

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKING
DU, Bu et still in lowest bracket

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Bu et) have failed to make any progress in the latest QS world University ranking of 2021.

Like the previous year, both universities have been placed in the 801-1000 bracket.

QS does not assign specific positions for universities rated below 500.

University of Dhaka has slipped 200 places, from 601 bracket to 800-1000 bracket in the rankings, between 2012 and 2020.

After falling to the 701+ bracket in 2014, DU held that position till it slipped to the bracket below in 2019.

QS ranked 1,000 universities from 80 different locations, surveyed 102,662 academics and 51,649 employers whose insights and opinions determine the “reputation” indicator. They also analysed 18,530,368 research papers and 138,397,765 citations, recorded by bibliometric database Scopus/Elsevier.

The institutes have been ranked on six metrics - academic, reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio.

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Although it didn't rain that hard in Chattogram city yesterday, the Prabartak intersection was became waterlogged, amid ongoing road repair work. As a result, vehicles had to fight through waves of muddy water to reach their destination.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Running out of beds
Sylhet's biggest dedicated Covid-19 hospital near capacity as cases soar

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

Saheed Shamsuddin Ahmed Hospital in Sylhet, a subsidiary 100-bed hospital under Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, was dedicated for treating Covid-19 patients, days before the first patient was detected on April 5.

But with the number of Covid-19 patients increasing everyday, the beds dedicated for them are going to be filled up soon; so the authorities concerned must take immediate steps in this regard, said health experts and concerned citizens.

The hospital capacity has also reduced to 90-bed after a new ICU facility was installed occupying a ward recently.

Moreover, the negotiation to bring in a private hospital under the government management as a dedicated hospital for Covid-19 treatment has come to a halt.

Dr Sushanto Kumar Mahapatro, resident medical officer of Saheed Shamsuddin Ahmed Hospital, said, “There are 71 patients admitted here as of today (Wednesday); it was 81 on Sunday. We are reaching our maximum capacity.”

So far, 1,698 persons tested positive for Covid-19 in Sylhet division while 415 recovered, 38 died and 245 are undergoing treatment at different hospitals.

Beside this hospital, 31-bed Shahporan Hospital in Khadimnagar area in Sylhet Sadar upazila and 20-bed Sylhet Infectious Disease Hospital were dedicated for Covid-19 treatment. Sylhet health office also had a plan to use the newly-constructed Dakshin Surma Upazila Hospital.

“These are yet to be used for Covid-19 patients but we are preparing to utilise them for isolation of suspected coronavirus patients. We are also trying to increase health facilities there,” Dr Anisur Rahman, assistant director of Sylhet divisional health office, said.

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‘The ambulance was just yards away...’
Man dies from seizure at Rajshahi rail station as ambulance refused to come amid Covid-19 fear

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

An elderly man died after suffering a seizure on the platform of Rajshahi Rail Station yesterday. With no ambulance available, transport to the hospital was impossible, which eventually led to the man's death, railway police said quoting doctors.

Abdul Kuddus (52) of Kustia eventually died after being taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital by an auto-rickshaw, Md Shah Kamal, officer-in-charge of Rajshahi General Railway Police, told this newspaper.

Abdul Kuddus had come to Rajshahi by the Kopotaksha Express intercity train for treatment. He had been suffering from heart conditions for over a year, police said quoting his relatives. He was accompanied by one of his sons, a daughter and another person from his village.

After getting down from the train around noon, he suffered a seizure while walking on the platform towards the station's gate. Soon people around him went away seeing him falling down, fearing that he had coronavirus, the OC said, quoting witnesses.

After police arrived on the spot in 15 minutes, they saw locals covered him with a shawl, suspecting that he had died, he said. “We tried calling for an ambulance of the Railway Hospital, but they refused to come, arguing that they cannot come during the pandemic,” the OC said.

Police decided to call an auto-rickshaw. Railway police's Sub-inspector Biswajit accompanied Kuddus to the hospital.

Upon his arrival at the hospital, doctors sent him to cardiology department, hearing his history. Doctors treated and tried to recover him for some time before declaring him dead, said SI Biswajit.

“Doctors told us the delay to take him to the hospital may have been fatal,” he said.

Contacted, the railway's divisional medical officer Dr SM Maruf Hasan denied allegations of refusing to send the ambulance. “I did not talk to police. A station official called me for the ambulance. We sent the ambulance immediately with a specialised doctor in it,” he said.



Passers-by cover the ailing man in a shawl and try to move him after he collapsed, while a woman attempts to pick up his inconsolable son next to him.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

But the patient was already transported before the ambulance could reach, he said.

Contacted again, the OC said, he called the assigned phone numbers for ambulance and they denied to carry the patient. “Some people at the station carried him to the auto-rickshaw,” he said.

“The ambulance was just yards away from the patient. It was at Railway Hospital near the platform. If it had come at our first call, we could have transported the patient much earlier. Maybe his death could have been prevented,” OC Shah Kamal said.

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, deaths like this keep piling up due to the nature of the infectious disease. Although they don't show up in the official tally, these deaths are no less tragic, and authorities concerned must work towards finding a solution to end this stalemate for medical patients, all involved said.

Waive 50pc tuition fees for six months
Guardians urge edu minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A section of guardians demanded 50 percent waiver of tuition fees of all non-government schools and colleges as they are in severe financial crisis after losing income source due to the ongoing coronavirus situation.

In this regard, Ziaul Kabir Dulu, president of Obhibhabok Oikya Forum, a platform of guardians, sent a letter to Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday.

Ziaul said he had sent the letter through email. “We have demanded 50 percent waiver of tuition fees from March 2020 to August 2020,” he told The Daily Star.

The letter mentioned that no classes have been taking place at most schools and colleges since March 17. No teachers have gone to their workplaces since then.

As a lot of economic activities remain halted, about 80 percent guardians either have lost earning source or on the brink of losing jobs. They are grappling with maintaining increased daily life expense, and paying house rent and utilities bills, the letter mentioned.

The guardians' association sent the letter two days after a writ petition was filed with the High Court on collection of monthly tuition fees by private educational institutions, which get the monthly pay order (MPO) facilities.

Raise awareness thru' places of worship
Says govt circular

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The government has asked the authorities of worship places across the country to spread awareness against Covid-19 through loud speakers.

To this effect, the Ministry of Religious Affairs issued a circular on June 8 instructing the managing committees of mosques, temples and pagodas.

The circular, which has 12 announcements on how to disseminate the messages on Covid-19, was signed by ministry Deputy Secretary Md Shakawat Hossen.

Shakawat told The Daily Star that the country's 3 lakh mosques will have to spread the messages via loudspeakers every day, especially during Friday's Juma prayers.

Apart from this, temples, churches and pagodas will take steps in line with their worship schedules, he said.

The announcements to be made include urging people not to get panicked and keep faith on the Creator; to wash hands for 20 seconds frequently and wear masks while outside home; maintain social distance, among others.

Islamic Foundation Secretary Kazi Nurul Islam told this newspaper that they received the circular on June 9.

“We will take necessary steps to ensure that the announcements are made,” he said.

Chondon Talukdar, president of Chattogram city Puja Uddjapan Parishad, said they were yet to receive the copy of the circular. “Once we get it, we will take steps accordingly,” he said.

ANTI-MOSQUITO DRIVE
DNCC fines house owners Tk 2.5 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation yesterday found Aedes mosquito larvae at 153 houses and establishments on the fifth day of its ongoing 10-day combined operation to eliminate mosquitoes.

During the drive, the city corporation teams yesterday visited 13,462 houses, under construction buildings and establishments, according to a DNCC official.

The teams, comprising 12 entomologists of Directorate General of Health Services and the DNCC, fined different house owners Tk 2.5 lakh under 14 cases through mobile courts.

The teams also found breeding grounds and wet containers at 9,258 spots.

They also warned house owners for not taking proper steps to destroy the breeding sources.

The larvae were found in discarded tyres, flower tubs, water containers, bucket, water bottles, flooded floors, hole of water metre, clay pots, water tank, plastic containers, rooftop drain, discarded commode, basement, middle space of two buildings and coconut shell.

DNCC teams have so far found Aedes mosquito larvae at 854 spots after visiting 67,592 houses and establishments since inception of the drive. They also found breeding grounds and wet containers at 46,801 spots, and realised Tk 4.36 lakh in fines from owners and authorities of establishments where Aedes larvae were found.

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

When reports of people being denied treatment at various hospitals started circulating on social media, a youth in Chattogram took it upon himself to help alleviate such sufferings. He promptly set up a five-bed primary healthcare facility for those in need of the service.

Md Iqbal Hossen, a young entrepreneur working in the readymade garment sector, after coming up with the idea, opened the facility at port city's Hamidchar, a low-income area.

Everything was set up using his personal income, and the facility started serving people on Saturday.

Talking to The Daily Star, Iqbal said he saw non-Covid-19 individuals who needed treatment were dying, and oxygen was almost unavailable in the city, leaving the poor to suffer.

“This prompted me to do



A man receives oxygen and nebuliser at the five-bed facility.

something for these people who need primary care and oxygen. I then collected five beds and other medical equipment to run the facility,” he said.

Two doctors, alongside local

ailments. They also provide primary health check-ups like measuring blood pressure and glucose, but one of their important services is providing individuals with oxygen.

“So far, I managed to acquire three oxygen cylinders, oximeters, nebulisers, glucose meter and other medical equipment. I'm trying to get more equipment to improve the service,” he added.

Jesmin Akther Sathi was moving from one hospital to another with her husband, who was having breathing difficulties.

“My husband had been suffering from some complications, and his condition deteriorated on Sunday night,” Jesmin said. “We went to a local doctor who advised us to manage oxygen for him. Then we spent the whole night looking for oxygen but in vain.”

“Finally, someone informed us of this [Iqbal's] facility. We rushed there and oxygen was arranged for my husband,” she said.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

COVID-19
424 medical personnel test positive in M'singh division

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A total of 424 medical professionals including doctors and nurses have been tested positive in Mymensingh division until June 9.

Of them, 255 are in Mymensingh district, said sources.

Among the total number of infected medical professionals, there are 63 doctors, 82 nurses and 110 health workers, said Dr ABM Mashiul Alam, civil surgeon of Mymensingh.

At the upazila hospitals, 12 doctors, 15 nurses and 38 medical staff were tested positive so far, said the civil surgeon. Of the total doctors at upazila level, four were tested positive at Gafargaon Upazila Health Complex, said the official.

Of the total 255 covid-positive medical professionals in Mymensingh, 190 are of MMCH and MMC, said Dr Zakiul Islam, assistant director of MMCH. This includes 51 doctors, 67 nurses and 72 medical staff, informed the assistant director.

A total of 1,604 people tested positive in Mymensingh division until June 9.

Of the total affected people, 798 are in Mymensingh, 364 in Jamalpur, 300 in Netrakona and 142 in Sherpur.

Healthcare professionals make up around 30 per cent of total infected people in the division, said Dr Md Abul Kashem, Divisional Director (Health). Mymensingh Division.

Nineteen people have died of Covid-19 in the division so far, of whom nine were in Mymensingh, five in Jamalpur, three in Netrakona and two in Sherpur, the official informed.

On the increase in number of medical professionals getting infected, the official said, “At the beginning of the outbreak, many patients got admitted at MMCH and other hospitals concealing their health history, which proved dangerous for frontline healthcare workers.

Some units of MMCH including Incentive Care Unit were locked down to contain the menace, the official added. But now the rate of infection among medical professionals is on a downtrend as strict precautionary measures have been taken to handle patients, said the official.

Appellate Division to run virtual functions till June 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Appellate Division of the Supreme Court will conduct judicial functions till June 30 through virtual system in order to contain the coronavirus outbreak.

The SC administration issued a circular to this effect yesterday, saying that Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain has assigned Justice Md Nuruzzaman to run the judicial functions of the apex court in the chamber during this period.

Justice Nuruzzaman will hold virtual hearings and dispose of the cases for three working days on June 16, 23 and 30. On May 30, the justice constituted 11 High Court benches for holding hearing and disposing of the cases through the system.