such incidents through our symbolic procession. Next time, we will start protesting in front of the hospital, which will deny patients treatment," he said.

A rally will be organised this morning in front of Sylhet Central Saheed Minar, he added. "We urge the deputy commissioner of Sylhet, civil surgeon and mayor to work together to take action against those hospitals involved in such misdeeds," he said.

So far, at least four people have died in the last one week in Sylhet city after being turned away by hospitals. The Daily Star has also published two reports regarding this issue.



Carrying a symbolic coffin, youths bring out a procession in Sylhet city yesterday, protesting death of patients after being turned away by hospitals.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR



This road at the capital's Motijheel has remained dilapidated for the last few months. With frequent rain recently, water has been collecting in the potholes, causing pedestrians and vehicles to deal with an even worse situation. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

**দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন**  
প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা

সবাই মিলে গড়ব দেশ, দুর্নীতি মুক্ত বাংলাদেশ

**মাইক্রোবাস আউটসোর্সিং সংক্রান্ত পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

নং: দুর্নীতি/প্রশাস ও পরিঃ/৯১/২০০৮(অংশ-১০)/১২০১৬ তারিখ: ০৪/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ

১।	অনুলিপি/বিভাগ/অফিস	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন।
২।	সংক্রান্ত সড়ক নাম, রোল ও কোড	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, ঢাকা, ৬৭০১।
৩।	যে কারনের জন্য দরপত্র	১। জুলাই ২০২০ থেকে ৩০ জুন ২০২১ পর্যন্ত দরপত্র সিডিউল বর্ণিত শর্তাদি সংশ্লিষ্ট দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকার কার্যক্রম ও কার্যনির্বাহনের অধিনে কার্যক্রমের জন্য এটি ২০১৬ সালের অনন্যিক ০৪ (পেচ) বার কার্যক্রম হয়েছে এমন সিডিউলি চালিত ১২ আনন বিশিষ্ট Climate Controlled মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়া।
৪।	দরপত্র সূত্র ও তারিখ	দুর্নীতি/প্রশাস ও পরিঃ/৯১/২০০৮(অংশ-১০)/তারিখ: ০৬/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ
৫।	সর্বোচ্চ পদ্ধতি	বেসিক দরপত্র (OTM)।
৬।	বাজেট ও অর্ডার উদ্দেশ্য	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশনের বায়ব্য বাজেট।
৭।	দরপত্র প্রস্তুতের তারিখ	০৭/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ।
৮।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিস্তারিত শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৩/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।
৯।	দরপত্র সন্নিবেশ শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৪/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ সকাল ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১০।	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়ে পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব) এর অফিস কক্ষে আপাত ২৪/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ সকাল ১৩:৩০ ঘটিকায় দরপত্রের কার্যক্রম উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র খোলা হবে।
১১।	দরপত্র সিডিউল বিস্তারিত স্থান/সড়ক	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১, সেজনবাগিচা, ঢাকা-১০০০।
১২।	দরপত্র সন্নিবেশ স্থান/সড়ক	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১, সেজনবাগিচা, ঢাকা-১০০০।
১৩।	প্রতিবেদন দরপত্র সিডিউলের কৃত	প্রতিবেদন দরপত্র ডকুমেন্টের কৃত ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা (অন্যভাবে প্রদেয়)।
১৪।	দরপত্রের নিয়ন্ত্রণ আয়ন	দরপত্রের সাথে দরপত্র আয়নকে হিসেবে প্রতিটি মাইক্রোবাসের জন্য ২০,০০০/- (বিশ হাজার) টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার যে কোন ব্যক্তিগত ব্যাংক (সিডিউল ব্যাংক) হয়ে সরকারি পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব), দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা এর অফিসে সন্নিবেশ করতে হবে। অন্যথায় দরপত্র সরাসরি বর্জিত বলে গণ্য হবে।
১৫।	দরপত্রের খেতাবের মেয়াদ	দরপত্রের সাথে দরপত্রের কার্যক্রম (Valdity) সরাসরি খোলার তারিখ হতে ১২০ (একশত বিশ) দিন পর্যন্ত বহাল থাকবে।
১৬।	দরপত্রের মেয়াদ ও প্রয়োজনীয় সলিসিট	মাইক্রোবাসের প্রকৃত মালিক/স্বত্বাধিকারী প্রতিজন। সমসাময়িক সর্বস্বত্বের সাথে গাড়ির চালনা/স্বত্ব হ্রাস, সিডিউল সলিসিট/সেট, ট্যাক্স টোকেন, ইন্সুরেন্স সলিসিট/সেট, ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, অপ-ই-গ্রেট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সলিসিট/সেট, সার্ভিস, ট্রান্সমিটন সলিসিট/সেট ও আন্যকর পরিষেবা প্রয়োজনীয় সলিসিট/সেট সন্তুস্ত করতে হবে।
১৭।	নিষেধ নির্দেশনা	ক. কর্তৃত্বক কোন কোন দরপত্রের ব্যক্তিগত যে কোন বা সলস মালিক বর্জিত অথবা যে কোন দরপত্র প্রস্তুতের অথবা সরবরাহ করবে। খ. দরপত্রের বিজ্ঞপ্তি শর্তাদি দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ থাকবে। গ. অনির্দিষ্ট কার্যক্রমের নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ে দরপত্র প্রদান করা হবে না বলে পরবর্তী কর্মসূচিতে একই সময়ে ও স্থানে দরপত্র প্রদান করা হবে।
১৮।	দরপত্র আনয়নকারীর নাম	মেহেদুস আলী আওরাল।
১৯।	দরপত্র আনয়নকারীর পদবী	পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব)।
২০।	দরপত্র আনয়নকারীর ঠিকানা	দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ১, সেজনবাগিচা, ঢাকা।
২১।	দরপত্র আনয়নকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগের বিবরণ	০২-৯৬৩০২৭৪ (অফিস)।

সৌভাগ্য আলী আওরাল  
পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব)

তারিখ: ০৪/০৬/২০২০

# Downpour breaches Mymensingh protection dyke

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Last week's heavy downpour caused severe damage to eight-kilometre-long Mymensingh City Protection Embankment at five points.

Two of the damaged points are in Khagdohor Taltola area and three others in Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Park (Saheb Quarters Park) area of the divisional city, said sources at Mymensingh Water Development Board (WDB).

Work of the embankment from Khagdohor to Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge (Shambhuganj Bridge) area began in 1998 and was completed in 2008 under the Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project funded by the World Bank, said WDB sources.

The area experienced a heavy rainfall on May 28 and the rainwater rolled down the embankment, causing damage to it, WDB sources said.

"On an emergency basis, we started repair work in Zainul Park area on June 1 involving required number of workers. Primary we assessed that it will cost around Tk 8 lakh for repair work at the three points," said Md Musa, executive engineer of WDB, Mymensingh.

For repair work at two points in Khagdohor Taltola area, contractors will be assigned after assessment of the cost very soon, he added.

The repair work will be completed soon as the water level



This area of Mymensingh City Protection Embankment, along with a few other spots, developed breaches following last week's heavy downpour.

PHOTO: STAR

in the Brahmaputra River is going up every day, WDB officials said, adding that it will become difficult to repair the dyke if the water level in the river sees a sharp rise.

The embankment faced damage after heavy downpour due to unplanned tree plantation alongside the embankment and appearance of rat holes, said WDB

Executive Engineer Md Musa. Due to faulty drainage system along the embankment, the water cannot flow out easily after heavy rain and it enters the gaps in the embankment, causing such havoc, he said.

Engineer Nurul Amin Kalam, secretary of Mymensingh Nagorik Andolon, a citizens' forum,

said during construction of the embankment, the work of earth-filling was not done properly and so the embankment sees damage after every heavy shower.

Earth filling work at the damaged points should be done properly and the slopes to drain out the rainwater into the river should be modified, he suggested.

# Road damaged days after construction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A one kilometer road stretching from Gourangi Uttar Para to Akashi School in Ghatail upazila has been badly damaged due to rain within days of completion of its construction work.

It became unfit for traffic and motor vehicles due to a number of potholes and cracks, causing immense sufferings to the commuters, said locals.

They have mainly blamed low quality construction work for such damage caused by light rain.

In 2018-19 fiscal year, Tk 94.94 lakh was allocated for construction of the road, according to Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) in Ghatail.

Construction firm Shova Enterprise got the work order while Louhajang Enterprise implemented the work.

The construction of the road was completed around late April, said villagers.

Around 20 days after completion of the construction work, a number of potholes and cracks have developed at different points of the road due to rain, said Masud Miah, a resident of Akashi village.

Khasru Talukder, former member of the local union parishad, said although the road got damaged due to rain, the low quality

of construction work was the main reason behind the damage.

Kazi Arzu, vice chairman of Ghatail upazila parishad, said being informed, he recently visited the area and found potholes and cracks at different points of the road.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not reach any representative of the construction firm for their comment on the issue.

However, quoting the contractor, an official of local LGED said untimely heavy rain was the main reason behind damage of the road.

Ashraf Uddin, Ghatail upazila assistant engineer of LGED, said the construction work is yet to be completed. Some damaged parts of the road need renovation. Necessary steps will be taken in this regard immediately.

Meanwhile, local people have submitted a written complaint to the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) demanding reconstruction of the road.

UNO Anjan Kumar Sarkar said he has already informed the deputy commissioner (DC) in Tangail about the matter.

"The DC has directed us not to release bills of the works until completion of the renovation work of the damaged parts of the road," he added.



A one kilometer road from Gourangi Uttar Para to Akashi School in Tangail's Ghatail upazila gets damaged within days of its construction.

PHOTO: STAR

# Paddy, mango, litchi on 30 acres damaged

Locals point finger at a brick kiln for the loss

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A huge amount of mature paddy, mango, litchi and maize on more than 30 acres of land was damaged on the night of May 21 in Sujalpur village of Birganj upazila.

The affected farmers, as many as 25, alleged that their crops were damaged when hot and toxic fumes were spewed by a brick kiln, Maa Bricks, situated by the Dhepa river in the village under Nijpara union.

They said the fume was released during the shutdown process of the kiln, owned by one Shamsheer Ali, that night and they found out about the damage next morning.

They also said they sent a petition to Birganj upazila nirbahi officer early last week, seeking compensation for the damage.

The extent of the damage is so severe that not a single kilogram of rice can now be salvaged from the crop field, said a farmer.

Damage to an adjacent litchi orchard, a mango orchard (on four acres of land) and a maize field (on

six acres) was also extensive. The total area of the litchi orchard could not be known immediately.

A large number of fruits from the litchi and mango trees in the orchards are now falling off, the farmers said.

Ramisa Begum, whose husband Abu Bakar Siddique died recently, said they cultivated paddy on one bigha of land leased from Abdul Kader in the village.

They worked hard for the paddy, but the matured crop is completely ruined overnight by the fume from the kiln, she lamented. "I don't know whom I should complain to for its compensation."

Another affected farmer, Jitendranath Roy, said he cultivated paddy on one acre of land and he was hoping to pay off his debts after harvesting the paddy. "Now my worry is how I would repay the debts."

Mango trader Mamunur Rashid said he had leased a mango orchard on four acres of land for Tk 6 lakh, but all the mango in the orchard are now ruined because of the fumes from the brick kiln.

When the entire country went into shutdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the farmers continued their work as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged all not to leave one inch of arable land unutilised in order to cope with looming economic crisis due to the pandemic.

The farmers are already in a financial crisis due to falling prices of their produce over the last few years and unless due compensation is arranged, they might not survive such a huge blow to their livelihood, Mamun added.

Department of Agricultural Extension official Manoranjan Adhikari said after getting complaints from the farmers, he visited the affected area already.

He also said a report assessing the damage has also been filed with the higher authorities.

Contacted, Birganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Yamin Hossain ensured that legal action would be taken against the brickfield owner and compensation would be paid to all the affected farmers.



People inspect damage to a paddy field in Sujalpur village of Birganj upazila recently. Hot and toxic fumes spewed by a brick kiln on May 21 have damaged crops on around 30 acres of land surrounding the kiln, alleged locals.

PHOTO: STAR

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
**বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ**  
**পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়**  
**রাজবাড়ী**

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০১/২০২০-২০২১**

The Public Procurement Act-2006 & The Public Procurement Rules-2008 এবং তৎসম্পর্কিত হালনাগাদ সকল সংশোধনী আইন ও বিধি মোতাবেক আগামী ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের বিভিন্ন ইউনিটে ব্যবহারের জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের জন্য মালামাল সরবরাহ সম্বন্ধে লক্ষ উপযুক্ত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিক এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন অগ্রাধী প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/যোগাণকার/ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী/প্রকল্পকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে নিম্ন প্রকল্পের প্যাকেট সীলমোহরসহ ক্রমে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্র.সং.	কাজের বিবরণ	টেন্ডার সিদ্ধি/প্রতি (ফেরতযোগ্য)	সিদ্ধি/প্রতি মূল্য (প্রতি সেট)	কাজের সময়সীমা
১.	মন্ত্রণালয়	১	১০০০/-	
২.	সহকারী/বিভাগ	১	১০০০/-	
৩.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	১	১০০০/-	
৪.	ক্রি কার্ডের দরপত্র আহ্বান	১	১০০০/-	
৫.	দরপত্রের সূত্র ও তারিখ	১	১০০০/-	
৬.	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	১	১০০০/-	
৭.	বাজেট ও অর্থসংক্রান্ত খাত	১	১০০০/-	
৮.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১	১০০০/-	
৯.	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১	১০০০/-	
১০.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১	১০০০/-	
১১.	দরপত্র মূল্যায়নের তারিখ ও সময়	১	১০০০/-	
১২.	দরপত্র তত্ত্বাবধি/সিদ্ধি/প্রতি বিজ্ঞপ্তির অফিস	১	১০০০/-	
১৩.	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিস	১	১০০০/-	
১৪.	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	১	১০০০/-	
১৫.	দরপত্রদাতার যোগ্যতা	১	১০০০/-	
১৬.	দরপত্রের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	১	১০০০/-	

১৭. কাজের বিবরণ

ক্র.সং.	কাজের বিবরণ	টেন্ডার সিদ্ধি/প্রতি (ফেরতযোগ্য)	সিদ্ধি/প্রতি মূল্য (প্রতি সেট)	কাজের সময়সীমা
(ক)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের জন্য সাজু বিধান সামগ্রী সরবরাহ কাজ।	৩০,০০০/-	৪০০/-	
(খ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের ব্যবহারের জন্য অন্যান্য মনিহারী সামগ্রী সরবরাহ কাজ।	৫০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(গ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের জন্য ব্যবহার্য ব্র্যান্ড সিরবরাহ কাজ।	৫০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(ঘ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী পুলিশের হাসপাতালে ঔষধ ও শৈশ্য চিকিৎসা সরঞ্জাম সরবরাহ কাজ।	৩০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(ঙ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশ ব্যবহারের জন্য কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী সরবরাহ কাজ।	২০,০০০/-	৪০০/-	
(চ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের ব্যবহারের জন্য কম্পিউটার ও কন্সিউমবিল সামগ্রী সরবরাহ কাজ।	২০,০০০/-	৪০০/-	
(ছ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশ কর্মকর্তাদের সামার টিউনিক, উইন্টার টিউনিক, ব্লু জেকার (সেসকিট ব্যতীত), পোশাক সেলাই এবং রিবন সরবরাহ কাজ (পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টারের অন্তর্গত ডিজাইন ও নমুনা মোতাবেক)।	৫০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(জ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশ কর্মকর্তাদের পোশাক সেলাই এবং রিবন সরবরাহ কাজ (পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টারের অন্তর্গত ডিজাইন ও নমুনা মোতাবেক)।	৫০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	আগামী ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরের জুলাই/২০২০ হতে ৩০ জুন ২০২১ পর্যন্ত
(ঝ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের বিভিন্ন প্রকার মোটরযানের কাঁচামাল ও সূচনা যন্ত্রাংশ, ব্যাটারী, টায়ার চিউব সরবরাহ এবং সেলামত কাজ।	৫০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(ঞ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের জলবায়ুর সূচনা যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ ও সেলামত কাজ।	১০,০০০/-	৪০০/-	
(ট)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশ কর্মকর্তাদের অফিসের ও মোটরযানের জন্য কখনা খাবার (কুকচুড়) সরবরাহ কাজ।	২৫,০০০/-	৪০০/-	
(ঠ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশ বিভাগে ব্যবহারের জন্য ১০/১২ আসন বিশিষ্ট মাইক্রোবাস (ডোলামি কার্ভার) জাতীয় সরবরাহ কাজ।	৩০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(ড)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের ব্যবহারের জন্য বিভিন্ন ধরনের আসবাবপত্র সরবরাহ কাজ।	৩০,০০০/-	৪০০/-	
(ঢ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশের ব্যবহারের জন্য যন্ত্রপাতি ও অন্যান্য সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ কাজ।	৩০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	
(ণ)	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বছরে রাজবাড়ী জেলা পুলিশে আউটসোর্সিং পদ্ধতিতে জনবল সরবরাহ কাজ।	৫০,০০০/-	৭৫০/-	

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সিদ্ধি-১৫৬

## Lightning kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A man was killed in lightning strike in Rangabali upazila on Wednesday.

The deceased, Faizul Gazi, 30, was son of Bazlu Gazi of Sajirhaola village.

Police said the incident occurred when a streak of thunderbolt hit Faizul while he was cutting earth inside a fish enclosure near Kaukhali Sluice Gate around 11:00am on Wednesday, leaving him dead on the spot.

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**Zuckerberg promises Facebook policy review**

Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg on Friday promised to review the social network's policies that led to its decision to not moderate controversial messages posted by US President Donald Trump. The announcement, which came in the form of a letter to employees, appeared aimed at quelling anger inside the company that was so severe it prompted some to quit. The outrage was sparked when Zuckerberg said Facebook would not remove or flag Trump's recent posts that appeared to encourage violence against those protesting police racism. Zuckerberg's message Friday seemed to attempt to mollify that anger: "We're going to review our policies allowing discussion and threats of state use of force to see if there are any amendments we should adopt," Zuckerberg wrote. This, he said, includes "excessive use of police or state force. Given the sensitive history in the US, this deserves special consideration."

**Pakistan PM gets court notice for defamation**

A Pakistani court has issued a notice to Prime Minister Imran Khan in a defamation case filed by PML-N chief Shahbaz Sharif seeking early hearing of his suit against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, pending for three years. In April 2017, Khan alleged that Shahbaz Sharif allegedly offered him USD 61 million through a "common friend" to withdraw the Panama Papers case in the Supreme Court against 70-year-old former Prime Minister and his elder brother Nawaz Sharif. On Friday, Lahore's Additional District and Sessions Court took up Shahbaz Sharif's application for early hearing on June 10.

**Al-Qaeda chief in the Islamic Maghreb killed**



French forces have killed the leader of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Algerian Abdelmalek Droukdel, in northern Mali, France's defence minister said. Droukdel was killed on Thursday near the Algerian border, where the group has bases from which it has carried out attacks and abductions of Westerners in the sub-Saharan Sahel zone, Defence Minister Florence Parly said Friday. "Many close associates" of Droukdel -- who commanded several affiliate jihadist groups across the lawless region -- were also "neutralised", she added. AQIM emerged from a group started in the late 1990s by radical Algerian Islamists, who in 2007 pledged allegiance to Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda network.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



People protest in London, Sydney and Paris against racism and police brutality to show solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed black man who died after a police officer knelt on his neck in Minneapolis, US, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



**CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

**Wear masks in public: WHO**

UK extends ban on evicting tenants

AGENCIES

The World Health Organization has changed its advice on face masks amid the coronavirus pandemic, saying they should be worn in places where the virus is widespread and physical distancing is difficult.

The use of masks has been a hot topic ever since the pandemic first emerged in China in December.

"In light of evolving evidence, WHO advises that governments should encourage the general public to wear masks where there is widespread transmission and physical distancing is difficult," said WHO chief Tedros Ghebreyesus.

But the UN health agency stressed that facemasks alone "will not protect you from COVID-19" -- and people suffering with the virus should not be out in public if they can avoid it.

The WHO also issued new guidance on the composition of non-medical fabric masks for the general public, advising that they should consist of at least three layers of different material. The inner layer should be made of a water-absorbent material such as cotton, the middle layer -- which acts as a filter -- from a material like non-woven polypropylene, while the outer layer should be a water-resistant material such as polyester.

Meanwhile, the British government said on Friday it would extend a ban on evicting tenants from social or private rented accommodation in England and Wales by two months to Aug 23 due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The government said the extension, which will take the total length of the moratorium to five months, would give greater protection to millions of renters who may be experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic.

**INDIA-CHINA BORDER STAND-OFF**

**Generals meet to end row**

AGENCIES

India and China yesterday held high-level talks, amid the border stand-off between the militaries of the two countries near eastern Ladakh. The talks were requested by India and were held at the Border Personnel Meeting Point in Maldo on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh.

The Indian delegation was led by Lieutenant General Harinder Singh, Commander of 14 Corps, while the Chinese side was headed by the Commander of the Tibet Military District. Multiple local-level talks by regional military commanders have not made any headway so far.

Without specifically mentioning the talks, the Indian Army in a statement said Indian and Chinese officials continue to remain engaged through the established military and diplomatic channels to address the current situation in the India-China border areas.

India says the Chinese military is hindering normal patrolling by its troops along the LAC in

Ladakh and Sikkim, and strongly refutes Beijing's contention that the escalating tension between the two armies was triggered by trespassing of Indian forces across the Chinese side.

The stand-off in eastern Ladakh is in at least five key areas where India and China have had traditional differences on the perception of the LAC in the region. The present tension between the two sides came into sharp focus when reports of skirmishes between the soldiers of both sides were reported in the Pangong Lake region on May 5 and May 6.

The likely trigger for the face-off was China's stiff opposition to India laying a key road in the Finger area around the Pangong Tso Lake and the construction of another road connecting the Darbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie road in Galwan Valley. The road in the Finger area in Pangong Tso is considered crucial for India to carry out patrol. India has already decided not to stall any border infrastructure projects in eastern Ladakh in view of Chinese protests.

**Biden clinches democratic nomination for 2020 polls**

AFP, Washington

Joe Biden said Friday he had secured the delegates needed to clinch the Democratic nomination and face Donald Trump in November's US presidential election.

"Folks, tonight we secured the 1,991 delegates needed to win the Democratic nomination," the former vice president said on Twitter.

"I'm going to spend every day fighting to earn your vote so that, together, we can win the battle for the soul of this nation."

Biden passed the 1,991 threshold to secure his party's nomination as counting continued from Tuesday's round of Democratic primaries.

He had been the presumptive Democratic challenger since Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders dropped out of the race in April and endorsed his onetime rival's run at the



White House.

Biden reached the threshold with the country wracked by protests over the death of African-American George Floyd at the hands of police.

Floyd's death has reignited long-felt anger over police killings of African-Americans and unleashed a nationwide wave of civil unrest unlike any seen in the US since Martin Luther King Jr's 1968 assassination.

"This is a difficult time in America's history. And Donald Trump's angry, divisive politics is no answer," Biden wrote in a post on Medium. "The country is crying out for leadership. Leadership that can unite us. Leadership that can bring us together."

Biden's response to the protests has been in marked contrast to Trump, who threatened to deploy the military against American citizens.

**Melting permafrost: a pandora's box**

An oil spill in the Arctic 'ticked a time bomb' threatening global health, environment

AFP, Paris

Melting permafrost, suspected by Russia of being behind an unprecedented fuel spill that has polluted huge stretches of Arctic rivers, is a time bomb threatening health and the environment, and risks speeding up global warming.

A national-level state of emergency was announced after 21,000 tonnes of diesel fuel spilled from a reservoir, owned by Russian metals giant Norilsk Nickel, that collapsed on May 29.

The spill -- which has coloured remote tundra waterways with bright red patches visible from space -- has highlighted the danger of climate change for Russia as areas locked by permafrost for centuries thaw amid warmer temperatures.

Putin has declared a state of emergency in the region and complained of what he said was a bungled state response, while Russia's Prosecutor General's office on Friday ordered a review of all hazardous objects built on permafrost after saying it looked like the ground beneath a fuel tank had subsided.

In an online meeting, Putin asked officials to amend Russian law to try avoid similar accidents in future. Three criminal probes have been launched.

A vast Arctic state, Russia is warming 2.5 times faster than the world average. Sixty-five percent of the country is covered by permafrost and the environment ministry warned in 2018 that the melt threatens pipes and structures, as well as buried toxic waste, which can seep into waterways.



An aerial view of the large diesel spill in the Ambarbaya River outside Norilsk in the Arctic. Photo was taken on June 4. Inset, the Ambarbaya river running red due to the oil spill inside the Arctic circle.

PHOTO: AFP

**What is permafrost?**

Permafrost -- soil that is frozen -- is found mostly in the Northern Hemisphere, where it covers about a quarter of exposed land and is generally thousands of years old. It covers a wide belt between the Arctic Circle and boreal forests, spanning Alaska, Canada, and Russia. It can vary in depth from a few metres to hundreds. Locked into the permafrost is an estimated 1.7 trillion tonnes of carbon in the form of frozen organic matter -- the remains of rotted plants and long-dead animals trapped in sediment and later covered by ice sheets. Permafrost soils contain roughly twice as much carbon -- mainly in the form of methane and CO2 -- as Earth's atmosphere.

**Speeding up global warming**

When permafrost thaws, this matter

warms up and decomposes, eventually releasing the carbon that it holds as carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane, gases which have a greenhouse warming effect on the planet.

The release of greenhouse gases threatens a vicious circle in the warming of the Earth. According to a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in September 2019 a large part of the permafrost could melt by 2100 if carbon pollution continues unabated, releasing a carbon bomb of greenhouse gases.

**Frozen diseases?**

The thawing of the permafrost also threatens to unlock disease-causing bacteria and viruses long trapped in the ice. There have already been some cases of this happening. In 2016 a child died in Russia's far northern Siberia in an outbreak of anthrax that scientists

said seemed to have come from the corpses of infected reindeers buried 70 years before but uncovered by melting permafrost. Released from the ice, the anthrax seems to have been passed to grazing herds.

Scientists have also warned that other dormant pathogens entombed in frozen soil may be roused by global warming, such as from old smallpox graves.

In 2014 scientists revived a giant but harmless virus, dubbed Pithovirus sibericum, that had been locked in the Siberian permafrost for more than 30,000 years. A permafrost thaw could be a boon for the oil and mining industries, providing access to previously difficult-to-reach reserves in the Arctic. But in disturbing the subsoil too deeply, they could awake the viruses, scientists warn.

**Trump opens Atlantic sanctuary for fishing**

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump announced on Friday he will open up a 5,000 square mile conservation area in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of New England to commercial fishing.

The move allows commercial fishing to resume in the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument, a sanctuary created in 2016 during the Obama administration. It also cancels a planned phase out of red crab and lobster fisheries in the area.

Trump signed a proclamation on opening the area during a visit to Maine in his latest move to appeal to working class and blue collar workers in an election year by touting regulatory rollbacks that he says can restore jobs and economic activity.

"We're cutting regulations from highways and roadways to fish," Trump said at a roundtable event in Bangor.

Trump, who won in Maine's rural 2nd Congressional district in the 2016 election, also announced he would create a task force to identify international markets for U.S. seafood.

Environmental groups and some recreational fishermen warned that allowing commercial fishing in these areas undermines the protections established by the monument designations, putting marine wildlife, including endangered whales and sea turtles, sharks and fragile corals in danger of harm and entanglement in fishing nets.

The commercial seafood industry and regional fishery management councils have pressed the Trump administration to restore commercial fishing in federal waters closed off under monument protections, citing the regulatory burden that they say forces fishermen to travel further with increased operational expenses and safety risks.

**Trudeau takes a knee**

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau joined thousands on Friday in taking a knee in front of Canada's parliament in solidarity with US protesters marching against racism and police brutality. It marked a rare public outing for the Canadian leader since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, as protests spread outside the United States after police in Minnesota killed an unarmed black man. Trudeau, holding a "Black Lives Matter" T-shirt, chanted from behind a mask along with the crowd that extended several blocks to the US embassy, and later stood in silence for eight minutes and 46 seconds. This was the length of time that a white police officer in Minneapolis knelt on the neck of George Floyd, an unarmed African-American, who died after pleading "I can't breathe." On Tuesday, Trudeau appeared at a loss for words, pausing for 20 seconds when pressed for



his thoughts on US President Donald Trump's threat of military mobilization against violent protests. "We all watch in horror and consternation what's going on in the United States," he said finally. Now "is a time to listen, it is a time to pull people together and a time to learn what injustices continue despite progress over years and decades," he added.

**US sues Chinese firm over 'fake' N95 masks**

The US Justice Department sued a Chinese company for selling nearly a half million fake and substandard N95 respirator to US buyers in April as the COVID-19 pandemic swept the country. In a complaint filed in federal court in Brooklyn, New York, the department said Guangdong-based King Year Packaging and Printing shipped three batches of purported N95 masks, needed to protect medical and other personnel from the coronavirus, to US buyers. The company falsely claimed the 495,200 masks it shipped were met the N95 standard and also falsely claimed they were certified by the US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), according to the complaint. The complaint indicated the importer of the masks paid more than \$1 million for them. The Chinese company was charged with four counts of importing misbranded and substandard health products and making false to the US Food and Drug Administration. Each charge carries a maximum fine of \$500,000, or if greater, twice what the company earned in selling the masks.



**Landslide carries buildings into sea off Norway**

Several houses have been swept into the sea following a powerful landslide in Alta municipality, northern Norway, on Wednesday. Anders Bjordal, a Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate engineer, told CNN that he saw there had been a "big clay slide" after being called to the scene at 4 pm Wednesday to offer guidance to the police and rescue team. The slide was 650 meters (2,133 feet) wide and 150 meters (492 feet) deep, destroyed eight buildings, including four cabins which act as weekend residences, Bjordal added. No one was harmed and all people were evacuated from the buildings, he said. Alta municipality, located in the country's northernmost Finnmark county, is known for its forests, mountain plateaus, coastal landscapes, and Northern Lights.

# Favipiravir: A light of hope for COVID-19

IFFAT ARA

The antiviral drug Favipiravir, better known as Avigan, is being trialed as a treatment for the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Avigan is the brand name of the drug Favipiravir, it was developed by the Japanese Fujifilm Toyama Chemical Company, has emerged as a potential drug to treat patients infected with the deadly novel coronavirus.

Two renowned pharmaceutical industries of Bangladesh have manufactured this drug in their plant for the trial of COVID-19 patients in Bangladesh. Other pharmaceutical industries are also in the process of getting permission to produce the drug from the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), Bangladesh.

In Japan, Favipiravir was approved in 2014 for sale domestically under the brand name Avigan for stockpiling against influenza pandemics. Testing in the development stages, however, revealed that the drug can result in elevated blood uric acid levels and cause deformities in the unborn young of animals.



This anti-influenza drug has shown some promise in the fight against COVID-19, but experts warn that it has known side effects and that there is insufficient clinical data for its use. Favipiravir works by blocking the ability of a virus to replicate inside a cell. It induces lethal RNA transversion mutations, producing a nonviable viral phenotype.

Favipiravir is a prodrug that is metabolised to its active form, favipiravir-ribofuranosyl-5-triphosphate, available in both oral and intravenous

formulations. It does not inhibit RNA or DNA synthesis in mammalian cells and is not toxic to them.

However, Favipiravir has not proven effective in primary human airway cells, casting doubt on its efficacy in influenza treatment. Japan approved favipiravir for treating influenza strains unresponsive to current antivirals. The Japanese Fujifilm Toyama Chemical Company initially hoped that favipiravir would become a new influenza medication that could replace oseltamivir (brand name Tamiflu).

On the other hand, animal experiments show the potential for teratogenic effects, and the approval of production by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare was greatly delayed and the production condition is limited only in an emergency in Japan.

The Italian Pharmaceutical Agency, however, has reminded the public that the existing evidence in support of this drug is scant and preliminary. Favipiravir has shown limited efficacy against the Zika virus in animal studies, but was less

effective than other antivirals such as MK-608. The agent has also shown some efficacy against rabies and has been used experimentally in some humans infected with the virus.

A study of 80 people in comparison to ritonavir found that it reduced viral clearance time and that 91% of people had improved Computed Tomography (CT) scans with few side effects. The limitation of this study was that it was not randomised, double-blinded and placebo-controlled.

The drug has been approved for use in clinical trials of the novel coronavirus disease 2019 in China and at the same time, in March 2020, Italy also has approved the drug for experimental use against COVID-19 and has begun conducting trials in three regions most affected by the disease. Though this drug is on the trial process and in some cases on phase II or III, this drug could be a light of hope for the treatment of COVID-19 until we get a better option.

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## SUGAR LEVEL

Glucose levels linked to maternal mortality, even in non-diabetic women

An elevated pre-pregnancy HbA1c — which measures average blood glucose concentration — is associated with a higher risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes even in women without known diabetes, according to a new study published recently in *PLOS Medicine*.

Diabetes mellitus and obesity are both associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes but the relationship between pre-pregnancy A1c and severe maternal morbidity or maternal mortality is unknown.

Overall, the risk of severe maternal morbidity (SMM) or death from 23 weeks gestation to 6 weeks postpartum was 2.2%. For each 0.5% absolute increase in A1c, the relative risk of SMM or death was 1.16 (95% CI 1.14-1.19, p(0.001) after adjusting for maternal age, multifetal pregnancy, world region of origin, and tobacco/drug dependence.

The authors note that most women do not undergo A1c testing, which may have led to selection bias among the cohort. Additionally, pre-pregnancy body mass index was unknown for 77% of the participants. Therefore, the potential interaction between BMI, A1c and risk of SMM should be investigated further. Still, these findings have implications for pre-pregnancy health screening.

## HEALTH bulletin



### Disrupted sleep increases the risk of cardiovascular disease by promoting inflammation

Sleep disruption has been shown to be associated with an increased risk of atherosclerosis, but the mechanism has been unclear. A new study in the open-access journal *PLOS Biology* reveals that fragmented sleep exacerbates atherosclerosis and may raise the risk of stroke via an effect on inflammatory pathways. These results provide a mechanism to explain the long-standing observation that poor sleep increases the risk of heart disease and stroke, and suggest simple and direct ways to reduce such risk.

The authors found that sleep fragmentation, as measured by actigraphy, predicted both higher neutrophil (but not monocyte) counts and higher coronary artery calcium, a measure of atherosclerosis pathology. They showed that the influence of sleep fragmentation on coronary artery calcium was mediated through the increase in neutrophils; in other words, poor sleep led to an increase in neutrophils, which in turn led to an increase in atherosclerosis.

Improving sleep may offer a novel way to reduce inflammation and thus reduce the risk of atherosclerosis. These findings may help inform public health guidelines that seek to increase the continuity of sleep as a way to improve health and decrease the burden of heart disease on society.

## Coronavirus infection in children

PROF M KARIM KHAN

The coronavirus outbreak has become a global problem, creating panic and concern all over the world. The pandemic has restricted movement, paralysed business and affected the economy in many countries including Bangladesh. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared it as a pandemic and global emergency.

Coronavirus is a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to severe respiratory distress. The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a very contagious disease and has claimed the lives of about half a million people worldwide. COVID-19 started its journey from Wuhan, China and now has spread over 195 countries of the world. Bangladesh has recorded more than 60,000 confirmed cases and around 900 deaths so far.

The novel coronavirus can affect anybody, from neonates to adults. Fortunately, children are being less affected by it and their signs and symptoms are not exaggerated. Why are the children less affected is not so clearly known. The reasons might be that they might be exposed less, their receptor for viruses are less or they might have better immunity than adults and develop better antibodies.

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at high risk for COVID-19. Elderly people with comorbidity is more at risk. China conducted a research on 2,143 paediatric patients, among which two-third were suspected cases and the rest were laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases. About 4% of them were asymptomatic,

51% had mild illness and 39% had moderate illness. Boys and girls were equally affected. About 6% had severe illness compared to 18.5% of adults. They also found infants develop more critical manifestation than older children.

As it is a new virus we must wait for more information and explanation regarding children's infection. Whatever may be the seriousness we have to prevent it and the steps of prevention are the same for everyone.

Frequent hand washing for at least 20 seconds with soap, using alcohol based sanitisers, maintaining social distancing, staying at home and avoiding touching the nose, mouth and eyes with unclean hands are imperative.

Having lukewarm water often and increased intake of vitamin C is also

important. The use of proper masks while going out and proper disposal of used tissue papers after coughing or sneezing are important. It is better to avoid the consumption of raw or uncooked food.

By any means we must prevent/lower the community transmission and the best way to do that is to keep yourself at home. Do not come out of your home until it is very much essential. Social, religious or political gatherings must be halted and avoided. Public transportation should also be avoided.

It is important to not panic. Be cautious, be safe and make others safe by staying at home.

The author is a Professor of Paediatrics at Community Based Medical College, Mymensingh.  
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### Breastfeeding helps counteracts BMI gain

For people whose genes put them at risk of becoming obese, exclusive breastfeeding as a baby can help ward off weight gain later in life. These findings from a new study were published recently in *PLOS Genetics*.

A growing body of research suggests that babies who consume only breastmilk are less likely to be overweight as children or adults, but the reasons behind this and other benefits of breastfeeding are not well understood. The authors investigated whether the weight-reducing impact of breastmilk can counteract the effects of genetic variations that increase the odds that a person will become obese.

In 18-year-old boys whose genes put them in the "high-risk" category for obesity, exclusive breastfeeding until 5 months of age reduced their BMI (Body Mass Index) by 1.14 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. In girls, the impact was even larger, with a reduction of 1.53 kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

Breastfeeding exclusively until 3 months of age, or a mix of breastmilk and formula, did not cause the same BMI reduction in high-risk individuals. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that all babies be breastfed exclusively until 6 months of age, but globally, only about 40 percent of babies breastfeed until this age.

The new findings reinforce the WHO's recommendation and suggest that a longer duration of exclusive breastfeeding may have the greatest benefits for individuals with a high risk of obesity.

f b /StarHealthBD

## HOW TO HOME QUARANTINE

The home quarantined person should:



Stay in a well-ventilated single-room preferably with an attached toilet



Needs to stay away from elderly people, pregnant women, children



Restrict his/her movement within the house



Under no circumstances attend any social/religious gathering



Wash hand frequently with soap and water or with alcohol-based sanitizer



Avoid sharing household items like dishes, glasses, cups, utensils, towels, bedding



Wear a surgical mask at all time. The mask should be changed every 8-8 hours



Dispose off used mask in a closed bin and bin should also be handled responsibly



If symptoms appear, he/she should immediately inform the nearest health centre

## COVID-19 OUTBREAK



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## Bangladesh among top 20 countries infected with Covid-19!

*Hospitals should be adequately prepared to face the impending challenge*

IT is most unfortunate that Bangladesh has become one of the top 20 countries in the world in terms of the number of people infected with Covid-19 as the country reported 63,026 positive cases until yesterday. While Belgium, the western European country that Bangladesh has replaced with its rising number of Covid-19 cases, detected its first coronavirus patient in February, and reportedly, has been recording less than 400 cases every day since mid-May, three months after the first Covid-19 case was detected in Bangladesh, around 3,000 new cases are being officially confirmed here every day, with the number of deaths also rising steadily. Sadly, this is the case when only around 10 to 15 thousand tests are being conducted every day. If 3,000 people test positive among 10,000, we can easily guess the actual number of cases.

Apparently, a number of factors have contributed to this negative development in Bangladesh, the government's downplaying and mishandling of the pandemic from the very beginning being the most important reason among them, as health experts have claimed. The health ministry and the DGHS did not give due importance on increasing the number of tests, contract tracing and isolating people who were at risk of contracting and spreading the virus. Sadly, these steps have still not been prioritised. Also, not enough was done to make people follow the directives of the government regarding maintaining lockdown and social distancing measures. While people's disregard for health safety has also been a big reason for the spike in new cases, lack of awareness raising programmes among the public is also to blame. While in some of our neighbouring countries curfew was declared to stop people from coming out of their homes, our government did not take strong enough action to declare such emergencies.

Our collective failure in taking the required measures has helped spread the virus to such an alarming level. Now, our weak healthcare system is overburdened with Covid-19 patients as the curve is going up. Although the government has given directive to all hospitals and clinics to have separate treatment facilities for Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 patients amid the surge in new cases, only a handful of hospitals have made such preparations. Even the designated hospitals for Covid-19 have been struggling to provide treatment to the rising number of patients. Every day, we are coming across reports of patients being denied treatment by hospitals and dying on the street. Our hospitals have a very limited number of ICU beds and ventilators, and most of them do not even have a central oxygen supply system.

In order to face the impending challenge, the government needs to heed the suggestions given by the health experts and the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) and strictly implement their recommendations which include ensuring uninterrupted oxygen supplies at hospitals, increasing the ICU beds on a priority basis, increasing the number of tests, conducting proper contract tracing, etc.

## Only 1 percent target met in paddy procurement!

*Can government afford such apathy when stocks are diminishing fast?*

IT is concerning that the government has made very little headway in procuring Boro paddy and rice over the past month, even though it fixed its highest ever paddy procurement target this year—double that of last year's Boro paddy purchase. According to reports, the Directorate General of Food (DGF) has managed to purchase only 7,750 tonnes of Boro paddy from farmers—less than one percent of the target of 800,000 tonnes—since the drive began on April 26. Additionally, the food office has procured six percent of the targeted 10 lakh tonnes of parboiled rice from millers after the drive was launched on May 7.

These numbers paint a very bleak picture at a time when it's more crucial than ever to ensure adequate public food stock for distribution to low-income, poor and vulnerable groups, who are on the verge of starvation owing to the unprecedented assault on livelihoods brought about by Covid-19. According to data from the food ministry, on June 3, the food stock at the state godowns dropped by 16 percent from the same day a year ago, while the stock of staple food rice declined by 29 percent. This stock will diminish at an alarming rate as more food-based safety net operations are rolled out in the coming months.

We had earlier warned the government to pay heed to calls for reforms in its procurement system, including easing the current regulation on moisture content of freshly-cut paddy. Unfortunately, those warnings seem to have fallen on deaf ears of the DGF, who are now citing the high moisture content of paddy as a justification for the slow procurement rate. We urge them, once again, to remove the barriers in rice procurement and do the needful to reach its desired target by the end of August. The DGF should not need a reminder that this is a particularly critical year for the country and that its efficiency (or lack thereof) can be the difference between food security and famine. It simply cannot afford to continue at its sluggish pace.

# The Great Lockdown

*Managing the economic impact in the less developed countries*

WAHIDUDDIN MAHMUD

THE social distancing measures to contain the spread of the Covid-19 infection have been appropriately called the Great Lockdown, in remembrance of the Great Recession of the 1930s. It needs no elaboration that this health crisis and the associated social distancing measures have imposed an enormous economic burden worldwide, but more so on the less developed countries, in terms of employment and production losses and the hugely increased demand for social security measures. Compared to the developed countries, the less developed ones are obviously more hard-hit in terms of economic misery of the large proportions of their populations who already live below or near the poverty line and who are now joined by numerous others who have lost their livelihoods because of the lockdown.

There is a lot of discussion in the context of these countries, about how to balance between measures to save lives or livelihoods. The reality is that providing for the minimum sustenance of the poor and keeping them home for an indefinite period may prove simply beyond the resources and the logistical capability of the authorities. Cross-country comparisons show that the poorer countries are lifting or relaxing the lockdowns and social distancing measures earlier, perhaps prematurely, in relation to the time of the initial infections. A few countries, notably Vietnam, are exceptions in containing the spread of the disease early enough so as to be able to safely return to normal economic activities.

The challenge is how to live with Covid-19 while maintaining some measure of safety to slow down the spread of infection as the economy gets restarted. The problems is that, there is not enough testing or epidemiological analysis to plan for a sequencing of such easing of restrictions, except following what other countries are doing, which is of course not the best idea. The bottom line is that if infections continue to spread fast with large numbers of deaths, there may be so much panic and disruptions that the choice between lives and livelihoods will no longer remain meaningful.

A particularly disappointing aspect of the onset of the Covid-19 crisis is that it took place at a time when many of the less developed countries were showing signs of strong economic growth momentum. There may, however, be a silver lining. Crises and shocks expose many structural weaknesses of the economy, which are not

paid much attention to when the going is good. Several areas of such weaknesses can be readily identified.

First, the lack of representative credible local governance is always a problem in implementing social security measures and local development plans, resulting in huge resource leakage and mistargeting of beneficiaries; but the problem is now all the more acutely felt when many countries have to rely on the centralised bureaucracy with very little local knowledge to manage things during the lockdown. No wonder, the Indian state of Kerala, known for its strong local governance, has proved a model for coping with this crisis by implementing effective lockdown, infection tracing and delivery of social security assistance.



The typically bustling Mirpur-1 area wears a withdrawn look amid an unofficial lockdown across the country, on April 6, 2020.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Second, the weaknesses of the commercial banking system in many of these countries with huge portfolios of non-performing loans are well-known. The problem is now starkly exposed as governments are trying to implement the huge stimulus packages through the banking system. Many enterprises need to be given flexibility in loan repayment, which is to do with the immediate liquidity problem and is relatively easy to implement; but some also need loans at concessional interest rates to cover loss and avoid bankruptcy. Even if the loss of interest earnings of banks is to be covered from the government's budget, assuming that fiscal resources permit that, monitoring is a huge problem. The recourse is to open refinancing facilities from the central bank at zero or very low

interest, which is equivalent to printing money.

A related, and a more important issue is how to assist small enterprises to tide over the crisis and save them from winding up, particularly since they lack effective political lobbies to attract the government's stimulus funds. Yet, small enterprises, some of these scaled up from the subsistence scale and others set up through lateral entry, are extremely important for providing employment, for making growth more equitable and for making the economy more resilient in the face of impending problems with remittance and exports amid a prospective global economic recession. Although in many developing countries we see much dynamism in the small-scale sector in

spending on health, along with weak governance of service delivery. Some countries, Bangladesh is foremost among those, have earned plaudits for increasing the average longevity of the population, mostly by reducing child mortality; and that has been achieved mostly through low-cost solutions and effective social campaigns, such as for child immunisation, or diarrhoea treatment by oral saline. Such public health campaigns have largely bypassed the government's regular health establishments. Coping with the Covid-19 crisis has now exposed how fragile and inadequately equipped the health infrastructure is in many of these countries.

Looking at the future, another related challenge will be posed by the increasing health risks from environmental degradation and pollution associated with urban and industrial concentrations, particularly in the densely populated countries. Increasing incidence of mid-life morbidity and mortality resulting from environmental pollution may already be eroding into the gains in average longevity from reduced child mortality. Incidentally, environmental pollution is also related to increased incidence of respiratory illnesses that make people more prone to fatal Covid-19 attack.

There are other areas of policy reforms that may be initiated in the wake of this crisis such as in respect of revenue mobilisation, restructuring of import tariffs or exchange rate management. The need for revenue mobilisation has come to the fore in light of the need for increased public social spending both in health and in education and training; the latter for coping with the need for creating more and new kinds of jobs. Then, the likely impact of impending global recession on remittance and export earnings may compel policymakers to rethink the strategy of unduly defending the domestic currency, while creating enclave-like arrangements for one or two major manufacturing exports amid a general anti-export bias. While these countries will need a lot of assistance from the multilateral and other donors to cope with the post-Covid-19 economic recovery, such assistance needs to be aligned with these much-needed policy reforms.

Wahiduddin Mahmud is Chairman, Economic Research Group, Dhaka.

Remarks made in response to the keynote presentation by Professor Gita Gopinath of IMF and Harvard University at the virtual workshop organised by the Centre for Economic Policy Research, London, June 4-5, 2020.

## A look back at the historic Six Point Movement



STRAIGHT LINE

MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

Muhammad Nurul Huda

On June 7, 1966, in the then East Pakistan, a special protest day was observed in support of the Six Point Movement. The government of General Ayub Khan moved to suppress it with

force. Huge demonstrations were fired upon by police claiming a number of lives. Large scale arrests followed. It is time once again to gratefully recall those intrepid Bangali nationalists whose sacrifices expedited our defiant march to full independence a few years later.

In so far as Bangladesh's socio-economic emancipation is concerned, the historic Six Point programme of the Awami League launched in 1966 is undoubtedly a milestone in the annals of our political progression. The Six Point Formula for regional autonomy was set out in a written statement, which was to have been placed before the Lahore Conference. It was published under the title "Six Point Formula-Our Right to Live" on March 23, 1966. It was presented as a statement of basic principles for a firm resolution of the country's inter-wing political and economic problems.

Before venturing to record the significance of the above historic document, let us look at the contents of the formulation. The Six Point, as formulated in the statement were:

**Point 1:** The Constitution should provide for a Federation of Pakistan, in its true sense, on the basis of the Lahore Resolution, and a parliamentary form of government with the supremacy of Legislature which would be directly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise.

**Point 2:** The federal government shall deal with only two subjects, vis: Defence and Foreign Affairs, and all other subjects shall vest in the federating states.

**Point 3:** Either of the two following measures (should be adopted) with regard to currency—(a) two separate, but freely convertible currencies for the two wings may be introduced, or (b) one currency for the whole country may be maintained. In this case, effective constitutional provisions are to be made to stop the flight of capital from East to West Pakistan. A separate banking reserve is to be made, and separate fiscal

and monetary policy be adopted for East Pakistan.

**Point 4:** Power of taxation and revenue collection shall vest in the federating units and the federal centre shall have no such power. The federation shall have a share in the state taxes for meeting their required expenditure. The consolidated federal fund shall come out of a levy of a certain percentage of all state taxes.

**Point 5:** (1) There shall be two separate accounts for the foreign

*The "Six Point Formula" was indeed both demand and ground reality driven, as analyses had shown that the main instruments through which the transfer of resources had been made from the eastern wing to the western wing were control over foreign trade, foreign exchange and foreign aid.*

exchange earnings of the two wings; (2) the earnings of East Pakistan shall be under the control of the East Pakistan government, and that of West Pakistan under the control of the West Pakistan government; (3) the foreign exchange requirement of the federal government shall be met by the two wings either equally or in a ratio to be fixed; (4) indigenous products shall move free of duty between the two wings; (5) the Constitution shall empower the unit governments to establish trade and commercial relations and set up trade missions in, and enter into, agreements with foreign countries.

**Point 6:** A militia or paramilitary force shall be set up for East Pakistan.

It is relevant to recollect that the then "East Bengal" (present day Bangladesh) very rightly felt that it had not received a "fair deal" since the earliest period in Pakistan. There was an acute feeling

of being discriminated against in the allocation of federal funds and foreign exchange, and in the matter of recruitment to public services by the central government. The writings of Bangali economists continued to highlight the discriminatory policies that had resulted in marked disparities in the economic developments of the two wings.

The main thrust of the Six Point scheme was to regionalise economic management. In fact, the essence of the scheme urged that the practical measures required to redress the disparity would need certain basic institutional changes. Those changes demanded the dismantling of the Central Planning Commission and replacing it with two powerful regional planning bodies, and the bifurcation of the ministries of finance and economic affairs. The idea was for regionalising economic management, i.e. transfer, to the regions the powers of taxation, of making fiscal and monetary policy, of planning and controlling resources, and of conducting foreign economic relations.

The "Six Point Formula" was indeed both demand and ground reality driven, as analyses had shown that the main instruments through which the transfer of resources had been made from the eastern wing to the western wing were control over foreign trade, foreign exchange and foreign aid. It was quite clear that federal control over economic management had to be countered and it was logically and manifestly demonstrated in the Six Point Formula. Quite expectedly, the ruling elite from the western wing was not prepared to relinquish the instruments through which they had been able to dominate the economy.

Pakistan's president General Ayub's reaction to the Six Point programme was to threaten repression with the use of force. He labelled the programme a scheme for secession and declared that he would respond to it "with the language of weapons". The Awami League decided to propagate the Six Point amongst the people and this inspired a tremendous mass movement to grow in its support. On April 18, 1966, Bangabandhu was arrested under the Defence of Pakistan Rules.

General Ayub Khan was removed from office by the mass upsurge of 1969. On March 29, 1969, General Yahya Khan was sworn in as Chief Martial Law Administrator and on assumption of office, committed himself to the transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. National elections were held

on December 7, 1970 in which the Awami League won 167 out of 169 seats in East Pakistan in a house of 313 seats. An overwhelmingly decisive election result gave an absolute majority to the Awami League and was a clear verdict in favour of the party's Six Point programme.

It is pertinent to recollect here that in June 1970 Bangabandhu had stated clearly that the elections would be a referendum on the Six Point. The popular verdict was decisive. Bangabandhu had to announce that the Six Point were now the property of the people and that he had no authority to compromise on their substance. This was so because there was a so called polite invitation from the military junta to discuss the substance of the Six Point, and Bangabandhu and the Awami League were not prepared to make any concession.

In a mammoth public meeting in January 1971, all elected members of national and provincial assemblies along with Bangabandhu and other leaders took an oath that they would not compromise on the Six Point. This was inevitable because at this time, Bengali nationalism was recording its voice and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the leader who had been marked to carry the struggle to its conclusion.

The military junta of Pakistan, in 1971, was not amenable to reason and were definitely blinded by ignorance and prejudice. It is thus no wonder that they did not come to terms with the Six Point, although according to even economists of moderate competence, the Six Point Formula was of benefit to the richest regions of West Pakistan. The refusal of the military government to concede to the logical demands resulted in the commencement of the non-cooperation movement, and the brutal military crackdown thereafter and the subsequent war of liberation leading to the emergence of sovereign Bangladesh.

There is no denying that the Six Point Movement created an unprecedented political awakening that clearly indicated that East Pakistan was no longer open to the exploitation either of its resources or its share of external assistance. Politically speaking, the Six Point programme galvanised an entire population to seek real economic emancipation by means of total decentralisation of economic decision-making, to be based on the use of the region's own resources. It was, indeed, an unique resolve of our self-determination.

Muhammad Nurul Huda is a former IGP.



# How are we doing in the fight against Covid-19?

Researcher and scientist Dr Bijon Kumar Sil is a renowned name in the field of microbiology. In 2003, he invented the SARS coronavirus detection kit in Singapore. Recently, he has come under the limelight with his latest invention—G Rapid Dot Blot—a low-cost and time-saving kit developed by Gonoshasthaya Kendra for detecting Covid-19 with an accuracy of over 90 percent. Even though the kit is yet to be approved by the authorities, its promise has gained much appreciation. Having worked in prominent organisations internationally, the scientist from Natore returned to Bangladesh and joined Gono University and is now its lead virology scientist. The following is an excerpt from an interview taken by Golam Mertoza, which was broadcast live on The Daily Star's Facebook page recently.

**What is the current status of your G Rapid Dot Blot kit?**  
Hopefully, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) will give us the approval soon.

**Last week when we spoke, you were expecting their report in a week's time, which has already passed. Isn't it taking a bit too long?**

Yes, it is taking some time indeed. Initially we proposed to detect antibodies and antigens of coronavirus from the blood. But now we are able to do so from saliva—enabling us to get the results rapidly. We discovered that even before the symptoms start to appear in a patient, the virus is present in their saliva. Therefore, we requested BSMMU to use saliva as a sample in the trial of our kits. In order to do so, they had to hold a meeting again and get the approval. After that we gave them the kit along with the containers they needed to collect the saliva in, which they did not have. Hence, it has become a time-consuming process.

So far, two countries got the approval for antigen kits—US and Japan. Experts in Japan said that they will consider using the saliva test in the future. However, we have done so and the results seem promising. And it is with our kit that I have identified the virus in Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury on May 26. The next day he provided his sample to BSMMU for PCR test.

**You were the first scientist in the world to proclaim the development of the antigen and antibody kits. Even though US did so later, they were able to bring it to the market earlier following their approval. You have also accomplished the saliva test before Japan did. Like before, do you think you may fall behind this time?**  
It is unlikely because we have already filed for a patent. If someone else wants to make use of it, they will need to get our consent.

**There seems to be a lot of criticism regarding your kit. Many experts and physicians in the country have claimed that testing with your kit will not provide accurate results.**

Those who claimed that the results won't be accurate must be very experienced, and I can't claim to be an expert like them. However, I am very familiar with the coronavirus as well because in 2003, I worked with SARS coronavirus during the outbreak, and the recent one is of a similar kind. What I say and do is based on my own experience. In 2003, I worked on four different methods to identify SARS, the first and second of which are not possible in Bangladesh because we don't have a laboratory of that calibre. Then there was the PCR method, which we designed at that time (in 2003) in Singapore and the final method was Dot Blot which enabled the fastest detection. It took around three and a half hours to get the result using PCR and cell culture takes even longer. With Dot Blot we can now get the result in three to five minutes. I claim its accuracy based on my research, innovation and testing.

**What is the reason behind their criticism?**

The naysayers may be knowledgeable, but I possess more experience in this regard. Both antibody and antigen tests are necessary. In the past 20 years, molecular technology has advanced remarkably. It has been reported from different parts of the world that PCR test results are coming out inaccurately and collecting samples for it remains challenging. It requires skilled technicians because if the sample is not collected from the precise spot, then the result won't be accurate. Therefore, there is a 30 percent chance of the result being inaccurate. The price of PCR machines are more expensive as well. Because of such constraints, I developed the Rapid Dot Blot kit. I

respect criticism, but it would be better if it was constructive.

**Whenever I try to reach you, I am told you are busy in the lab. What are you working on now?**

Due to the lockdown, we had to import all the required reagents and it was a time consuming and challenging process. With all the criticism around, we are trying to refine our method as much as possible. The lab in which my team and I are working in now was



Dr Bijon Kumar Sil

arranged in only a week. What we are thinking about today, the west is doing so tomorrow. Hence, we had to work diligently so that there are no room for mistakes.

**Having worked in state-of-the-art labs in Singapore, how was the experience of returning to Bangladesh to work for an organisation dedicated to the public health of the underprivileged?**

The researchers in my team are all very talented individuals. In Singapore, I could avail all the necessary items in no time, there was no lockdown and we made the antigens ourselves. But there are limitations now. All that we require needs to be imported from outside. The

foreign minister, the Prime Minister's Office, customs and others have all assisted us to progress this far.

**How long did it take you to get approval for the SARS virus kit in Singapore?**

Since there was a pandemic, it did not take us long to get the approval. As I had joined the Singapore Civil Service working for the government, the kit we made was considered government-approved.

**Compared to SARS, COVID-19 is a worldwide contagion. How long are the developed nations taking to approve the kit during such an emergency?**

In the US, in order to get approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), one would have to wait at least three years, provide extensive paperwork and it is a very expensive process. However, for the antigen kit to get approved by the FDA, it only took three days.

**In PCR tests, around 30 percent of the time the results turn out to be inaccurate. What about your kit?**  
It is not possible to get 100 percent accurate results in every test. Due to antigen and antibody tests, the success rate of our kit tends to be above 90 percent.

**Vietnam and South Korea have succeeded in dealing with coronavirus in a relatively short time. What would you attribute their success to?**

While testing, we detected coronavirus in the saliva of numerous asymptomatic patients. If we look at South Korea, they have conducted mass testing using Rapid Test kits which helped them prevent the spread of the virus. The scenario here is different though, despite the restrictions that were in place, many ignored them increasing the chance of infection.

**Many infected patients are opting**

**for plasma therapy now. Probably even more so since Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury felt better after availing it. How feasible is plasma therapy in Bangladesh?**

Last February, I posted on Facebook addressing the World Health Organization that hyper-immune therapy or plasma therapy was the way forward as it can prove effective even for critical patients. After administering it to Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, it helped him create enough antibodies to fight Covid-19. There is another method which is better—if the blood from a recovered Covid-19 patient can be given to someone who is infected, provided that their blood groups match. Memory cells in the recovered patient's blood helps the plasma cells to produce around 2,000 antibodies every second in the blood to prevent the virus from dominating. Even though plasma therapy is compelling, the latter is even better. Another important factor in combatting this virus is one's morale. A strong morale significantly helps boost the body's immune system.

**Since the lockdown is no longer in place, as a scientist, what advice would you give to the general public?**

We must maintain good hygiene at all costs. As the virus grows in the mouth, if we drink hot tea and gargle with it, the virus will not be able to multiply easily as tea is an antibiotic and the hot temperature will increase the blood circulation in the mouth increasing the cells of our immune system. Vitamin C plays a vital role too by activating our immune system. There were no supplements for vitamin C and zinc earlier. Gonoshasthaya then produced them. In addition to the natural sources of vitamin C, taking two supplements in the morning and two at night will greatly condense the prevalence of the virus. As there is no running from this virus, we should not dread it and must face it with courage and determination instead.

## Why we should let our demographic lead the way

SHARMIN AHMED and SADIA AHMED

WHEN WHO declared Covid-19 a pandemic, many organisations immediately called for ideas on what to do as there was no doubt that an economic disaster was looming. Most measures focused on keeping the economy alive through low interest loans and financial services—all immensely important for keeping businesses buoyant and ensuring a rebound after the crisis. But a key characteristic of Bangladesh is its huge and dense population, one without the safety-net services and support that developed nations can provide to their people. Therefore, this crisis is bound to culminate into a humanitarian disaster for us, leading to people at the bottom of the pyramid living in poor health, hunger and generally low well-being.

While on the one hand we use social-distancing measures, testing and other healthcare services to directly address the pandemic, on the other hand we are also aiming to help the economy survive and remain resilient. Right now, making sure that essential services continue to be provided is crucial, as this will mean people are safe and can survive without "handouts". Yes, without handouts. It is not to say that the efforts of different organisations and individuals alike to

aid people who have lost their jobs and livelihoods should be stopped. These are essential in the short run, although, development experience and countless studies have shown that directly giving cash to people might work better than providing food packages. For a forward-thinking approach we may want to consider more comprehensive systems—sectors like telecommunication, transport, agriculture and labour-intensive industries.

Let's start with the agriculture or the food sector. We have seen farmers in rural areas not being able to sell their products because there aren't enough buyers and transport from rural to urban areas due to the general holiday. This means that in urban areas, prices are going up, making things difficult for the poor even though there is enough food in rural areas. On the other hand, farmers who are not being able to sell are getting poorer. As a result, farmers will not have the money to buy seeds, fertilisers and other materials for the next harvest, which could lead to a real shortage.

If the flow of goods from rural to urban areas is increased, farmers could earn enough to invest next season and food prices can also be kept stable. With that in mind, import of farming

material should be subsidised for next season. And for the next one or two years, the government should try to get more open pollinated variety (OPV) seeds. Hybrid is expensive and cannot be reused, OPV has less yield but can be replanted without buying new seeds—that is what we need now, cheaper seeds that can be re-used. The government and multilateral organisations should collaborate to support seed companies to expand and extend their distribution networks to reach more farmers.

Similarly, the production of PPE will continue to be important until most of the world can be vaccinated. This implies a steady demand for PPE which some of our factories already produce; and potentially others too can.

Companies should now restructure their CSR activities to support the governments in this crisis. Mobile operators could give free airtime to the poor. And the benefits could be two-way as these networks can provide data that will help determine who needs what kind of support and how to reach them. Keeping communication lines alive is also very important to ensure that news and information have a way of reaching those who are stuck in slums without televisions and access to information. Investing in increasing the reach of bKash and other money transfer services

would be useful. It is high time we brought in our low-income unbanked population into the formal financial sector backed by telecommunication services. While it is inevitable that we will go through a recession, the idea should be to make sure people do not suffer through it and die of hunger or starvation.

When the economy starts to reopen, and it must happen gradually, the government should initiate projects to employ people. Construction, real estate and factories—anything that needs a large number of workers—will be essential for our recovery. The gig economy will also be key, as it could be a source of mass employment.

Because we have a small pool of funds, its judicious use is vital for us to weather this crisis. The World Bank has predicted a 22 percent fall in remittances due to Covid-19, and Bangladesh still remains significantly dependent on remittances. To resend our workers abroad, we need to inspire confidence among countries that need them. This could include testing facilities at airports or before travel.

The truth it is that while the pandemic has left us in uncharted waters, old debates on letting go of the one-size-fits-all theories are all the more valuable now. We need to look



If the flow of goods from rural to urban areas is increased, farmers could earn enough to invest next season and food prices can also be kept stable.

PHOTO: STAR

at our demographics for guidance, our internal systems and decide what's best for us. The good news is that past calamities have shown us to be a resilient people.

Sharmin Ahmed is a consultant at IFC working on agriculture advisory. Sadia Ahmed is an economist who has worked in economic development projects in countries across Africa, Asia and East-Europe.

### QUOTABLE Quote



EM FORSTER (1879-1970)

British novelist, essayist, and social and literary critic.

*Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon.*

### CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- |                        |                               |                             |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>          | product                       | 8 Tricktaking card game     |
| 1 River vessels        | 32 Maximum amount             | 9 On the train              |
| 6 Iron output          | 33 Wasn't selfish             | 10 Best Picture of 1955     |
| 11 Some messages       | 35 Pocatello's state neighbor | 16 Lackeys                  |
| 12 Curaçao's           | 38 Green hue                  | 20 Pics                     |
| 13 Singer Reese        | 39 Pearshaped instruments     | 21 "— bodkins!"             |
| 14 Home design         | 40 Printer need               | 24 "Fifth Beetle" Sutcliffe |
| 15 Go along with       | 41 Used up                    | 25 Delayed                  |
| 17 Pillbox, for one    | 42 Sky sights                 | 26 In recent days           |
| 18 John who plays Sulu |                               | 27 Yacht spot               |
| 19 "My bad!"           | <b>DOWN</b>                   | 28 Shrewd                   |
| 22 Finger count        | 1 Edit                        | 29 Passover meals           |
| 23 Personally gave     | 2 Don of "Coconut"            | 30 Train supports           |
| 24 Fizzy quaffs        | 3 Bird of prey                | 34 Heaps                    |
| 25 Bit of inside info  | 4 Floor piece                 | 36 Egg layer                |
| 27 Rap performers      | 5 Hockey plays                | 37 East, in Berlin          |
| 30 Denies              | 6 Blue                        |                             |
| 31 Brewpub             | 7 Due follower                |                             |

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### YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



### BETLE BAILEY



### BY MORT WALKER



### BABY BLUES



### BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

## Official Covid-19

FROM PAGE 12  
that Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital, may already have as many as 750,000 cases, even though the official national tally is less than 60,000.

Over the past week the three countries have largely lifted nationwide lockdowns intended to curb the spread of covid-19. The freeing of 1.7bn people—more than a fifth of humanity—from varied restrictions will bring relief to the region's battered economies. Alas, it promises no relief from the pandemic itself. In luckier countries, stay-at-home rules reduced the number of new infections. In South Asia they managed only to moderate the disease's acceleration, but not to halt it. The lifting of the lockdowns, in turn, is likely to hasten its spread again.

Doctors in Pakistan say the government's claim that there are adequate hospital beds is nonsense. "The situation is very, very unsatisfactory," says Qaisar Sajjad of the Pakistan Medical Association.

In normal times, the region's rich can largely insulate themselves from the implications of decades of puny public spending on health. "If they so much as sneeze they flee to Thailand, Singapore or India," says a doctor at a private hospital in Dhaka. Now, she says, it is "almost impossible" to gain admission to Bangladesh's elite hospitals, whether for covid-19 or other illnesses.

Finding places in morgues, cemeteries and crematoria is also becoming a challenge. At the municipal graveyard of Narayanganj, an area with lots of garment factories on the outskirts of Dhaka, a typical month sees fewer than 250 burials. Last month it jumped to 575, only 70 of which were officially recorded as victims of covid-19.

Inevitably, the failure of all three countries to control the pandemic has led to soul-searching and blame-casting. Imran Khan, Pakistan's prime minister, has loudly pointed out that he was never a fan of the lockdown, which he had warned would hit the poor unduly hard, and could only slow the disease. His detractors respond that a big reason for failure was precisely the half-hearted and inept way Pakistan's lockdown was enforced. In Bangladesh, inconsistent rulemaking, a collapse in average income in slum areas of an estimated 75% and the mass return to villages of hundreds of thousands of garment-workers undermined any gains from the lockdown.

Perhaps the most egregious errors were made by India's government. Despite imposing the most stringent and heavily policed restrictions in the region, the government failed to foresee that its measures might prompt a mass exodus from cities of tens of millions of migrant workers made suddenly destitute. The authorities first tried to block the movement, bottling migrants in urban slums with the highest infection rates, and then allowed perhaps 20m workers to leave, spreading the disease across the country.

Whatever the cause, the damage is now done. Farid Uddin, a gravedigger in the Bangladeshi port city of Chattogram (formerly Chittagong), comes close to tears as he explains that he and his team have scarcely slept in four days. "There are so many deaths," he gulps. "We are overwhelmed. Please pray for us so Allah forgives us and takes back this disease."

## Some 900

FROM PAGE 1  
It, however, did not mention the test results.

Of 497 collected samples, 407 were taken from the dead.

According to the report, 229 people died at home, 69 on the way to hospital, and 544 after being admitted to hospitals.

Of those who passed away at home, 2.18 percent died after one or more hospitals refused to provide them with any kind of treatment in fear of coronavirus transmission, the report added.

It said 21 people were found dead outside their homes. In some cases, the bodies were left untouched for a long time out of fear until police would recover them.

Of the total deceased, 578 were males, 210 females and gender of 112 others were not mentioned.

The report also said 65 of the deceased were aged up to 19 years, 152 between 20 and 39 years, and the rest were 40 or above.

It said 91 of the deceased were identified as farmers, labourers, garment workers, rickshaw-pullers and drivers, fishermen and boatmen.

Thirty-two were employees of different organisations, 30 were traders and shop owners, 29 students, 17 small traders and hawkers, 13 physicians, dentists and health workers, nine teachers of universities, colleges, schools and madrasas, 11 officials and bankers, 10 members of police, Ansar and navy, and seven journalists and cultural activists.

As many as 213 were children, elderly, retired and disabled persons, 123 housewives while the occupational identity of 294 people was not mentioned.

District-wise, the highest 98 people died in Dhaka followed by 43 in Narayanganj.

Upazila-wise, the highest 17 people died in Narayanganj Sadar followed by 11 in Keraniganj of Dhaka and 10 in Rupganj of Narayanganj, according to the report.



The villagers in Koyra Upzaila of Khulna facing acute shortage of drinking water as around 1,100 tube wells have been damaged there due to flood caused by cyclone Amphan.

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY

## Water crisis with water all around

FROM PAGE 12  
cyclone victims in the upazila.

Each tablet can be used in a 5-litre container of water collected from partially-submerged tube wells or ponds, but it won't remove salinity, Proshanta said.

"We are also supplying 1,500 litre of drinking water using four mobile water treatment plants in the affected areas every day but we could not yet reach many remote places," he said.

"People in those places are facing water crisis. We told them to collect rainwater," Proshanta added.

However, people like Amena, possessing no large containers, cannot collect rainwater and are often drinking the saline water, risking their health.

Humayun Kabir, chairman of Koyra Sadar Union Parishad, said many villagers in his union are suffering from cold, fever, skin-infections and water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea

but are not getting medical help.

All the four clinics of the union are closed and the health providers cannot reach the affected area because roads have been flooded, he said.

According to Humayun and Sardar Nurul Islam Company, chairman of Uttar Bedkashi union, at least 50,000 people from the two unions have been stranded for the last two weeks.

So far, only 400 people from these unions have received relief such as rice, lentil, dry food and some cash, they claimed.

Abu Huriaya, a former member of Koyra Sadar Union Parishad, and a resident of No 2 Koyra village, said many are having trouble cooking these relief items because of lack of stoves and firewood.

Some better-off families are buying gas cylinders, but many like Amena try to collect dead trees floating in the water and dry those out to use as firewood.

Abu Huriaya also noted how the absence of sanitation facilities and people living in close quarters with domestic animals in dry areas, flood control dams and cyclone shelters are adding to the health risk of the cyclone victims.

"Relief has not yet reached the char and remote areas. Many of these people had already lost their jobs in the pandemic. They are now in dire condition with no food at home," he added.

The tidal surge caused by the cyclone Amphan flooded hundreds of villages in Khulna district. At least 80 villages in the district including 60 in Koyra upazila are still under saline water.

Around one and a half lakh cyclone Amphan affected people in the upazila are facing scarcity of food, drinking water, accommodation, sanitation and health facilities, locals claimed.

Koyra Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Sudip Bala, however,

said 12 medical teams are working in the waterlogged villages and there is no medical crisis anywhere.

He said a campaign asking people not to drink saline water is being carried out and they are also providing saline and necessary medicines in the waterlogged areas.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shimul Kumar Saha of Koyra told The Daily Star that they already distributed 50 tonnes of rice, Tk 75 lakh and dry food for cyclone-affected people.

Though relief distribution is continuing, reaching all the affected areas is taking time due to lack of manpower and volunteers, he said.

Local lawmaker Md Akhtaruzzaman Babu said the government has allocated money for dam construction, which will start from October.

When asked how the cyclone victims would cope till then, he said, they are taking the time to build a sturdy, long-lasting dam this time.

## 'Six-point demand was the roadmap to independence'

FROM PAGE 12  
although Ayub Khan's regime took recourse to all sorts of brutal measures against the proponents, organisers and supporters of the six-point formula, they couldn't suppress it as the demands garnered massive public support. It was the beginning of the struggle for independence, he adds. Recalling the heroic sacrifices of the June 7 martyrs, he urges the people to take a fresh vow to rebuild the nation.

Bangabandhu recalls with gratitude the assistance and cooperation extended to the struggling people of

Bangladesh for their liberation by the people and government of India and Russia. He expresses his confidence that the friendship and brotherly ties with these two friends will be everlasting and no power on earth can drive a wedge between them.

Sharply rebuking Pakistan President ZA Bhutto for indulging in purposeless talk, Bangabandhu turns down the offer to sit and talk for a settlement. Let Bhutto recognise Bangladesh first and then it will be decided what to do and what not to do, he adds. Bangabandhu advises

Bhutto not to waste his efforts to save war criminals. They will be tried for the brutality they committed in Bangladesh during the war, says the prime minister. He also asks Bhutto to allow four lakhs of Bangalees living in Pakistan to return to Bangladesh.

Bangabandhu further says that Bangladesh needs help from friendly countries but such assistance must be without any strings attached. The government cannot accept any aid belittling the country's independence, he adds.

Bangabandhu appeals to the

people to put extra effort to increase production in agricultural and industrial units. He adds that the government has started the task of reconstruction on debris and will not be able to deliver any substantial goods to the people for three years.

The prime minister warns hoarders, smugglers and conspirators of stern action if they don't desist from their evil-mongering immediately.

SOURCES: June 8, 1972 issue of Purbodesh.

## Key global cities rally for justice

FROM PAGE 12  
"Like so many people, I am appalled by the death of George Floyd. I understand why people are deeply upset," the UK health minister said on Friday.

"But we are still facing a health crisis and coronavirus remains a real threat."

Londoners held a rally outside parliament yesterday and will hold demonstration in front of the US embassy on the opposite bank of the Thames River today.

In the United States, prominent Democratic politicians urged police reform as demonstrations continued for 11th night.

Democratic leaders in Minneapolis voted to end the use of knee restraints and choke holds, although the ordinance must be approved by a judge.

California Governor Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, said he would bar a state police training agency from teaching a restraint technique, sometimes called a "sleeper hold," that involves restricting the carotid artery in the neck.

And in New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo said his state should lead the way in passing "Say Their Name" reforms, including making police disciplinary records publicly available and banning chokeholds.

"Mr Floyd's murder was the breaking point," Cuomo, also a Democrat, said in a statement. "People are saying enough is enough, we must change."

A federal judge in Denver ordered city police to stop deploying tear gas, plastic bullets and other "less-than-lethal" devices such as flash grenades. The temporary injunction was in response to a lawsuit filed by protesters.

**DRESSED IN BLACK**  
Aboriginal protesters performed a traditional smoking ceremony at the start of a "Black Lives Matter" protest in Sydney, which was sanctioned at the last minute after initially being

banned on health grounds.

Tens of thousands of Australians defied government orders to stay home regardless, holding up signs and wearing face masks marked up "I can't breathe" -- the words Floyd kept repeating while handcuffed as a policeman knelt on his neck.

"The fact that they have tried to push us all back and stop the protest, it makes people want to do it even more," said Jumikah Donovan, one of thousands who turned up thinking the Sydney ban was still in place.

Thousands more dressed in black to mourn Floyd's death in Melbourne and other Australian cities.

## Brazil threatens

FROM PAGE 12  
the far-right leader told journalists.

Dubbed the "Tropical Trump," Bolsonaro has followed the US president in his handling of the pandemic, downplaying its severity, attacking stay-at-home measures and touting the purported effects of hydroxychloroquine against Covid-19.

The WHO has suspended trials of hydroxychloroquine after major studies raised concerns about its safety and effectiveness -- irking Trump, who even took the drug himself as a preventive measure.

Most of the authors of the studies that appeared in The Lancet and the New England Journal of Medicine retracted their work, saying they could no longer vouch for their data because the firm that supplied it refused to be audited.

But a new study from Oxford University said Friday that hydroxychloroquine showed "no beneficial effect" in treating Covid-19.

The WHO also changed its advice on face masks, saying that "in light of evolving evidence" they should

be worn in places where the virus is widespread and physical distancing is difficult.

### US 'LARGELY THROUGH'

The new coronavirus has killed almost 396,000 people and infected 6.7 million globally, the world's worst health crisis in more than a century.

At its early peak, the pandemic forced half of humanity into some form of lockdown and risked tipping economies into the deepest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

OPEC and its allies were set to meet via video conference yesterday to assess their deal to slash production as oil prices tentatively recover on easing lockdowns around the world.

In the US -- the hardest-hit country, with 109,000 dead and nearly 1.9 million infections -- Trump also said the economy was bouncing back.

"We had the greatest economy in the history of the world. And that strength let us get through this horrible pandemic, largely through, I think we're doing really well," he told reporters.

## Rapid test kits the only answer

FROM PAGE 1  
Currently, the Rapid Dot Blot Kit, developed by Gonoshasthaya Pharmaceuticals Ltd, is being examined by the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, which is likely to publish the observations next Thursday.

Earlier at a meeting last Thursday, the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) for the Covid-19 outbreak formed a sub-committee to finalise the protocol on the rapid antibody test. Dr Mohammad Shahidullah, president of the NTAC, told The Daily Star.

"Our opinion is that the rapid test kit has no usefulness in detection," Prof Nazrul Islam, a member of the NTAC, told The Daily Star.

### DAILY UPDATE

In the 24 hours till 2:30pm yesterday, 35 more Covid-19 patients have died, said Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the DGHS, in the daily online bulletin.

The death toll now stands at 846 and the death rate at 1.34 percent.

During this period, 521 Covid-19 patients have recovered, taking the total number of recoveries to 13,325 and the recovery rate to 21.14 percent, she said, adding that 314 people were put under

isolation.

Of the dead, 28 were male and seven female, the DGHS official said, adding that 20 were from Dhaka, eight from Chattogram, two from Sylhet, three from Rajshahi and two from Barishal division.

Of them, two were aged between 11 and 20, three between 21 and 30, two between 31 and 40, three between 41 and 50, 10 between 51 and 60, five between 61 and 70, nine between 71 and 80 and another was between 81 and 90, Dr Nasima also said.

Dhaka city continues to be the worst affected region in terms of the number of Covid-19 patients detected and deaths so far.

As of yesterday, 19,327 cases were detected in the capital city, followed by Chattogram district with 2,875 cases.

After more than two months of shutdown, the government partially reopened offices and businesses. Officials, however, said that it is also planning to impose area-wise lockdowns.

With the surge of infections in many hotspots, local administrations of different districts and towns have imposed area-wise lockdowns to contain further spread of the virus.

## After 3-hour

FROM PAGE 12  
10 days, according to his elder brother Abdur Rouf Badsha.

"We requested the authorities to admit my brother, but the duty doctor refused to admit him without an X-ray report of his chest," he said.

It was not possible to manage an X-ray report in the morning as the X-ray room of the hospital was shut until 9:00 am, Badsha said.

"We had to wait in front of the X-ray room until 9:00 am. Immediately after undergoing the X-ray test, my brother collapsed on the ground and became unconscious," he continued.

Later, the hospital authorities took him to the emergency unit and declared him dead, Badsha said.

"We had to wait around three hours before the test. If the emergency doctors gave him primary treatment immediately, my brother could have survived," Badsha lamented.

The deceased's brother also alleged that the hospital authorities did not collect his samples even though he died with coronavirus-like symptoms.

Contacted, Abdul Wadud, assistant director of SZMCH, said the patient's condition was very severe. He was suffering from diabetic and kidney problems with coronavirus symptoms.

"Our duty doctor asked the patient's attendances to provide his chest-X ray report. By this time, our staff were preparing necessary papers for his admission. In the meantime, the patient died on the floor of the emergency unit," he said.

Responding to a query that the patient was waiting for three hours since 6:00 am to get an X-ray report, the SZMCH assistant director said he was informed that the patient arrived at the hospital around 8:30 am.

He also said that they somehow missed the collection of samples from the deceased to ascertain whether he had coronavirus infection.

## Nasim's

FROM PAGE 12  
positive for coronavirus.

Director and CEO of BSH Imran Chowdhury said the AL leader suffered a stroke around 5:00am on Friday.

His surgery was performed by a team led by Rabiul Haque, chief of the Neurosurgery at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Imran added.

Nasim is the convener of the AL-led 14-party alliance.

## Historic Six-point

FROM PAGE 12  
six-point political and economic programme in Lahore on February 5 in 1966, aiming at attaining greater autonomy for the East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, in the backdrop of exploitation and discrimination by the then Pakistani rulers.

The six-point demands were: creating provision in the constitution for a Federation of Pakistan in its true sense based on the Lahore resolution; the federal government will deal with only two subjects: defence and foreign affairs; introduction of two separate, but freely convertible currencies for East and West Pakistan; vesting the power of taxation and revenue collection with the federating units; maintaining two separate accounts for the foreign exchange earnings of the two wings; and creation of a separate militia or paramilitary force for East Pakistan.

Marking the day, Awami League has urged all to pray for the eternal peace of the departed souls of all martyrs, including the martyrs of June 7 in 1966 and Liberation War in 1971, maintaining the health guidelines issued to slow down the spread of Covid-19.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Birth Centenary Celebration National Implementation Committee will organise a virtual discussion and an online quiz competition for youths today. Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, chief coordinator of the committee, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave consent to preside over the discussion.

## Fossil reveals

FROM PAGE 12  
of any plant-eating dinosaur, revealing even the cellular structure of the leaves and intact spores.

"Direct evidence of diet in herbivorous dinosaurs is very rare," said palaeontologist Caleb Brown of the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Alberta, lead author of the research published in the journal Royal Society Open Science. "Almost everything we think we know about the diet of these animals is based on indirect data such as tooth wear, jaw biomechanics, the available plants and the nutritional content and digestibility of those plants."

Borealopelta, 18 feet long (5.5 meters) and 1-1/2 tons, was a member of a group called nodosaurs. It had a wide body, small head and walked on four short legs. As protection from large meat-eating dinosaurs, its body was studded with osteoderms - bones embedded in the skin - and it boasted a large spike on each shoulder.

Its stomach contents were comprised mostly of leaves of a particular type of fern, with very few leaves of conifers and cycads - a type of evergreen. A sizable amount of charcoal was found in the stomach, indicating it was browsing in a recently burned area.



## 'England-Windies series will be crucial'

MAZHAR UDDIN

In the post-Covid-19 era, you are not going to see a fast bowler at his run-up mark waiting to be handed the ball by a teammate who was moments prior busy shining one part of the cherry with his saliva.

As it has on the rest of the world, the pandemic will leave its mark on cricket and perhaps the deadly virus is going to take a lot from the game, especially when considering the safety and hygiene of players as well as the nature of the game.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) earlier this week issued the 'ICC Back to Cricket Guidelines' which provide a framework with practical suggestions on how members can resume cricket.

On-field behaviour such as team celebrations with body contact and shared use of drinking bottles, towels and equipment is strongly discouraged. Bans also extend to using saliva to shine the ball, although sweat may still be used while other artificial substances are being trialled and awaiting ICC approval.

According to the ICC, the ball is a potential transmission medium and there have to be rules governing the safe management of the ball.

Whether it is reverse swings with the old ball in the latter part of the game for seamers or if it is a case of getting more drift from the shinier part of the ball for



spinners, the fielding team has always made use of saliva and sweat to keep one half of the ball spick and span.

ICC cricket committee chairman Anil Kumble, a legendary former spinner, believes the ban on using saliva to shine the ball will help spinners and Bangladesh ODI captain Tamim Iqbal agreed that the ban would certainly have a huge impact on bowlers in Test cricket. However, the left-hander added that it would not make as much of a difference in the limited-overs formats.

"I think the ban on saliva will surely have an impact in Test cricket as it has long been a part of a bowler's preparation. As a batsman, I have my own preparation just before batting such as trigger movements. And shining the ball with saliva or sweat is akin to preparation for bowlers before a delivery. I can't say how much it is going to affect seamers or spinners but, being a batsman, I can say that it won't make a huge difference in limited-overs format. In limited-overs cricket, the ball's shine goes

away even after five-six overs nowadays. But in Test cricket, keeping the ball shiny for a longer period is very important for the bowling side," Tamim told The Daily Star.

The communicability and contagiousness of the virus has forced cricket's governing body to adopt strict hygiene protocols which will see social distancing become the new normal.

However, Tamim believes things are not going to remain that way forever and anticipated a return to normalcy in due time. According to the Tigers' most successful batsman, the upcoming series between England and West Indies in July will be crucial for cricket.

"We are all aware of the threat and we have to follow hygiene properly for our safety. We need to remain clean and strictly follow everything in the dressing room. I really think the upcoming England-West Indies series will be crucial and we will get a better idea when cricket finally returns to the field. I think it will take some time to get things back to normal," said Tamim.

There are reports that the England and Wales Cricket Board and the ICC are discussing allowing coronavirus substitutions during upcoming Test series against the West Indies and Pakistan.

Things are surely not going to remain the same in the post-pandemic cricket world. Until the rules are adjusted and regulations adopted to ensure the return of cricket to the field with proper safety measures, there will be hardly anyone to oppose that.



Real Madrid defender Marcelo was pulling off some outlandish parlour tricks in training yesterday as players begin to shake off the rust that had accumulated over the course of the three-month stoppage in sport worldwide due to the coronavirus outbreak. Spain's La Liga begins next week, with matches every single day in a bid to finish the top tier's remaining 11 rounds. Real Madrid currently trail league leaders Barcelona by two points. PHOTO: COLLECTED



## FANS FLOOD FOOTBALL STADIUM

Thousands of fans poured into stadiums in Vietnam on Friday as the country resumed top-flight football without social distancing measures or curbs on crowd sizes, owing to its success in combating the spread of the coronavirus. In one of three opening V. League matches, spectators stood shoulder-to-shoulder with few face masks to be seen. Vietnam has won praise for its aggressive coronavirus testing and a mass, centralised quarantine programme, putting it on course to resume its V. League, which were suspended in March, exactly where it left off bucks a global pattern of countries preparing to restart leagues without supporters or limited entrances.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Serie A to allow five substitutions

REUTERS

Serie A is set to allow five substitutions per team when it resumes on June 20 following the coronavirus stoppage after the temporary rule change was approved by the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) on Friday.

The FIGC said in a statement that its decision-making council had agreed "to allow a maximum number of five substitutions to be made for each team in the scheduled competitions up to the end of the 2019/2020 season."

The change was approved by soccer's rule-making body IFAB in May to help teams battling possible fixture congestion as they try and complete the season in a short period of time.

However, it is up to individual federations and leagues to decide if they want to adopt it.

Serie A was suspended on March 9 and the teams will have to play 12 rounds of matches in a hectic six-week period ending on August 2.

## World Cup Qualifiers return in October

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national football team will likely return to competitive football in October this year as Asian Football Confederation (AFC), on Friday, released a new schedule for the remaining fixtures of the second round joint qualifiers of 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup. The four remaining matchdays will be held in the FIFA windows of October and November.

Bangladesh are at the bottom of Group E with one point, having played a game each against all four opponents. The last game Bangladesh played was on November 14, 2019 away to Oman, suffering a 4-1 defeat. According to the new schedule, Bangladesh will host Afghanistan on October 8 before playing away to Qatar five days later. After a month's break, Bangladesh will host India on November 12 and end their campaign of the second round by hosting Oman on November 17.

"The latest decision has been taken with a view to completing the Preliminary Joint Qualification Round 2 by November 2020 and to commence the subsequent FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Asian Qualifiers Final Round as well as the play-off matches for the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Round 3 Qualifiers by the March 2021 match dates in the FIFA International Calendar," said an AFC statement.

Although the SAFF Championship is scheduled to be held in September, it looks unlikely that the regional event will be held on time, and these qualifying fixtures, too,

are being proposed subject to normalcy of the situation in October and November.

Bangladesh Football Federation's general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag yesterday, through a video message, confirmed the news. He said that BFF will hold discussions regarding the matter in the coming days.

"Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) will be discussing this matter with the national team's committee. And we hope that the proposed fixtures in October and November can be played as we hope that

### FIXTURES

Date	Results/Fixtures
Sep 10, 2019	Afghanistan 1 - 0 Bangladesh
Oct 10, 2019	Bangladesh 0 - 2 Qatar
Oct 15, 2019	India 1 - 1 Bangladesh
Nov 14, 2019	Oman 4 - 1 Bangladesh
Oct 8, 2020	Bangladesh v Afghanistan
Oct 13, 2020	Qatar v Bangladesh
Nov 12, 2020	Bangladesh v India
Nov 17, 2020	Bangladesh v Oman

the situation will get better in the meantime. We have already started our preparations keeping this in mind," said Shohag.

AFC has also proposed to host the postponed fixtures of the AFC Cup (South Asia Zone) in September and October this year, but at a single venue. However, unlike the AFC Cup, which is a club competition for the second-tier teams of the continent, the qualifying fixtures of the national teams will be held in home-and-away format.

## La Liga fires up again as old foes unite

REUTERS, Barcelona

After an almighty push by all parties, Spain's La Liga roars back into action next week after a three-month pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with matches taking place every day and with everything to play for.

The season resumes on Wednesday in bizarre circumstances with the second half of a second-tier match between Rayo Vallecano and Albacete that was abandoned in December due to offensive chants.

The (re)starting gun will be properly fired with Thursday's derby between Sevilla and Real Betis, while champions Barcelona play their first game on Saturday away to Real Mallorca, with title rivals Real Madrid hosting Eibar on Sunday.

All matches will be played without spectators for safety reasons, although broadcasters plan to replicate crowd noise for television viewers, which will include a minute of applause for Spain's more-than 27,000 COVID-19 victims.

## We will miss Bravo and Hetmyer, says Holding

Duo opt out of England tour due to virus fears

REUTERS

Pace great Michael Holding believes West Indies will particularly miss batsmen Darren Bravo and Shimron Hetmyer on their tour of England after they, along with all-rounder Keemo Paul, opted out of the series because of COVID-19 fears.

The three-Test series is scheduled to be played in July behind closed doors at 'bio-secure' venues of Ageas Bowl and Old Trafford, subject to British government approval.

"I think it's unfortunate as far as West Indies cricket is concerned," Holding said on his YouTube channel.

"I'm not going to tell anyone that they should be going to England because COVID-19 is around, someone may get sick or even worse," he said. "But at the same time I think it's unfortunate for the West Indies team because these guys have quite a bit of talent, and they'll be missed."

West Indies dropped Bravo for the one-off test against Afghanistan in November and Holding reckoned the England tour was a missed opportunity for the top-order batsman trying to revive his stop-start career.

"I'm sorry that Bravo in particular isn't going because Bravo, I think, needs to resuscitate his career," the 66-year-old Jamaican said.

"I think the more cricket he can play now, especially for West Indies, the better

chance he has of getting back on track and showing everyone the great player that he could be."

Fearless middle-order batsman Hetmyer could have also benefited from the England tour, Holding said.

"Hetmyer, again, I think he's a very, very talented player."

"Again, I'm sorry that he's not going so that he can get more opportunity to express himself. But I am not blaming them for not going."

Ian Bishop echoed Holding's sentiments,



saying players must get an option during a health crisis situation.

"You have to give players the option because it's a world health crisis," Bishop told the Trinidad Express.

"If a player decides he does not want to take that health risk, you can't hold it against him in this context. The players know they are taking a risk if someone who replaced them goes on to have great success. That's a chance you take," he said.



Moenchengladbach's Marcus Thuram looks dejected after the match as his side's push for a Champions League place was stalled by Freiburg who clinched a 1-0 win in the Bundesliga on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Akram ranks Viv as the best

AGENCIES

Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram, has given his verdict on the top five batsmen that he either bowled to or played along.

Akram's former teammate Basit Ali invited the legend on his YouTube show and gave him names of five batsmen and asked Akram to rank them in terms of their overall ability in Test cricket.

Akram picked legendary West Indies batsman Sir Vivian Richards for the top spot, saying: "If you talk about a batsman with an unmatched technique, charisma and someone

who had a huge impact on the game, it is Sir Vivian Richards. I have played against all the greats from mid-eighties to the nineties to the 2000s, but Viv Richards was a class apart.

"At number two I will put Martin Crowe because of his sheer technique. At a time when the world had no idea how to face reverse swing, he played against us. It was a series where Waqar got 30 wickets in three matches and I picked up 16 wickets in one and a half matches as I got injured. Crowe scored two centuries in that series."

He picked Brian Lara third, explaining: "At number three I will put 'the prince', Brian Lara. He was a quality batsman. He was very different and odd to bowl at. His bat would

come from various directions. He was never settled and it was difficult to bowl to him," Akram said.

Akram picked Inzamam-ul-Haq fourth and kept Sachin Tendulkar at number five.

"I am keeping Tendulkar aside because we didn't play Test cricket against him for 10 years. Waqar and I didn't bowl to him for ten years in Test matches. He came to Pakistan in 1989 as a 16-year old and after that we played against him in 1999."

"I bowled at him in Sharjah in ODIs but Test cricket is different. No doubt he is one of the greats of the game but as a bowler I didn't bowl to him in my peak and that is why it is difficult for me to judge him."



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AMPHAN AFTERMATH

# Water crisis with water all around

People in submerged Koyra villages still stuck with multifarious problems

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

There's water all around Amena Begum. Yet, her son has to bring drinking water in a raft from a shallow tube well 2.5km away.

Hundreds of cyclone Amphan victims stranded on the partially submerged Koyra Sadar-Bedkashi road in Khulna's Koyra upazila have to access drinking water similarly.

Losing their homes and belongings to Amphan, these people have been living in makeshift shanties on the dryer parts of the road since May 21, a day after the cyclone.

"Some people gave us rice, lentil and oil as relief. But no one gave us water," Amena said.

The Koyra Sadar upazila with two water treatment plants is 8km away, so most families cannot go there to fetch water, she added.

Proshanta Kumar Paul, Koyra upazila public health engineer, said in the four worst-hit unions of Koyra, 1,100 tube wells have been fully submerged or damaged by the tidal surge during the cyclone.

He said 1.4 lakh water purification tablets and 1,500 water jars --10-litre each -- have been distributed among

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Unknown artists pay tribute to the frontline warriors of Covid-19 with graffiti painted on the wall of DCC market in the capital's Gulshan. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Nasim's condition critical

Ex-health minister's blood pressure fluctuating

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The physical condition of former health minister and ruling Awami League MP Mohammed Nasim turned critical yesterday due to acute fluctuations in blood pressure.

Infected with Covid-19 and later suffering a stroke, the senior AL leader remained unconscious since he had a brain surgery on Friday, said Raziul Haque, a neurosurgeon at Bangladesh Specialized Hospital (BSH) where Nasim is undergoing treatment.

He has been on a ventilator at the ICU for the last two days, the doctor said, adding that they were trying to keep his blood pressure under control.

"His overall condition is critical," the doctor said.

Nasim was admitted to BSH in the capital's Shyamoli as he was feeling unwell. Later, he was tested

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INDIA-PAK-BANGLADESH

## Official Covid-19 numbers disguise undercounting

Reports the Economist

STAR DESK

The numbers related to Covid-19 infections and deaths in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan disguise both widespread undercounting and a rate of growth that was frightening even before the recent lifting of restrictions, the Economist reported.

At the current pace, it said, the numbers are doubling every two weeks, suggesting that by the end of July, when some models predict the outbreak will peak, the official number infected may reach 5m and the death toll could approach 150,000.

If one goes by official counts, the region's toll looks relatively modest -- some 350,000 confirmed cases and fewer than 9,000 deaths so far.

Low levels of testing mean that the real numbers could be far worse. One foreign health official in Pakistan reckons the death toll is between two and three times the government's count, wrote the London-based weekly newspaper.

John Clemens of ICDDR,B (formerly the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh), estimates

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

## "Six-point demand was the roadmap to independence"



Bangabandhu addressing a massive gathering on the occasion of Six-point Day at Suhrawardy Udyan on June 7, 1972.

June 7, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S JUNE 7 SPEECH

The nation observes the historic June 7 throughout the country with due solemnity. The grateful nation pays rich tribute to Manu Mia, Mujibullah, Abul Hussain and countless others who laid down their lives on June 7, 1966 for achieving the right to self-determination of the nation and paved the way for the liberation of Bangladesh.

On this historic occasion, Bangabandhu today speaks to a mammoth gathering at the Suhrawardy Udyan. Recounting the history of Six-point Movement, the prime minister says that

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## Historic Six-point Day today

BSS, Dhaka

The historic Six-point Day, marking the demand for autonomy for the then East Pakistan, is being observed today virtually across the country amid the Covid-19 outbreak.

On June 7 in 1966, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had launched a massive movement against the misrule of the Pakistanis on the basis of the 6-point demand.

Eleven people, including Manu Mian, Shafique and Shamsul Haque, were gunned down by the police and paramilitary EPR on that day in Dhaka and Narayanganj during a hartal called for the release of Bangabandhu and other leaders detained over launching the six-point movement against the then barbaric ruling clique.

Bangabandhu had launched his historic

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## Fossil reveals a dinosaur's last meal



REUTERS, Washington

In a forest rebounding after a wildfire 110 million years ago, an armoured dinosaur devoured a meal of tender ferns in western Canada before suffering a sudden death - perhaps drowning in a river or a flash flood - and being washed out to sea.

That unfortunate Cretaceous Period beast is now providing unique insight into the dietary habits of plant-eating dinosaurs. Scientists said on Wednesday the fossilised stomach contents of the dinosaur, called Boreolopelta markmitchelli, were preserved in exquisite detail with its skeleton, revealing what was on the menu for its last meal.

The fossil, from the province of Alberta, represents the best-preserved stomach contents

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## After 3-hour wait for x-ray, man dies in hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A 55-year-old man with Covid-19 symptoms died yesterday after reportedly being denied treatment at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital (SZMCH) in Bogura.

Md Golam Rabbani, a dispensary owner in Bogura town, was taken to the emergency unit of the hospital around 6:00 am as he was suffering from fever, cough and breathing complications for the last

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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 7

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
 AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-45 8-15  
 JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## POLICE BRUTALITY Key global cities rally for justice

Several US states announce police reform as demonstrations continue for 11th night

AGENCIES

Taking a knee, chanting and ignoring social distancing measures, outraged protesters from Sydney to London kicked off a weekend of global rallies against racism and police brutality yesterday.

The death during the arrest of George Floyd, an unarmed black man in the US state of Minnesota, has brought tens of thousands out onto the streets during a pandemic that is ebbing in Asia and Europe, but spreading in other parts of the world.

UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock spoke for many concerned officials as he tried to convince Britons not to gather for events involving more than six people this weekend, no matter the cause or their rage.

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A Black Lives Matter painting is seen on 16th street near the White House as protests against the death in Minneapolis police custody of George Floyd, continue in Washington DC. The street was renamed Black Lives Matter Plaza.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC Brazil threatens to quit WHO

India overtakes Italy as 6th worst-hit country

AGENCIES

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has threatened to pull out of the WHO over "ideological bias," as his counterpart Donald Trump said the US economy was recovering from the coronavirus pandemic while Europe slowly reopens its borders.

From Africa to Europe to Asia, governments are focused on reviving economies ravaged by weeks of restrictions to contain the virus that has killed almost 400,000 people worldwide since it emerged in China late last year.

India reported a record 9,887 new coronavirus cases in one day yesterday and overtook Italy as the world's sixth-biggest outbreak, two days before the relaxing of a lockdown with the reopening of malls, restaurants and places of worship.

European countries that are among the hardest hit are steadily reopening with the infection rates slowing even as Latin America is battered by the epidemic, especially Brazil which now has the world's third-highest number of virus deaths.

Fuelling the debate raging around the pandemic, its origins and the best way to respond, Bolsonaro criticised the World Health Organization for suspending clinical trials of the drug hydroxychloroquine for Covid-19 -- a decision it reversed this week -- and threatened to follow in Trump's footsteps by quitting.

"I'm telling you right now, the United States left the WHO, and we're studying that, in the future. Either the WHO works without ideological bias, or we leave, too,"

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