

**PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM**

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# AMPHAN-HIT SUNDARBANS Damage 3 times worse than Bulbul's

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

The lush green banks of the Shibsra river winding through the Sundarbans, once outlined by the beautiful keora and golpata trees, have turned all grey and pale yellow.

The devastation of the world's largest mangrove forest by the super cyclone Amphan became increasingly visible as the boat carrying this correspondent sailed a few kilometres down the Shibsra in the Khulna Range of West Sundarbans on May 29.

It looked like a graveyard of trees, many uprooted, broken, and leafless, blown and smashed into the forest floor. Even the gewa trees, that grow away from the shore, are standing like skeletons.

According to the Forest Department, Amphan's damage to the Sundarbans on May 20 is three times bigger than that of cyclone Bulbul's on November 10 last year.

During Amphan, around 12,358 forest trees have been broken and uprooted. The damage to the forest department's infrastructure is assessed at Tk 2.15 crore.

In comparison, cyclone Bulbul damaged 4,589 trees in the Sundarbans and infrastructure worth Tk 62.85 lakh.

After the cyclone, the Forest Department formed four committees based on the four ranges of the Sundarbans to assess the damage.

A compilation of the reports submitted by the committees to the Conservator of Forests in the Khulna region, showed around 12,332 trees have been broken and uprooted by Amphan in Khulna and Sakhira ranges of

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**A 9-km stretch of the Nolian forest by Shibsra River in the Sundarbans Khulna range lies badly damaged in the aftermath of Cyclone Amphan, which hit last month. Like every other time, the Sundarbans bore the brunt, sparing large swathes of coastal areas from the wrath of Amphan. The photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY

## Asymptomatic transmission 'very rare'

Says WHO; experts raise questions

REUTERS, London

Disease experts yesterday questioned a statement by the World Health Organization that transmission of Covid-19 by people with no symptoms is "very rare", saying this guidance could pose problems for governments as they seek to lift lockdowns.

Maria van Kerkhove, an epidemiologist and the WHO's technical lead on the coronavirus pandemic, said on Monday that many countries undertaking contact tracing had identified asymptomatic cases, but were not finding they caused further spread of the virus. "It is very rare," she said.

"I was quite surprised by the WHO statement," said Liam Smeeth, a professor of clinical epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who added that he had not seen the data Kerkhove's statement was based on.

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## Less experienced drivers to drive heavies

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government yesterday extended the relaxation of the requirement to obtain driving licences to operate heavy vehicles by one more year to June 2021, following the demand of transport leaders.

Road Transport and Bridges Ministry issued a circular in this regard yesterday. Bangladesh Road Transport Authority had sent the proposal to the ministry on June 4 for approval, officials said.

Under the original rules, a driver had to have three years' experience with a light-vehicle licence to apply for a licence to drive medium-sized vehicles, and only after three more years of holding the latter licence could the driver apply for a heavy-vehicle licence, which includes for buses and trucks.

The minimum requirement of six years to graduate from light to heavy vehicles has in less than two years shrunk to three years, with the intermediary step of driving the medium-sized vehicle removed in February this year, to remain in effect till June. It is this relaxation that has been extended till June 2021.

"On Thursday, we sent the proposal to extend the deadline," Lokman Hossain Mollah, director (engineering) of BRTA said.

Replying to a question, he said, "Yes, transport owners and workers have demanded an extension."

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## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

### First trial under the Collaborators Act



**Chief Minister of West Bengal Siddharta Shankar Roy and his wife call on Bangabandhu at his official residence on June 10, 1972.**

June 10, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

#### SIDDHARTA SHANKAR ROY CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

Siddharta Shankar Roy, chief minister of West Bengal, along with his wife calls on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today at his official residence. They discuss various bilateral issues.

Roy arrived in Dhaka in the morning today for a two-day visit. He is greeted with warm reception at the Tejgaon Airport. While talking to the journalists at the airport, the chief minister says that the friendship between India and Bangladesh will be everlasting and no evil force can drive a wedge between them. He further says that India's support to the cause of Bangladesh during the Liberation War was based on principle, not for any political gain. He also expresses his confidence in Bangabandhu and says that Bangladesh will be a happy and prosperous country under his able leadership.

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## GONOSHASTHAYA KIT BSMMU delays trial results

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University will not submit this week the performance trial results of home-grown Covid-19 testing kit developed by Gonoshasthaya Kendra.

"We earlier said we would submit the trial result this week. But we have to delay it as some technical problems developed. Hopefully, we would be able to submit it the next week," Prof Kanak Kanti Barua, vice-chancellor of BSMMU, told The Daily Star yesterday afternoon.

"We have already solved the issues."

He, however, did not clarify what sort of technical issues they had.

Earlier, Prof Kanak told the media that they would submit the trial result to the Directorate General of Drug Administration by today.

DGDA Director General Maj Gen Mahbubur Rahman also recently

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## Nasa plans to build orbiting lunar 'hotel'

MAIL ONLINE

Nasa has awarded a \$187 million contract to Northrop Grumman to build a crew module that astronauts will stay in before landing on the moon.

Known as the habitation and logistics outpost (HALO), it will be the size of a small flat and form part of the Lunar Gateway, a small

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## Moscow emerges from lockdown

WHO warns of 'worsening' global crisis

AFP, Moscow

Moscow emerged from a strict coronavirus lockdown yesterday despite Russia seeing thousands of new cases every day, as the World Health Organization warned the pandemic was "worsening" worldwide.

Muscovites flocked to streets and parks after authorities in the Russian capital lifted restrictions in place since March 30, even as the country registered 8,595 new cases and its total death toll surpassed 6,000.

Walking in central Moscow under sunny skies, 33-year-old marketing manager Olga Ivanova said that after weeks stuck at home it felt good to have her city back.

"It's nice out and there are a lot of people on the streets. It's a beautiful day, in every sense of the word," she said.

With more than 485,000 cases as of yesterday, Russia has the third-highest number of confirmed infections after the United States and Brazil.

Officials say the high number is the result of a huge testing campaign, with more than 13 million tests carried out so far, and point to Russia's relatively low mortality rate as evidence it is safe to ease lockdowns.

Critics have accused authorities of under-reporting deaths and say officials are rushing to lift restrictions for political

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**Garment factory workers blocking a road in Uttara yesterday morning. They staged a two-hour protest against the layoff of their co-workers after the factories closed down due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Garment workers have been facing a crisis with their livelihoods since the pandemic took hold in the country.**

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## POLICE BRUTALITY Floyd laid to rest in his hometown

Democrats unveil police reform plan

AGENCIES

George Floyd's funeral was held in his native Houston yesterday after mourners paid their respects to the African American whose death in custody ignited global protests against racism and calls for reforms of US law enforcement.

Reverend Al Sharpton

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#### PRAYER TIMING JUNE 10

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-05	12-45	5-00	6-50	8-15
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15	5-15	6-55	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ  
রাজস্বক ভবন, ঢাকা  
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**জরুরি বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

এতদ্বারা সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষের উত্তরা ১৮নং সেক্টরে উত্তরা এপার্টমেন্ট প্রকল্পের 'এ' ব্লকে নির্মিত/নির্মাণাধীন এস ১৬৫৪ বর্গফুট আয়তনের ৫ম পর্যায়ে বরাদ্দযোগ্য স্বল্প সংখ্যক ত্রুটি বরাদ্দের প্রসপেক্টাস ও আবেদন ফরম বিক্রি এবং আবেদন ফরম জমা দেয়ার সময়সীমা আগামী ৩০ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০২০ খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত পর্বিত করা হলো।

এ সংক্রান্ত অয়োজনীয় তথ্যাদি রাজস্বক ভবনে গয়েবসাইট [www.rajukdhaka.gov.bd](http://www.rajukdhaka.gov.bd) হতে সন্ধান করা যাবে। প্রয়োজনে [uap@rajukdhaka.gov.bd](mailto:uap@rajukdhaka.gov.bd) এ মেইল/ফোন লাইন-০১৭৩০০১৩৯৪৫ এ নাম্বরে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

শাৰীমা মোমেন  
সচিব  
রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ, ঢাকা

তারিখ-১৯৯৯