

PM donates Tk 10 crore to CRP

UNB, Dhaka



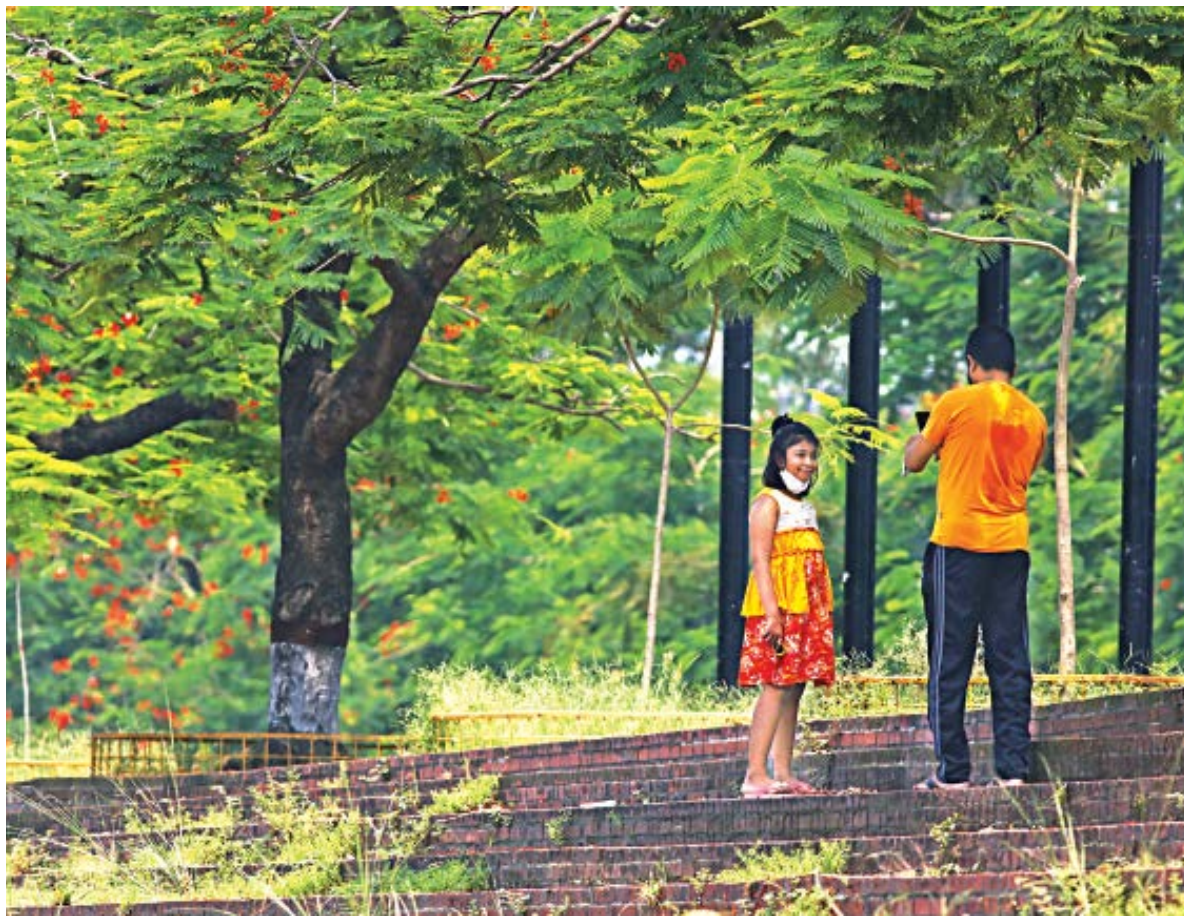
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday donated Tk 10 crore to the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) to continue its healthcare and other services.

The donation came from the prime minister so that the CRP can run its activities smoothly, confirmed PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim.

CRP, which began its journey in 1979 in order to meet the desperate needs of people with disabilities, provides medical treatment, rehabilitation and support services focusing on physical, emotional, social, psychological and economic aspects.

It promotes the development of skilled personnel in healthcare and rehabilitation in the country. CRP has developed centres in different parts of the country to expand the services for disabled people in collaboration with other organisations.

The centre, situated in Savar, also promotes empowerment of disabled people through community-based services, advocacy and networking on disability issues and empowerment of disabled girls and women. CRP also raises awareness on disability issues nationally, regionally and internationally.



Cranky after being stuck at home for months, this second-grader finally got her father to agree to a stroll around town. Dressed in matching orange clothes, this father-daughter duo was seen taking in the fresh air at Chandrima Udyan yesterday, with masks on at all times except during a photo op. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Masterplan for urban forestry taking shape

DNCC mayor tells Environment Day event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A masterplan is in the offing to bring the capital under planned forestation.

Initially, the plan will be prepared for Dhaka North City Corporation areas and gradually it will be extended to Dhaka South City Corporation and Gazipur, Narayanganj and other city corporations.

This was disclosed at an interactive video conference, marking World Environment Day on June 5 by DNCC Mayor Aitqul Islam.

The conference, titled "Masterplan for Urban Forestry" was organised to bring together professionals and environmentalists to work on a dedicated platform for planned urbanisation of Dhaka.

The mayor said tree plantations should take place under a database system. "We want to build a green and planned city, which is possible through a masterplan," he said, adding that the journey of making Dhaka green has started from this

day to forming the platform.

Urging people to plant more trees, the mayor said, "Let us start afforestation from DNCC areas."

Iqbal Habib, joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, said the platform along with experts has been formed at this event to prepare a masterplan for the capital.

Initially this relevant committee of experts will prepare a set of recommendations for the plan, its identification, implementation and management process, Habib said.

After the masterplan is in place, all tree plantation and felling in the city will be based on the committee's recommendations, he said.

Dr Akter Mahmud, president of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said the key is to make the city liveable for its residents. Networks can be created among the rivers around Dhaka and the canals inside.

Jalal Ahmad, president of Institute of Architects Bangladesh, said the journey of making Dhaka green has started from this

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Let's fight Covid-19 together: NGOs to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

NGOs and civil society groups have demanded that the government take up a long-term plan and involve the NGOs in tackling novel coronavirus that is likely to stay for long and heavily impact the lives and livelihood of people.

They said NGOs have been actively involved in the country's development process having their networks up to grassroots and they have wide range of expertise on health, education, microfinance, disaster management and livelihood programmes.

Therefore, empowering them with finance and engaging them with local government bodies could be an effective way of addressing many of the challenges arising out of the virus infection, they said at a virtual press conference yesterday.

NGO networks -- BDCSO Process, CCNF (Cox's Bazar CSO NGO Forum), Disaster Forum, National Alliance for Humanitarian Actors in Bangladesh (NAHAB) and NIRAPAD (Network for Information, Response and Preparedness, Activities on Disaster) along with ADAB (Association of

Development Agencies in Bangladesh) and FNB (Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh) organised it on "NGOs in Corona Response in Bangladesh".

In a presentation, Abdul Latif Khan, technical advisor of NAHAB, said until May 25, NGOs have reached 14.8 million beneficiaries with assistance. They have spent Tk 1.56 billion. Of that, 10 percent was mobilised locally.

The 212 NGOs of the networks provided assistance in 49 districts. The assistance includes creating awareness, food, health materials and cash.

NIRAPAD Programme Manager Hasina Akhter Mita said NGOs are the best organisations to reach remote areas and marginalised communities and there is no alternative to the NGOs in extending services to grassroots people. "The government should effectively engage local NGOs," she said.

ADAB Director AKM Jashim Uddin said the government must understand the benefit of involving NGOs and local government as the impact of coronavirus is long term and multifaceted. "If we are to

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Migrant workers in Iraq apply to return

JAMIL MAHMUD

Many Bangladeshi migrant workers are going through a tough time in Iraq due to the shutdown enforced in the country.

As job losses are growing among the community, some workers have applied to return home willingly, under a special arrangement undertaken by the Bangladesh embassy in Baghdad.

Meanwhile, International Organization for Migration (IOM) and a local charity organisation have come forward to support Bangladeshi workers. The Bangladesh mission there has also started distributing food supplies.

Iraq is home to about 2-2.5 lakh Bangladeshis. Over 50 percent of them are estimated to be undocumented, said sources at the Bangladesh mission.

Talking with this newspaper yesterday, Ahiduzzaman Liton, head of chancery at Bangladesh embassy in Baghdad, said in the last five days, some 270 Bangladeshis have applied to return home.

They applied under the condition that either their employers or they will have to bear return expenses, he said.

Of the workers, some 15-20 lost their jobs or do not have any income sources, said the official, adding that most of the others are stuck due to air-communication suspension,

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'Contact me if there's an issue'

DSCC mayor Taposh urges citizens at launch of anti-mosquito drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday inaugurated their yearlong anti-mosquito drives at Nababganj park in Lalbagh, with an aim to bring the whole mosquito control activities under a system and eradicate mosquitoes, including Aedes.

"We have already reshuffled the entire mosquito control activities of DSCC to make the work more efficient, changing the conventional method," the new mayor said.

He said every day, eight mosquito control workers in a ward will start spraying larvaicide at 9am and will continue it till 1pm.

They will be followed by 10-member mosquito control crew focusing on using aduclucide, which will begin at 2:30pm and continue till 6pm.

All ward councilors of DSCC will be involved directly in the work, the mayor said. "We are hoping to get a better result from next year with this integrated activities."

He also said they will start waterbody

cleaning work from June 14, and will release tilapia fish and ducks to make sure the waterbodies are not suitable for mosquito breeding.

The mayor also asked people to contact local councilors or health officials of the DSCC, or even with him, if they find any problems regarding mosquito control activities.

DNCC DRIVE FINDS AEDES LARVAE AT 216 SPOTS

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday found Aedes mosquito larvae at 216 houses and establishments on its second day of a 10-day drive.

Teams of DNCC visited 13,978 houses, under-construction buildings and establishments yesterday, said an official of DNCC.

The teams, comprising 12 entomologists of Directorate General of Health Services and the DNCC fined Tk 40,000 to five factories in Tejgaon Industrial area through mobile courts.

The DNCC teams also found breeding grounds and wet containers at 10,121 spots during the drive.

13 'mobile banking scammers' arrested

They swindled more than Tk 1 crore: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab yesterday claimed to have arrested 13 members of a fraud gang, who had misappropriated more than Tk 1 crore from mobile banking users in the last two months.

Several teams of Rab arrested them in the capital and Bhanga upazila of Faridpur early yesterday and recovered Tk 14.5 lakh and some electronic devices they used in the criminal activities, Lt Col Sarwar-Bin-Quashem, Rab's Legal and Media wing director, said.

The gang also used to swindle money from bank accounts of clients through debit and credit card forgery, he said.

The arrestees are Nazmul Jamaddar, Hasan Mir, Ibrahim Mir, Tawhid Hawlader, Mohon Sikder, Parvez Mir, Sohel Mollah, Delwar Hossain, Syed Hawlader, Rakib Hossain, Mohammad Ali, Palash Talukder and Emon.

This gang became more active during the shutdown when people used mobile banking service more. It embezzled more than Tk 1 crore in the last two months, Sarwar said.

They all are from Faridpur district and Rab claimed they came to know at least eight groups are active in such crimes.

The Rab official said some of the gang members used to collect the account numbers of mobile banking users, especially those who used to transact large amounts of money, from the agents of different mobile banking service providers. Later, they would collect passwords from the account holders after making a call with a spoofed (cloned) number belonging to official numbers of mobile banking service providers, and used those to siphon money out of their account.

They too deserve a dignified burial

Volunteer org providing funeral services for Covid-19 deceased

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

With deaths due to Covid-19 rising in Chattogram, bereaved families are facing yet another grim reality -- not being able to bury their loved ones with full rituals due to the fear of exposing themselves to the virus. In many cases, families and community members have not been able to attend the funeral prayers either because of physical distancing measures or due to fear of the infection.

The World Health Organization provided an interim guideline on March 24 saying, "To date there is no evidence of people becoming infected from exposure to the bodies those who died from Covid-19." Yet, the fear of transmission has made many reluctant in preparing the body for and performing the burial.

Amid such uncertainties, volunteers of Al Manahil Welfare Foundation have come forward to provide funeral services and bury those who died of Covid-19. The foundation has been providing the service since April.

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Wearing safety gear, volunteers of Al Manahil Welfare Foundation bring the body of a Covid-19 deceased to a graveyard in port city's Pahartali area for burial.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN



A group of workers crowd on a truck of Dhaka Wasa headed towards Shyamoli in the capital. While some of them are wearing masks, social distancing remains a luxury they cannot afford, and considering the limited Covid-19 testing facilities available in the country, they probably cannot afford to get tested either even if they contract the virus. The photo was taken near Gono Bhavan yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

COVID-19 No. of patients double in Rajshahi div in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi division recorded its highest number of Covid-19 patients yesterday, a number that has more than doubled since the previous days.

At least 253 people were found positive for Covid-19 while two patients died in a period of last 24 hours till 8am yesterday. With this, total death toll in the division rose to 16 and the number of total infected persons was recorded at 1540.

The number of daily identified corona patients in the division was below 100 till the previous day, health department reports show.

"The number [of corona patients] increased due to increase in number of tests," the divisional health director Dr Gopendranath Acharya told The Daily Star.

He said the health department sent some 1455 samples to different laboratories in Dhaka and the test results, showing 155 positives, were received yesterday.

Five districts of the division -- Rajshahi, Bogura, Naogaon, Joypurhat and Natore were marked as red zones, which means there would be full lockdown in those areas.

Three other districts -- Chapainawabganj, Pabna, Sirajganj were coloured as yellow for partial lockdown, Dr Acharya said.

The situation at Bogura was the worst as the two deaths were recorded there, and the highest 162 persons were detected corona positive in a day.

A total of six persons died while 731 corona patients were identified in the district so far, the health department report says.

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14 retired, 3 serving army members died of Covid-19 so far

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fourteen retired and three serving members of the army died of Covid-19 so far, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate said yesterday.

Of the 17 deceased, 14 retired members were above 60 and all of them were suffering from different incurable diseases for long and were infected with Covid-19 before their death, said ISPR in the release.

The release also said a total of 2,788 members of armed forces, retired persons, their family members have been infected so far since the outbreak of Covid-19 in Bangladesh. Of them, 2,057 are either retired or service members, 188 are family members and 543 are working in different organisations of armed forces and other organisations.

The ISPR release also said among the infected persons, 1,310 are receiving treatment at different hospitals of the armed forces while 1,461 recovered and returned to their residences. "All other admitted persons are in good condition," said the release.

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