

AMPHAN-HIT SUNDARBANS
Damage 3 times worse than Bulbul's
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SHAWWAL 17, 1441 HURI

16 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00

BANGLADESH UPDATE

3,171
New cases in 24hrs

71,675
Total cases

975
Deaths

15,336
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE

409,738
Deaths

7,246,081
Total cases



FUNDING NEXT BUDGET Kamal still banks on NBR

REJAUl KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

One can only hope, is what one would remark once learning of Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal's revenue target for the upcoming fiscal year, due to begin from July 1.

Despite the economy being in a state of recess for the best part of the past two-and-a-half months and with the health crisis revving to take an ominous turn and threatening another protracted general shutdown, Kamal is still holding out hopes that the National Board of Revenue would be able to fund the Tk 568,090 crore-budget he is set to unveil in the parliament tomorrow.

The revenue mobilisation target is most likely to be Tk 378,089 crore, up 0.07 percent from the target set in this fiscal year's original budget -- when the economy was riding on its tremendous growth momentum and not struggling with the economic impact of the pandemic.

Of the sum, the NBR would have to generate Tk 330,000 crore, up 1.35 percent from this fiscal year's target.

This would leave a budget deficit of about Tk 190,000 crore -- which would be 5.99 percent of GDP -- and half of it will be plugged with bank borrowing.

In a diversion from the past budget but a response to the need of the hour, development goals would be put on the backburner and non-development matter would be given priority.

The non-development budget would likely to increase by as much as 13 percent due to widening social safety net, the continuation of stimulus packages to tackle the effect of coronavirus, said finance ministry officials.

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BUDGET SIZE

Tk 5,68,090 crore

Development budget

Tk 2,05,145 crore

Non development budget

Tk 3,62,945 crore

Revenue earing target

Tk 3,78,089 crore

NBR revenue target

Tk 3,30,000 crore



A woman carries groceries to her home in the capital's East Rajabazar yesterday, hours before a lockdown came into force in the area at midnight to stem the spread of Covid-19. Inset, authorities giving health guidelines to locals through loudspeaker.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Trial East Rajabazar lockdown begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The capital's East Rajabazar was put under lockdown yesterday midnight on an experimental basis as part of government efforts to contain the spread of coronavirus.

"East Rajabazar has been placed in the red zone. For the last couple of days, we have been taking preparations to enforce the lockdown," local Ward Commissioner Faridur Rahman Khan Iran told The Daily Star earlier in the day.

He also said steps were underway to supply food to those living in the area and arrange transportation of patients. Besides, the authorities have ensured coronavirus testing sample collection booths and isolation centres for around 50,000 residents, he said.

People cannot leave East Rajabazar and no one from outside can enter it until further notice, Iran said, adding that volunteers would help those in

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BRAC ON COVID IMPACT 95pc surveyed suffered loss of income

51pc households have zero income due to shutdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ninety-five percent of the people surveyed across the country suffered a loss of income due to shutdown and social distancing measures enforced by the government in late March to contain the spread of the Covid-19, says a Brac survey.

Household income of 51 percent of the respondents was reduced to zero, while 62 percent of the low-income earners lost work opportunities. The pandemic left 28 percent of the respondents economically inactive, it mentions.

A total of 2,317 respondents -- 68 percent from rural areas and 32 percent from urban areas -- from different socio-economic backgrounds in 64 districts participated in the survey conducted between May 9 and 13.

The findings of the survey titled "Covid-19 awareness and economic impact" were revealed at a virtual press conference yesterday.

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Treatment on hold

Crucial tests stopped with no supply of an essential medical isotope for over two months

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

Thousands of critical cancer, heart, kidney and liver patients have their treatments on hold as medical tests they require have been off for lack of radioactive isotope for the last two months.

Jahangir Shahabuddin, a retired government officer, suffering from kidney disease and prostate cancer, also has anaemia which may indicate that cancer has spread to the bone. He was prescribed a bone scan more than a month ago but he hasn't been able to avail an appointment.

"All the hospitals said they do not know when they will be able to conduct bone scans again. I am really afraid that by the time I shall be able to conduct the test, it might be too late and my disease may get out of control," said Jahangir.

No one can get these tests, at the moment, putting their treatments at stake. Sharmin Sultana, who recently underwent a mastectomy (surgical removal of one or both breasts to treat breast cancer), was also prescribed a bone scan by her doctor to diagnose whether her cancer has progressed to the bone -- necessary in determining further treatment for her.

Following her surgery two weeks before Eid, Sharmin has been unsuccessfully

trying to get a bone scan appointment. The radioactive isotope, called Technetium-99m or Tc-99m, is an essential component in over 80 percent of nuclear medicine procedures.

These includes bone scans as well as other medical imaging tests such as immunoscintigraphy and sentinel node biopsy to identify cancer patients, myocardial perfusion imaging and cardiac ventriculography for cardiac patients, functional brain imaging, blood pool labelling and several other tests needed by kidney and liver patients.

According to a 2019 World Health Organization (WHO) report, there are more than 15 lakh cancer patients in Bangladesh.

These tests are done at 14 centres under Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), which are attached to government hospitals across the country.

Besides, the National Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (NINMAS), housed at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), also conducts the tests.

All the 15 centres are managed by the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), which is under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

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Bangladesh's GDP to grow only 1.6pc

WB now lowers its FY20 projection

REJAUl KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's economic growth would weaken further to 1.6 percent in the current fiscal year, the World Bank said yesterday as it revised its prospects revealing a far deeper impact of the coronavirus pandemic than it had initially thought.

"Bangladesh's growth is expected to slow to 1.6 percent, as the recovery in industrial production is reversed by the Covid-19-related disruptions such as mitigation measures and global exports plunge, and as remittances fall," said the WB in its June 2020 Global Economic Prospects.

Earlier in April, the Washington-based global lender had forecast that the growth would be between two and three percent, in a stunning decline from the

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Covid cases jump fourfold in a month

45 people die, 3,171 test positive, highest in a single day

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The Covid-19 infection in the country has increased fourfold in the last one month with 3,171 infections recorded yesterday -- by far the highest total for one day.

The country detected about 92 positive cases for every million in the population on May 11. But currently the number has gone up to 402 per million, according to World Health Organization (WHO) reports on Bangladesh.

The worst situation prevails in the capital where 2,489 people in each million have so far been tested positive for the virus. The rate was about 875 per million a month ago.

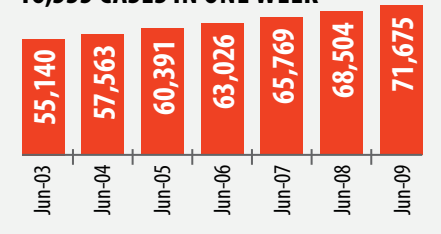
According to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), the total number of infection yesterday rose to 71,675.

The country also saw highest one-day death toll yesterday with 45 reported, taking the total to 975, said Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of DGHS.

Of the dead, 33 were male and 12 were female, she said. In the online briefing, Nasima said two were between 11-20 years old, two between 21-30, five between 31-40, three between 41-50, 15 between 51-60, 10 between 61-70, and eight between 71-80 years old.

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16,535 CASES IN ONE WEEK



BUSINESS



Economy can spring back if contagion is tamed

AV-shaped economic recovery from the ongoing slowdown is possible if everyone plays their part, said Manmohan Parkash, country director of the Asian Development Bank, in an interview with Star.

The difference between a U-shape and V-shape recovery is how quickly the health crisis can be brought under control. And the onus of flattening the curve on coronavirus does not lie squarely on the government's shoulders; cooperation from the people is going to be very critical. "Whether you will wear a mask, whether you will do social distancing, whether you will follow the lockdown rules, this is all about behaviour change. It is less on the government and more on the people to maintain those things."

STORY ON B1



A policeman's wife and her three children come out of Central Police Hospital in the city's Rajarbagh yesterday after giving samples for Covid-19 testing. They were asked to undergo the test as the cop tested positive for the virus a few days ago. A fellow policeman in PPE helping the family get a three-wheeler to take them home.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

METRO RAIL PROJECT

Pandemic holds back progress

Only 15pc workers now working

TUHN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The country's first metro rail project, Mass Rapid Transit-6, may miss its completion deadline in December next year if the construction suffers any further delays.

During the nearly two months of shutdown, the construction progressed by only 0.55 percent and only about 15 percent of the workers have returned to the site after the coronavirus restrictions were lifted.

Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), which is implementing the project, is behind its target of completing 65 percent work by June this year as its overall progress was 44.67 percent as of May, according to documents.

"It would be difficult to meet the deadline [in December 2021] if the coronavirus situation prolongs further," DMTCL Managing Director MAN Siddique said.

The Tk 22,000 crore Mass Rapid Transit-6 will connect Uttara 3rd Phase with Motijheel. About 60,000 people will be able to travel per hour using the service.

The original implementation period of the project was 2012-2024. Following the prime minister's directive, the deadline was first set for December this year and then extended to December 2021.

BEHIND TARGET
Officials at a meeting on January 7 discussed that it would not be possible to utilise the money allocated for the project for this year, a DMTCL official said.

The authorities planned to open the metro rail to the public on December 16, 2021, when the country would celebrate the golden jubilee of its independence, according to minutes from that meeting.

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