

**MENSTRUAL HEALTH
IGNORED TO MAKE
ENDS MEET DURING
PANDEMIC**

SEE PAGE 12

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Your Right to Know

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**BANGLADESH
UPDATE**



4,008

New cases in 24hrs



98,489

Total cases



1,305

Deaths



38,189

Recoveries

**GLOBAL
UPDATE**



447,437

Deaths



8,313,126

Total cases

GONOSHASTHAYA RAPID TEST KIT

BSMMU speaks at last, spurns it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Gonoshasthaya Kendra-developed rapid test kit is not effective in detecting Covid-19, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University has concluded.

The kit can trace novel coronavirus only in 11 percent cases in the first week of infection and in 40 percent cases in the second week, BSMMU Vice-Chancellor Prof Kanak Kanti Barua told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Therefore, we cannot conclude that the kit is effective in detecting Covid-19," he said after a BSMMU committee, headed by Prof Shahina Tabassum of virology department, completed performance trial of the kit on 509 samples in over a month.

The report on the trial was submitted to the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), which will decide whether the kit will be approved for mass production and distribution, said Prof Barua.

The BSMMU committee said the GR Covid-19 Rapid Dot Blot Immunoassay Kit could not tell whether the person was currently infected with Covid-19, because it was unable to differentiate between the IgM, the antibody that develops at the start of infection, and IgG, the antibody that develops later on.

In its recommendations released to the media, the BSMMU, however, said the kit could be used for testing in places where the standard RT-PCR kits are not available. Besides, it could be used on those who did not test Covid-19 positive in the RT-PCR tests after showing symptoms.

"At least 70 percent of the cases can be detected when the kit is used to test those who have already recovered from the infection," the BSMMU said.

The BSMMU committee recommended that the antibody kit be used for seroprevalence or to assess the proportion of a population which was infected but recovered.

"Such information of population is useful in terms of plasma distribution, fixing the time for ending quarantine period and relaxing lockdown," it said.

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India's Border Security Force soldiers stand guard at a checkpoint along a highway leading to Ladakh at Gagangeer in Kashmir's Ganderbal district yesterday. At least 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a brawl with Chinese troops on Monday in the Galwan Valley, close to Aksai Chin, an area controlled by China but claimed by both countries.

PHOTO:
REUTERS

BORDER STAND-OFF

India, China FMs seek to ease tension

Modi calls all-party meeting; UN, US, Russia urge calm

AGENCIES

India and China yesterday agreed to ease tensions at their disputed Himalayan border, even as they traded blame for a brawl that left at least 20 Indian soldiers dead.

The two nations' foreign ministers spoke by telephone to calm nerves two days after a high-altitude melee involving fists, rocks and clubs in Galwan Valley in Ladakh.

The call between China's Wang Yi and India's Subrahmanyam Jaishankar came as sources told AFP that Indian paramilitaries were being deployed to the area of the skirmish high in the Himalayas opposite Tibet.

According to a read-out issued by the Ministry of External Affairs, Jaishankar conveyed India's protest "in the strongest terms"

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Virus cases keep on rising

DGHS reports record 4,008 new cases, 43 deaths

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

A record 4,008 cases of the novel coronavirus were reported in the country yesterday.

New cases also jumped the previous day as well. However, health officials earlier this week said transmission rate had peaked and might begin to fall in a few days.

Healthcare experts, however, have been saying that transmission would not come under control until preventive measures are strictly implemented.

"There is only one way to tackle the virus and that is taking active measures like maintaining physical distance, early detection, contact tracing and treating infected patients in isolation," Prof Mushuq Hussain, consultant of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Prof Saif Ullah Munshi, chairman of virology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, said, "Even after full implementation of the zone-wise approach, it will take a minimum of two weeks to observe a downward trend in transmission."

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SHUTDOWN-HIT SCHOOL EDN

Covering loss a big challenge

Authorities mull extending academic calendar till Feb, cutting holidays, syllabus

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The authorities may extend the academic calendar for primary and secondary students till February next year to overcome academic losses caused by school closure over Covid-19.

Other alternatives like syllabus and holiday cuts and longer class hours are also being considered, said officials.

Education Minister Dipu Moni had previously said they were looking for ways to overcome the losses.

Akram-Al-Hossain, primary and mass educations secretary, said they already started working so that students did not suffer much due to Covid-19.

Recently, the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) conducted a rapid survey on Covid-19 impact on education sector in which 115 NGOs, working in the particular field, and 11 teachers' associations participated.

Of the respondents, 88 percent believed that regular syllabus might not be covered on time and 61 percent proposed revising the academic calendar and taking extra classes.

Also, 61 percent of the respondents called for extension of daily class schedules and extra classes to complete the syllabus and cope with class disruption.

All educational institutions have remained closed since March 17, and the government has now extended the closure till August 6 to contain the spread of Covid-19.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

3 more doctors die of Covid-19

STAR REPORT

Three more doctors died of Covid-19 in different districts yesterday, taking the toll to 44, according to Bangladesh Medical Association.

Md Ashrafuzzaman breathed his last at Kuwait-Bangladesh Friendship Government Hospital in the capital around 8:00am, around seven hours after he was admitted there, said the hospital Superintendent Mohammad Shihab Uddin.

Ashrafuzzaman was a former assistant professor at Dhaka Medical College, according to the Foundation for Doctors Safety Rights and Responsibilities.

He also worked as the chief of the burn unit at Mugda Medical College and Hospital. He retired from his government job four years ago.

In Dinajpur, Shah Abdul Ahad died around 8:30am at M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital, where he once worked as a director.

The 70-old-doctor, also a former president of Bangladesh Medical Association, tested positive for Covid-19 on June 8 and had been admitted to the hospital since then, said the district Civil Surgeon Abdul Kuddus.

He was diabetic and had heart conditions.

"His condition was stable last night, but

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COMMENTARY

Stories that our photographs tell

Unbearable sufferings of patients seeking hospital admission

MAHFUZ ANAM

The photograph, on the front page of yesterday's The Daily Star, of a five-year-old named Shaon, lying dead on a gurney and his wailing grandfather on the floor of the entrance of Chattogram Medical College Hospital will make the heart of all parents, grandparents and ordinary citizens of the country cry out in pain, anger and frustration. In pain because it is almost impossible to accept such tragedies that happen to kids. In anger because it was easily avoidable. In frustration because nothing will be done to remedy the situation and such tragedies will recur.

The boy was hit by a three-wheeler while playing near his home. Shaon's father and grandfather ran to hospital after hospital, four in all, and were refused treatment. No credible explanation given. Being poor they did not dare ask why. Finally, they came to the above-mentioned hospital. Doctors here attended to him but could not save him. The time lost in going from hospital to hospital cost the boy his life. Those who refused him in reality condemned him to his death – only a five-year-old.

The same day's paper has another photograph of a 35-year-old, Amena Begum, a cancer patient, who came from Elenga, Tangail, to the National Institute of Cancer Research (NICR) in Dhaka on June 8 for her cancer treatment. Needing a Covid-19 test, she had to wait till June 11. To submit her sample she had to go all the way to Mugda Hospital from NICR, several

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PM issues directives to tackle Covid-19

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a meeting yesterday discussed the Covid-19 situation in the country and issued directives to contain the pandemic.

The meeting, held at the Gono Bhaban, was convened to discuss the latest novel coronavirus situation.

Hasina discussed steps taken so far to curb the spread of the virus, plan to procure medical equipment and future steps to face the Covid-19.

"The prime minister gave various directives in this regard," PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told UNB.

Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam, PM's Principal Secretary Ahmad Kaikaus, PMO Secretary Md Tofazzel Hossain Miah, PM's personal physician Dr ABM Abdullah, Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services Dr Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad and Director

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For the last few days, 60-year-old Abdur Razzak has been spending hours on these stairs holding his catheter bag hoping someone from his family would come looking for him at the coronavirus treatment section of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He said he came from Mymensingh's Bhaluka with his wife and son and got admitted to the hospital for a surgery in his hip. But they left him after doctors checked his temperature and said he should be tested for coronavirus.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

India's virus toll sees record jump

2,000 die in a day; China cancels flights, classes over new outbreak; WHO moves to update guidance

AGENCIES

India's official coronavirus death toll leapt by more than 2,000 yesterday as China closed schools in Beijing and restricted air travel from the capital to prevent a second wave of infections.

Germany urged its nationals in India to consider leaving for their own safety, while France warned its citizens in New Delhi to stay home unless going to an airport to return to Europe.

Authorities said the sharp increase in fatalities to 11,903 was mainly due to Mumbai and Delhi updating their figures.

Death tolls in both cities have been increasing in recent days. Mumbai blamed unspecified accounting "discrepancies" for the increase of 862 to 3,165 deaths. Delhi added more than 430 fatalities, taking its total to over 1,800.

Officials said 93 of the Delhi deaths and 55 in Mumbai had been in the previous 24 hours.

The surging infections in South Asia and Latin America and new Chinese cluster have raised fresh doubts about how soon the world can control the pandemic, which has seen more than 8.1 million cases and nearly 444,000 deaths.

While hopes were boosted by a "breakthrough" treatment that could reduce deaths among Covid-19 patients, the lack of a vaccine means nations have to rely on some form of lockdowns to curb the spread of the virus.

After 31 more cases were reported in Beijing, Chinese authorities yesterday cancelled more than 1,200 flights from the capital's main airports, state media reported,

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Uber seeks intervention

FROM PAGE 12
enlisted with the road transport authority. Enlistment with the BRTA is a must for both the company and the vehicles to operate the service.

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

Although bus and other public transport hit the streets on June 1, operations of ride-hailing services remained suspended until notice citing health safety issues.

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

The BRTA, in a reply on June 4, asked them to inform it the number of owners and riders of enlisted vehicles (with vehicle registration number and driving licence number) who were interested to resume operation given the current situation and how they would ensure health safety guidelines, especially for motorcycle users.

BRTA officials said the letter bears a hint that they would not allow any unlisted vehicles from now.

BRTA SENDS LETTER AGAIN

Sources at BRTA said following their letter, Uber and Pathao sent a reply, where they mainly highlighted several technical limitations in the BRTA enlistment portal and process and they also sought more time to ensure enlistment of all drivers.

On June 10, BRTA sent another letter to those companies, refuting the allegations and said BRTA has solved all problems case to case basis. It also said although those companies in their letter, told about safety measures taken for motor cars but did not say anything how they main safety in motorcycle services.

Mentioning that as per the Ride-Sharing Service Guideline-2017, there is no scope to allow any unlisted vehicles under ride-hailing services, BRTA once again asked them to inform it the

number of owners and riders of enlisted vehicles who were interested to resume operation now.

But the companies did not get the list till Tuesday, BRTA acting chairman said.

According to the BRTA June 4 letter, only 126 vehicles (15 cars and 111 motorcycles) under Uber have the enlistment certificate while 118 (two cars and 116 motorcycles) under Pathao have it.

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.

When the BRTA started enlisting ride-hailing companies in July last year, it made the enlistment of at least 100 vehicles mandatory for the companies to have the certificates. Later BRTA on several occasions asked those companies to enlist their vehicles, but they did not comply, officials said.

Contacted, Sayeda Nabila Mahabub, director (marketing and public relations) at Pathao acknowledged receiving the latest letter.

She said BRTA reiterated their requests from their earlier letter dated June 4 to which they provided a prompt and comprehensive response on June 6.

"BRTA observed that there are no issues with the enlistment portal. As we had submitted letters to BRTA on multiple occasions and had a meeting with them at BRTA headquarters to raise these continuing problems with server load, one-time-passwords, payment options that remain unresolved. We had reiterated these issues in our letter to BRTA dated June 6," she said.

She said Pathao, in collaboration with other ride-hailing companies with guidance from the e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh, has developed a detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for car and motorbike-hailing.

They have already submitted the SOPs to BRTA, she added.

Stories that our photographs tell



A child dies of his wounds at DMCH after being denied treatment at four hospitals on Tuesday and a mother, right, holding on to her sick child breaks down after being denied admission at CMCH on Monday. These are some of the most heartbreaking stories our photographers captured over the last few months.

FROM PAGE 1
kilometres away. Till the 16th, when our photojournalist met her, she was yet to get her result. And all this while, from the 8th till today, she, with her mother as an attendant, was sleeping in an open space in the hospital as they cannot afford any rented place to sleep. Given the pressure on Mugda Hospital and the fact that many more tests are being done now, her Covid-19 test could take weeks.

Last Tuesday, June 16, we published a set of photos depicting the problems being faced by patients in various hospitals. There was a helpless mother in Chattogram, Morium Akhtar, of a 10-month-old, Rafa, sitting on a road divider and clutching her baby as the hospital she came to refused to admit her infant without a Covid-19 certificate. Hers was a case of inexpressible desperation as she had lost her two previous babies to liver complications and feared to also lose Rafa.

There was a case of a patient from Cox's Bazar suffering from a stroke whose attendants carried him from ward to ward with none to help them find out where exactly they need to go for proper treatment. For stroke patients, as we well know, not every minute but every second counts.

On June 15 we carried the heart-breaking story of a 22-year-old Habiba Sultana, a nurse at the capital's Ibn Sina hospital, who was refused admission and died at the doorstep of the very hospital where she worked. The reason, somehow the Covid-19 negative certificate that she had went missing in her files. Habiba suffered a stroke earlier on June 10 and was admitted to the National Institute of Neurosciences. When her condition

deteriorated the doctors felt that she needed to be in ICU and none was available at the Institute. The doctors advised that the patient be taken somewhere else. Her attendants took her to Ibn Sina, being certain that she will receive treatment there as she was an employee. The hand-written note on the file that she tested negative for Covid-19 and telephonic assurances by doctors from the Neuroscience Institute failed to convince the authorities at Ibn Sina who refused to take her in, where she later died.

We carried a photograph from Sylhet of an ailing woman, with an oxygen mask to help her breathe, waiting in an ambulance for a token to submit her swab sample for Covid-19 testing, with no idea how long it will take, before which no treatment or even a consultation by a doctor will be possible. Hundreds of patients, regardless of how serious their conditions are, wait for long hours at hospitals for Covid-19 test.

On Sunday, June 13, we carried photographs of two cancer patients, a boy of eight and a girl of 13, both being refused their chemotherapy without Covid-19 clearance. They have spent days just trying to give their samples after which the long process of waiting for the result will begin.

On June 11 there was the story of Abdul Quddus of Kushiā, a heart patient, who arrived at the Rajshahi railway station. As he was being helped by his son and daughter towards the exit of the station he collapsed and fell on the ground. Everybody around them ran away thinking that Quddus was a Covid-19 patient. Nobody helped and no ambulance came to take him to the hospital. Crucial time was lost that proved fatal in the end. To

their credit the police came forward, helped them to an autorickshaw, and soon after arriving at the hospital he was pronounced dead. He may have lived if things had happened on time.

We all sadly remember the story of the additional secretary, Goutam Aich Sarkar, who died after being refused treatment at four hospitals. Since then there have been several such deaths numbering probably around 50. This paper itself reported more than 15 such cases.

As of yesterday, we crossed 4,000 new infections from a testing sample of 17,000, which experts feel to be far from adequate to get a realistic picture. Also, these samples are from people who either come forward to be tested or seek it over telephone because of symptoms. So, the testing sample is not representative in any statistical sense which can be used to either assess how infected our population is or predict in any scientific way what the future scenario is likely to be. We seem to have learnt nothing from other countries, especially South Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan or Thailand, most of whom are readying themselves to reopen their countries.

The question is given our inadequate and highly stressed health system, as depicted in the sample stories above, and in which our doctors and nurses are already suffering from unacceptable and tragic level of casualties and overall weak health infrastructure, how are we going to handle the rising cases of coronavirus infection which appear to be upon us? Rhetorical exhortation, if not even remotely matched by reality, runs the risk of widening the credibility gap, which is the worst thing that should happen during this pandemic.

BSMMU speaks

FROM PAGE 1
Scientists say RT-PCR, in which samples from nose and throat are swabbed, is considered gold standard for Covid-19 tests, but it is expensive and time-consuming.

On the other hand, rapid test can give result in 15 minutes and is low cost. The tests can be done on a large scale. Many countries, including the US, UK, European Union and India, have approved antibody tests for coronavirus detection.

It takes five to seven days for antibody to develop in a human body after someone is infected. Antibody kits cannot diagnose the disease before the antibody appears, scientists say.

Gonoshasthaya also has antigen kits that can diagnose Covid-19 both in blood and saliva at the very initial stage. Scientists suggest combination of both tests can provide more than 90 percent accurate results.

Asked about the findings on the trial, Bijon Kumar Sil, leader of the Gonoshasthaya team of scientists which developed the kit, yesterday said they were yet to get the report from the BSMMU.

He said they would respond to its findings after receiving it.

He, however, told The Daily Star: "We are still confident that the kit is highly effective in detecting Covid-19. Our position is very clear about it."

Bijon said Gonoshasthaya Kendra Founder Dr Zafrullah tested positive both by rapid test and RT-PCR kits. Again, when he recovered, the test results came negative following both the tests.

"We have found similar results in several hundred tests. We have no doubt

about the effectiveness of our kit," he said.

In a press statement yesterday, GR COVID-19 Rapid Dot Blot Project Coordinator Mohibullah Khondoker said Gonoshasthaya Kendra was yet to receive any official communication from the BSMMU and that there was no discussion on it.

"Once we receive the detailed report from the BSMMU, we will inform our decision to the BSMMU," he said.

On April 30, Gonoshasthaya decided to get the antibody kit's performance trial done at the BSMMU, situated in the capital's Shahbagh. After formal communication, the BSMMU formed a committee and on May 12 it wrote a formal letter asking Gonoshasthaya to supply the kit.

Since May 13, Gonoshasthaya supplied about 600 antibody and 500 antigen kits to the BSMMU, which was scheduled to submit the report on the performance to the DGDA on June 10.

The date was postponed thrice and the BSMMU has finally submitted the report.

About the antigen kit's performance trial, the BSMMU in its media statement said Gonoshasthaya had requested the BSMMU on June 2 to suspend the antigen test, saying that the result that was coming was not expected.

Mohibullah of Gonoshasthaya said clear saliva was necessary for testing antigen, but the monitoring team comprised of scientists of the BSMMU and Gonoshasthaya Kendra identified issues in sample collection procedures.

He said they have developed a new device to properly collect saliva for the antigen test kit, but they were waiting for the antibody trial to be completed first.

Virus cases keep on rising

FROM PAGE 1
On Saturday, ASM Alamgir, principal scientific officer of virology at the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), told reporters that the transmission may start to go down within the next four to five days.

Asked about it yesterday, Alamgir said, "It is my personal observation. The trend may start going down within days."

On Tuesday, Prof Abul Kalam Azad, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), also told this newspaper that the transmission rate might start to go downwards within a week.

Meanwhile, in the 24 hours preceding 2:30pm yesterday, 43 Covid-19 patients were reported dead.

The total number of confirmed cases rose to 98,489 while the death toll reached at 1,305, said Prof Nasima

Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the DGHS, during yesterday's daily briefing.

Of all the infected, 71 percent were male and 29 percent were female, according to the IEDCR.

According to the data, 77 percent of the deceased were male and 23 percent were female.

In the previous four days, the numbers of daily new cases reported were below 4,000 with the hitherto highest 3,862 cases recorded on Tuesday.

Dhaka city remains the worst affected region, with 24,187 infected patients, followed Chattogram where 3,768 cases were detected as of yesterday.

Within the last 16 days, the number of confirmed cases almost doubled.

On June 1, the country passed the 50,000 confirmed cases mark and the 75,000 mark on June 11.

On April 6, number of confirmed

case were only 100.

Meanwhile, 1,925 more Covid-19 patients have recovered, taking the total to 38,189, Nasima said.

The current recovery rate is 38.77 percent, she said.

In the last 24 hours, 17,527 samples were tested by 61 labs across the country.

A total of 718 people were put under isolation, she added.

Among the 43 reported dead yesterday, 28 were males and 15 females, she said, adding that 21 were from Dhaka, 12 from Chattogram, four from Rajshahi, two from Khulna, one from Sylhet, two from Mymensingh, and one from Rangpur divisions.

One of the deceased was less than 10 years old, one between 11 and 20, one between 21 and 30, four between 31 and 40, four between 41 and 50, nine between 51 and 60, 12 between 61 and 70, nine between 71 and 80, and the other two between 81 and 90 years old.

Covering loss

FROM PAGE 1
Due to the closure, educational activities of more than 3.5 crore primary- and secondary-level students are being hampered.

Half yearly exams at the secondary schools and first terminal exams at the primary schools have also been cancelled.

In a bid to minimise the losses, the government started airing classes on Sangsad TV for secondary students on March 29, for primary students on April 7, and for technical and madrasa students on April 19.

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.

The education officials are also considering syllabus cuts for the Primary Education Completion Examinations (PECE) and equivalent exams after class V and Junior School Certificate (JSC) and equivalent exams after class VIII.

These two are the largest public exams of the country. Usually, JSC exams take place during the first week of November and PECE exams begin on the third week of the same month.

Officials at Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Directorate of Primary Education, and education boards are in discussion about finding out alternatives plans.

Talking with this newspaper, they said that they were unsure of the resumption of classes at schools and the way of finishing the syllabus for public and final exams within such a short

time.

On April 27, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said all educational institutions may stay closed until September if the situation caused by the coronavirus outbreak does not improve.

"If the schools open in September, then we will get only a couple of month. We closed the school on March 17, so there were only a few classes. So we are considering cutting down the syllabus for PECE and JSC exams as an option," an NCTB official said.

On the other hand, a section of education officials are proposing extension of the current academic year till February 2012. Normally, the academic calendar is from January to December.

"In that case we are thinking to cut down some vacations from rest of 2020 and for 2021 so that the students do not lose lessons in both academic years," NCTB chairman Prof Narayan Chandra Saha said.

DSHE director general Prof Syed Golam Faruk said regarding the solution they were in discussion with stakeholders of field level.

"No concrete decision have been taken so far."

3 more doctors

FROM PAGE 1
deteriorated in the morning," said the civil surgeon.

At Chattogram Metropolitan Hospital, senior resident medical officer Nurul Haque died at the hospital's ICU around 4:00am.

Executive Director of the hospital Abdur Rob told The Daily Star that Nurul Haque died at his workplace of 19 years. He was admitted there for treatment three days ago.

Nurul was a 38th batch graduate of Chattogram Medical College.

Fifth-grader raped by stepfather

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A Jhenidah court yesterday sent a man to jail on charge of raping his fifth-grader stepdaughter in the district's Kaliganj upazila.

The accused, an employee of a local hotel, married the victim's mother a year back, said the mother who supplies water door to door.

On Tuesday, both the parents went out for work in the morning. After a while, the man returned home and raped the 11-year-old girl, alleged the mother who also filed a case with Kaliganj Police Station on the same day.

The man also asked the girl not to disclose the matter to anyone and threatened her of dire consequences otherwise, the mother added.

On information, police arrested the accused in Kaliganj municipality area around 8:00pm Tuesday. He was produced before the court yesterday, said Mahfuzur Rahman, officer-in-charge of the police station.

The victim was sent to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital for medical tests around 11:00am yesterday.

India, China

FROM PAGE 1
on the violent face-off and accused that "the Chinese side took pre-meditated and planned action that was directly responsible for the resulting violence and casualties."

He warned that "this unprecedented development will have a serious impact on the bilateral relationship" and urged Beijing to "take corrective steps".

The Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement that Wang demanded "India conduct a thorough investigation" and punish those responsible.

"The Indian side must not misjudge the current situation, and must not underestimate China's firm will to safeguard its territorial sovereignty," it added.

But the two ministers also sought to de-escalate tensions.

China said both sides agreed to "cool down the situation on the ground as soon as possible".

India's foreign ministry said the two sides would implement a previously agreed disengagement, and "neither side would take any action to escalate matters".

Official sources said front-line bases of the Indian Army and the Air Force along the nearly 3,500 km de-facto border with China were put on high alert, reported PTI.

The Indian Navy has also been asked to raise its alert level in the Indian Ocean Region where Chinese Navy has been making regular forays.

The decision to raise the alert level of the three defence forces were taken at a high-level meeting Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held with Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat and the three service chiefs, our New Delhi correspondent said.

The army has already rushed in additional troops to all its key front-line bases and formations along the de facto border in Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh states, they said.

China's state broadcaster CCTV, meanwhile, showed footage of People's Liberation Army tanks and soldiers holding live fire drills in Tibet.

China has refused to confirm if it suffered any casualties in the first deadly clashes at the border in decades, although Indian media said more than 40 Chinese troops were killed or seriously hurt.

'APPROPRIATE RESPONSE'

The incident, which took place Monday at around 4,500 metres (15,000 feet) up in the Galwan valley area dominated Indian news channels and inflamed social media in both countries.

"Gloves are off, with the Galwan valley clash, China pushed too hard," the Times of India wrote in an editorial. "India must push back."

Small groups of protesters called for the boycott of Chinese goods, with some burning posters of Chinese president Xi Jinping.

In his first remarks on the deadly clashes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday told the nation the deaths of the soldiers "will not be in vain".

"There should be no doubt that India wants peace, but if provoked, India will provide an appropriate response," Modi said.

Top opposition leader and Congress party President Sonia Gandhi said that "in this time of crisis, my party stands with the army and the government. We are confident that the country will unite to face enemy."

The Prime Minister has called an all-party meeting tomorrow to discuss the situation at the India-China border after the clashes in Ladakh. Presidents of various political parties will participate in the meeting on Friday via video, the Prime Minister's Office said.

'VIOLENT HAND-TO-HAND SCUFFLES'

The Monday's clashes reportedly involved intense hand-to-hand fighting but no gunfire, in line with longstanding practices aimed at avoiding a full military confrontation.

An Indian army source told AFP there were "violent hand-to-hand scuffles", while media said that Chinese troops attacked with rods and nail-studded clubs. Many of these killed appear to have been punched or shoved off a ridge onto rocks and into an icy river below.

Post-mortem examinations on some of those killed showed that the "primary reason for death is drowning and it looks like they fell from a height into the water because of head injuries," an official told AFP.

ARREST OVER FB POST

1,120 Sust students demand withdrawal of case against peer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A statement, virtually signed by 1,120 students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (Sust), demanded withdrawal of a case filed against a fellow student by university authorities.

Registrar Mohd Ishfaqul Hussain, on behalf of SUST, filed the case under Digital Security Act with Lalalabad Police Station on Monday, accusing Mahir Chowdhury, a final-year economics student.

The registrar mentioned the student made a post on Facebook, defaming former health minister Mohammed Nasim, after his death on June 11.

In the statement, students termed the case vindictive, and said they do not feel safe under the university authority.

They demanded withdrawal of the case, apology from authorities and revocation of the act.

Meanwhile, another statement released by 286 Sust alumni placed a four-point demand.

The demands are withdrawal of the case, ensuring freedom of speech for all SUST teachers and students, protection for all teachers and students who have different opinions and ensuring democratic environment on campus.



An attendant transports his ill relative on a wheelchair in the pouring rain yesterday. They had to go to and from the old Betar Bhaban in Shahbagh for a coronavirus test, while the patient had a 103-degree fever. The patient was admitted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Medical University a couple of days ago with severe kidney complications and later began displaying symptoms of Covid-19.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

‘DEATH BY WRONG TREATMENT’

Doctor beaten to death by patient’s relatives in Khulna

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

A doctor, who was assaulted by a patient’s family members on Monday night over the allegation of wrong treatment which led to her death, passed away while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Khulna on Tuesday.

The deceased, Dr Abdur Rakib Khan (59), was the director of Raisa Clinic and Diagnostic Centre in Khulna and principal of Bagerhat Medical Assistants’ Training School.

He breathed his last at 6:20pm at Shaheed Sheikh Abu Nasser Hospital in Khulna, said doctors.

On Sunday, a pregnant Shiuli Begum, a resident of nearby Mohammadnagar area, was admitted to Raisa Clinic. Due to some complications, Dr Rakib and other physicians had to perform a C-section on her in the afternoon, said Saiful Islam, younger brother of Dr Rakib, quoting the doctor’s wife Nilufar Rahman Shanta, who is also a physician and a director of the clinic.

At first, the mother and child were doing fine. Later in the night, the woman’s condition started deteriorating. On Monday morning, she was recommended to be taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital.

After taking her to KMCH, doctors there advised to take her to the capital. The family hired an ambulance and started the journey around noon. The woman died on the way.

Around 9pm that night, her family members came to the building where the clinic is situated, bringing along Shiuli’s body, and brought allegations of wrong treatment against Dr Rakib.

An argument broke out between a family member and Dr Rakib, who

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

icddr,b begins clinical trial of Ivermectin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) yesterday started a clinical trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of anti-parasitic medicine Ivermectin, the organisation stated in a press release.

The trial will be evaluating the drug as a standalone treatment, and in combination with the antibiotic doxycycline. The two-month study will be randomised, double-blind and placebo-controlled.

“The study will enroll 72 patients from four Covid-19 treating hospitals in Dhaka. Initially, the study has commenced with Kurmitola General Hospital and Mugga Medical College and Hospital and discussions with others are underway,” said the press release.

The participants will be aged between 40-65 years, and only those suffering for less than a week, and that too with mild illness, will be chosen, to ensure a standard baseline.

Ivermectin is a drug for parasitic infections and it has previously shown to have broad-spectrum anti-viral activity in vitro, the statement added.

In-vitro means that the tests were conducted on cells inside test-tubes, or on petri-dishes, but not in living organism.

“The study aims to understand the virological clearance rate and days required for remission of fever and cough by using Ivermectin with or without doxycycline,” said icddr,b’s press release.

Tipu Munshi tests positive for Covid-19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi has become the fourth minister to test positive for Covid-19. His personal secretary Mashooqur Rahman made the confirmation.

“The minister today provided sample at Evercare Hospital, Dhaka. They informed us a while back that he tested positive for coronavirus,” Mashooqur said yesterday.

The AL lawmaker from Rangpur, last took part in the parliament session on Monday, his PS said.

The minister does not have any major complication, he added.



DIGITAL SECURITY ACT

10-day remand sought for Kajol

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Detectives have appealed for quizzing photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol on remand in connection with a case filed against him under the Digital Security Act.

Sub-inspector of Detective Branch of police Mohammad Rassel Mollah, also the case’s investigation officer, on May 14 submitted a 10-day remand prayer for quizzing Kajol.

The Daily Star came to know of the appeal yesterday. In the prayer, the IO said Kajol needs to be remanded to recover his Facebook account and to arrest his accomplices. The IO on May 3 submitted another petition to show Kajol arrested in the case.

The court, however, set June 28 to hear the petitions. Usmin Ara Bel, a member of Jubo Mahila League’s central committee, filed the case with Hazaribagh Police Station on March 10.

Meantime, a virtual court in Dhaka yesterday could not show Kajol arrested in another case filed under the same act as he was yet to be brought to Dhaka Central Jail from Jashore jail.

On June 14, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Jasim sent an email to the jail authorities, scheduling a virtual hearing for yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Double blow for kidney patients in port city

Those infected with Covid-19 deprived of dialysis

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Cg

Sufferings of kidney patients, who are also infected with Covid-19, have doubled as there is no scope of dialysis for them in the port city.

According to experts, an end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patient needs dialysis at least twice a week.

Dialysis is a process through which the body waste of kidney-failure patients are filtered out artificially. It is vital that patients suffering from ESRD are given dialysis, said Prof Dr SM Nurul Huda, head of nephrology department of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

Among the government hospitals in Chattogram, only CMCH has the facility for dialysis. Besides, there is scope for dialysis in a number of private hospitals. However, the ESRD patients -- who are Covid-19 positive -- are deprived of this facility both in government and private hospitals.

In May, Dr Hasan Shahriar, Chattogram

divisional director of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), and his 73-year-old mother tested Covid-19 positive.

Being an ESRD patient, his mother has been going through dialysis twice a week but after she tested positive, she was unable to get her dialysis done.

Finding no other option, he took her to the capital and admitted her to a private hospital there.

On May 26, Rakibul Islam, who was undergoing treatment at the “Corona Unit” of CMCH, passed away as the 27-year-old could not get kidney dialysis.

Though the hospital had a dialysis machine, it did not have any “water treatment plant” for patients. As a result, Rakibul had to wait for four days and eventually died, said family members.

“When the mother of the health boss in the division is deprived of treatment, you can realise what regular patients are going

SEE PAGE 4COL 5

Condition of Dr Zafrullah improving

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health condition of Gonoshasthaya Kendra Founder and Trustee Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury has improved.



“His condition is better than yesterday’s [Tuesday]. His lung infection is getting better and he has been given antibiotics,” said Jatiya Oikya Front’s Office Chief Jahangir Alam Mintu quoting Professor Dr Nazib Mohammad.

In a press release yesterday, Jahangir said that Dr Zafrullah is undergoing dialysis regularly. He no longer requires additional oxygen, but he is struggling to speak because of throat ache.

“He completely recovered from Covid-19. But he needs to be treated at the hospital for a few more days,” it reads.

Zafrullah, 79, was facing breathing difficulties on the night of June 4. He was then given oxygen. The next day, he was put on dialysis. His condition improved and has remained stable.

Since the detection of his infection, he has been undergoing treatment at Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital.

Ensure gender-responsive Covid-19 relief efforts

UN Women network urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspired by feminist and human rights principles, the Gender Monitoring Network facilitated by UN Women, called the Government of Bangladesh, through a press release, to ensure a gender-responsive, human rights-based inclusive response to Covid-19.

The 12-point call for action is endorsed by Ain O Salish Kendra, Bandhu, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh Nari Stromik Kendra, Bindu, Christian Aid, Light House, Manusher Jonno Foundation, Naripokkho, and Prottoy Unnayan Shongstha.

The signatories called on the government to declare gender-based violence (GBV) response services essential and life-saving, and allocate additional resources to ensure continued operation of justice, health and social services for women who are affected or at-risk. It also called on the government to ensure women and girls in marginalised communities have access to public health messaging as well as GBV prevention and response messages, including on child marriage.

In addition, the government must take necessary actions to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in quarantine and isolation centres and during relief distribution.

Besides, the government must design economic response and recovery packages with a gendered lens and assess their impact on women and men. At the same time, the government should urgently expand the existing social safety net and cash transfer programmes targeting the newly vulnerable women, girls and gender-diverse people to ensure food security.

The network also focused on paying attention to the role women are playing as frontline health workers and community health workers.



Despite a lockdown in place in port city’s Pahartoli (Ward-10) area from Tuesday, many seem to be oblivious. While this group of RMG workers had no other option but to go to the factory inside the area, others tried to step outside without any reason before being stopped by law enforcers and guards, inset.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Garbage vans filled to the brim remain parked throughout the day on Sylhet-Sunamganj road at Sylhet city’s Pathantuli area. As a result, foul stench covers the vicinity and liquid leaking from the vehicles makes the whole road dirty. Although city corporation takes the trash away once every day, locals have to suffer for the rest of the day. This is not a new problem; residents say they have been dealing with this for a long time. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Doctor jailed ‘for harassing patient’

Says he’s being framed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A doctor was arrested in Sylhet on Monday night, hours after he was confined to his chamber by locals, allegedly for sexually harassing a teenage patient.

The girl that night filed a case, and the doctor was sent to jail the next day by Sylhet court.

However, the doctor -- Jobayer Ahmed, a general practitioner of Dr Jobayer Medicare and Pathology Centre in Beanibazar upazila -- and his family say some influential locals have framed him, and they will continue the legal fight.

Citing the case statement, Beanibazar Police Station’s Officer-in-charge Abani Shankar said, “The teenage girl went to the doctor’s chamber on Monday when the doctor sexually harassed her and she ran out screaming.”

“We reached the spot at around 8:30pm and saw that many people confined the doctor. We arrested him as the patient filed a case the next day,” he said.

That night, Dr Jobayer posted on his Facebook saying he was being framed by a group of locals who had previously attacked him.

SEE PAGE 4COL 1

FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

National, int’l orgs come forward to help hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different national and international organisations have come forward to assist Bangladesh government in its fight against Covid-19.

The donation of supplies have come at a time when many of the country’s hospitals are suffering from critical supply shortages of medical equipment that are needed to diagnose and treat coronavirus patients.

The Australian government and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will install two screening and triage tents at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital and OGSB Hospital. Female patients, particularly pregnant ones, will get additional services in the centres.

According to a joint press release, 72,000 women will be able to avail services there in the next six months once these are established.

The Australian government and UNFPA also provided 4,172 “dignity kits” to women, girls and third-gender people to ensure protection from Covid-19 and dengue. The kits contain clothes and hygiene materials such as sanitary napkins, underwear, soaps, sanitisers and mosquito repellent.

Salma Adil Foundation and Bangladesh Medical Association, Chattogram jointly installed a sample-collection booth at Chattogram Medical College Hospital dedicatedly for doctors with Covid-19 symptoms.

According to Dr Mohammed Faisal Iqbal Chowdhury of BMA Chattogram, doctors can give samples every day from 9am to 1pm.

With cooperation from Chattogram Metropolitan Police commissioner Md Mahabubor Rahman, Aziz Al Kaiser, an entrepreneur and chairman of City Bank, donated a high flow nasal cannula to Chattogram General Hospital. The non-invasive respiratory support is used for patients with severe respiratory problems or hypoxic respiratory failure.

In an informal handing over ceremony, Aziz Al Kaiser appealed to the affluent people of our society to contribute to the fight against Covid-19.

Coronavirus leaves more Americans dead than WWI

With 740 new coronavirus deaths in 24 hours, the United States has seen more people die from the pandemic than died in World War I, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The new figure, counted at 8:30 pm (0030 GMT) Tuesday, brought the country's total COVID-19 deaths up to 116,854, the tracker from the Baltimore-based university showed. The increase came after two days of death tolls under 400. And 23,351 new cases in the same 24-hour period brought the total US count up to 2,134,973, making it by far the hardest-hit of any country in the world. The country's pandemic death toll had already passed that of its soldiers in the Vietnam War in late April. The United States, where many businesses are reopening, continues to register around 20,000 new cases of the novel coronavirus each day.

India set to get non-permanent UNSC seat

India was expected to register a comfortable victory in the Security Council elections that will bring the country to the UN high-table as a non-permanent member for the 2021-22 term. The 193-member UN General Assembly will hold elections for President of the 75th session of the Assembly, five non-permanent members of the Security Council and members of the Economic and Social Council under special voting arrangements put in place at the UN headquarters due to COVID-19 related restrictions. India is all set to join the powerful 15-nation Security Council as a non-permanent member. India is a candidate for a non-permanent seat from the Asia-Pacific category for the 2021-22 term. India's victory is certain since it is the sole candidate vying for the lone seat from the grouping.

Trump gov't sues to block ex-aide Bolton's book



The Trump administration filed a lawsuit Tuesday seeking to prevent publication of former national security advisor John Bolton's book, which is expected to provide a damning insider portrait of the White House. The Department of Justice alleged in its suit, filed in federal court in Washington, that publication of the book risks "compromising national security" through revelation of classified information that Bolton had access to during his turbulent 17-month stint in the White House. The book, "The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir," is due to hit the shelves next Tuesday. In the book, Bolton alleges that Trump committed a host of impeachable offenses beyond pressuring Ukraine to investigate his political rival, Democrat Joe Biden.

SOURCE: AFP, ANN

Trump signs order pushing to reduce US police violence

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump issued an order to improve policing Tuesday, calling for a ban on dangerous choke holds, but he stopped well short of demands made at nationwide protests against racism and police brutality. "We have to break old patterns of failure," Trump said in a Rose Garden ceremony attended by police and Republican congressional allies, though no black civil rights representatives or political opponents. His executive order encourages de-escalation training, better recruitment, sharing of data on police who have bad records, and money to support police in complicated duties related to people with mental or drug issues. A highlight of Trump's proposals, which he said could be complemented by legislation being negotiated in the Republican-controlled Senate, was ending choke holds "except if an officer's life is at risk," he said.

Taliban raids on Afghan posts kill 18

AFP, Mazar-i-Sharif

Taliban fighters killed at least 18 Afghan security personnel yesterday in two attacks on checkpoints in the north, officials said, the latest violence ahead of expected peace talks. In one pre-dawn raid, militants killed 12 Afghan security force members when they stormed a checkpoint in Jawezjan province, Maroof Azar, spokesman to the governor, told AFP. He said four security personnel were captured by the militants and five Taliban fighters were killed in the fighting. Separately, Taliban fighters were blamed for a raid on an army outpost in Kunduz. Six soldiers were killed in fighting that lasted about five hours, said Aminullah Iddin, a member of the provincial council. Army spokesman Hadi Jamal confirmed the attack, saying four Taliban fighters were also killed. Taliban did not comment on the Kunduz attack.

North Korea seeks crisis to force concessions: analysts

AGENCIES

North Korea's spectacular destruction of its liaison office with the South is part of a series of staged provocations aimed at forcing concessions from Seoul and Washington, analysts say. The South's President Moon Jae-in initially brokered a dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington, but the North now blames him for not persuading the US to relax sanctions. Inter-Korean relations have been in deep freeze for months, following the collapse of a summit in Hanoi between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump. That meeting foundered on what the nuclear-armed North would be willing to give up in exchange for a loosening of sanctions. North Korea yesterday said it had rejected a South Korean offer to send special envoys to ease escalating tension. On Monday, Moon offered to send his national security adviser Chung Eui-yong and spy chief Suh Hoon as special envoys, North's KCNA state news agency said. But Kim Yo Jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and a senior ruling party official, "flatly rejected the tactless and sinister proposal". In a separate KCNA dispatch yesterday, a spokesman for the General Staff of the (North) Korean People's Army said it would

dispatch troops to Mount Kumgang and Kaesong near the border, where the two Koreas had carried out joint economic projects in the past. "Internally, North Korea is deeply disappointed in Moon and appears determined to end inter-Korean ties," said Kim Keun-sik, professor of political science at Kyungnam University. "By doing so, it is sending a message in its brinkmanship tactics to Trump that he should resume talks or lift economic sanctions as it has demanded so long." The North's actions appear to be carefully calibrated, with Pyongyang drawing out the process by issuing multiple incremental warnings from different official sources -- leadership, government departments and the military -- ahead of each step it takes. The US could be next in North Korea's sights: Pyongyang has warned Washington to stay out of inter-Korean affairs if it wants to ensure a smooth presidential election in November. But such a move would be fraught with risk for Pyongyang. "The North should realise its brinkmanship tactic will not work this time, neither with Washington nor Seoul", said Kyungnam's Kim. "If it needs a change in status quo so desperately, then it must change its calculations instead of expecting the US to do so."



(From left, clockwise) Police officers detain an activist from Swadeshi Jagran Manch, a wing of the Hindu nationalist organisation Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), during a protest against China, in New Delhi; Supporters of India's ruling Bharatiya Jayanta Party (BJP) burn posters of Chinese President Xi Jinping in Ahmedabad; and a supporter of India's main opposition Congress party displays a placard during a protest after the killing of Indian soldiers in a border clash with Chinese troops in Ladakh region, in Kolkata, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

MEDIA REACTIONS ON BORDER TENSIONS

India for strong response, China mute

REUTERS, Mumbai/Beijing

Indian media commentators yesterday called for a strong response to a border clash with Chinese troops that led to the deaths of at least 20 Indian soldiers, with some questioning the Indian government's silence on the issue. Chinese media largely refrained from commentary on the incident, though the editor of a paper linked to the ruling Communist Party warned India that China did not fear a clash. Here is a round-up of commentary from both countries: **India demands befitting response** "The timing of the Chinese aggression and Beijing's assertive claims in the Galwan valley appear to be part of a strategy to remind India of its vulnerabilities," said an editorial in the Times of India, the country's best-selling English-language newspaper. "If this is the case then India, as a proud nation, should do exactly what the Chinese don't want and undertake diplomatic countermeasures against Beijing." Others went further. "We're dealing with medieval brutes," said Arnab Goswami, Editor-in-Chief of Republic Media Network. "We'll have to go out and give them (China) a very bloody nose. We'll have to hit them where it will really hurt the Chinese. And trust me, we know where that is."



"The Chinese army reneged on the promise of pulling its troops back from forward posts," said Sudhir Chaudhary, Editor-in-Chief, Zee News. "By attacking the Indian army without any provocation, they have challenged the might of our nation which must give a befitting response to China. We cannot talk about peace any longer. The killing of our soldiers has to be avenged." Shishir Gupta, editor of the Hindustan Times, said the answer to

the skirmish "does not lie in mere economic retaliation". "While a section within the Indian government advises diplomatic resolution of the June 15 face-off, the only answer to the PLA's (Chinese army) belligerence is standing up to them and holding the territory," he said. "The PLA must learn to respect the Indian army." **Indian opinion needs to be sober** In China, the incident has not been given wall-to-wall coverage. Official media have stuck largely to Tuesday's statement from the Chinese army's Western Command about the incident. On social media, bloggers and media-aggregating platforms shared Indian media reports, such as the Indian army's announcement acknowledging that the death toll had risen to 20. Most vocal was the Global Times, a paper published by the official paper of the ruling Communist Party. Its editor-in-chief, Hu Xijin, took to domestic and global social media platforms to scold India, saying "Indian public opinion needs to stay sober" and to warn that China did not fear a clash.



Self-cleaning mask can kill viruses!

REUTERS, Haifa

Israeli researchers say they have invented a reusable face mask that can kill the coronavirus with heat by drawing power from a mobile phone charger. The disinfecting process takes about 30 minutes - and users should not wear the mask while it is plugged in, said Professor Yair Ein-Eli, who led the research team at Technion University in Haifa. The new mask has a USB port that connects to a power source such as a standard cellphone charger that heats an inner layer of carbon fibers to up to 70 degrees Celsius, high enough to kill viruses. He said disposable masks were not economically or environmentally friendly. "You have to make it reusable and friendly, and this is our solution," he said about the invention.

INDIA-CHINA BORDER TENSIONS KEY DATES

Asian regional superpowers India and China share a long history of mistrust and conflict along their lengthy border, and tensions flared this week in their first deadly clash in more than four decades. Here are some key dates when the neighbours clashed over territorial disputes: **NEHRU'S 1959 BEIJING VISIT** India inherited its border dispute with China from its British colonial rulers, who hosted a 1914 conference with the Tibetan and Chinese governments to set the border. Beijing has never recognised the 1914 boundary, known as the McMahon Line, and currently claims 90,000 square kilometres of territory -- nearly all of what constitutes India's Arunachal Pradesh state. The border dispute first flared up during a visit by India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru to Beijing in 1959. Nehru questioned the boundaries shown on official Chinese maps, prompting Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai to reply that his government did not accept the colonial frontier. **1962 SINO-INDIAN WAR** Chinese troops poured over the disputed frontier with India in 1962 during a row over the border's demarcation. It sparked a four-week war that left thousands dead on the Indian side before China's forces withdrew. Beijing retained Aksai Chin, a strategic corridor linking Tibet to western China. India still claims the entire Aksai Chin region as its own, as well as the nearby China-controlled Shaksam valley in northern Kashmir.

1967 NATHU LA CONFLICT Another flashpoint was Nathu La, India's highest mountain pass in northeastern Sikkim state, which is sandwiched between Bhutan, Chinese-ruled Tibet and Nepal. During a series of clashes, including the exchange of artillery fire, New Delhi said some 80 Indian soldiers died and counted up to 400 Chinese casualties. **1975 TULUNG LA AMBUSH** This skirmish was the last time shots were officially reported to have been fired across the disputed border. Four Indian soldiers were ambushed and killed along the dividing line in Arunachal Pradesh. New Delhi blamed Beijing for crossing into Indian territory, a claim dismissed by China. **2017 DOKLAM PLATEAU STAND-OFF** India and China had a months-long high-altitude standoff in Bhutan's Doklam region after the Indian army sent troops to stop China constructing a road in the area. The Doklam plateau is strategically significant as it gives China access to the so-called "chicken's neck" -- a thin strip of land connecting India's northeastern states with the rest of the country. It is claimed by both China and Bhutan, an ally of India. The issue was resolved after talks. **2020 LADAKH CONFRONTATION** India said Tuesday that 20 of its soldiers were killed after a violent clash with Chinese forces a day earlier in the strategically important Galwan Valley on the Himalayan frontier, a dramatic escalation that represents the first combat fatalities between the Asian powers since 1975.

SOURCE: AFP

ARREST OF INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION STUFF

Pakistan denies harassing officials

AFP, Islamabad

A day after two Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad were arrested and interrogated over a road accident, Pakistan on Tuesday rejected New Delhi's accusation that the officials were harassed and tortured. According to Pakistani authorities, Monday's incident saw the two Indian high commission officials crash a speeding car into a pedestrian, causing serious injuries. They allegedly then tried to flee the scene but were arrested and detained for several hours. On Tuesday, India's external affairs ministry said the men had been held on "coerced" charges and had been subjected to "torture and physical assault". Islamabad reacted furiously, saying it "categorically rejects" New Delhi's claims. The two Indian men were eventually released after asserting diplomatic immunity, but only after India protested to Pakistan's envoy in New Delhi. The latest fracas comes after New Delhi expelled two officials from Pakistan's high commission on June 1 for alleged "espionage activities" -- claims Islamabad rejected.



People attend a vigil for slain black activist Oluwatoyin Salau, in Downtown Miami, Florida, US, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Pabna University of Science & Technology

Office of the Project Director, PUST, Pabna

Memo No. PUST/PD/e-GP/OTM/19

Date: 17/06/2020

e-Tender Notice (FY/2019-20)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following works under "Pabna University of Science & Technology Development Project", PUST, Pabna.

Sl No.	e-Tender ID	APP ID	Package No. & Invitation Ref. No.	Name of works	Tender publication date & time	Tender closing date & time	Method
01.	471119	158695	PUST/PD/e-GP/OTM/19	Construction of Temple work under Pabna University of Science and Technology Development Project, PUST. FY 2019-20	17 June, 2020 11:00	16 July, 2020 16:00	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Engr. Lt Colonel G.M Azizur Rahman

afwc, psc (Retd)
Project Director

GD-1005

Pabna University of Science & Technology, Development Project



PHOTO COLLAGE: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

Alex Vitale’s book asks: why do we need the police?

ERESH OMAR JAMAL

In *The End of Policing* (2017), professor of sociology Alex S Vitale journeys back to its origins to remind us that the idea behind the creation of the first police force in 1829 England was not so much to fight crime, but to “manage disorder and protect the propertied classes from the rabble.” This same model was later applied across the US and against various colonised populations, where political and economic leaders sought ways to “manage riots and the widespread social disorder associated with the working classes.” While the practice of policing has changed over time, the police force, according to Vitale, has remained a highly problematic institution—as is apparent around the world today.

The author begins by covering a recent slew of deaths of African American men at the hands of American police; but his purview for the book is wider. He delves deeper to identify some of the ‘failures’ of the police system and the social factors that cause them, and cuts through traditional reformist thinking by

The book contends that policing is a form of social control that disproportionately targets poor and ethnic minority communities. Certain sections of the society are perceived as “always-already guilty”. “This is not justice”, says Professor Vitale. “It is oppression.” Real justice would look to restore trust and social cohesion.

arguing against social and economic injustice and mass criminalisation. These, he contends, are at the heart of neoliberalism.

The “origins and function of the police are intimately tied to the management of

inequalities,” Vitale writes. Any police reform plan that doesn’t acknowledge this history will backfire. As we witnessed recently in the States and witness commonly in our own country, certain sections of the society are perceived as “always-already guilty”. “This is not justice”, says Professor Vitale. “It is oppression.” Real justice would look to restore trust and social cohesion.

He points out how mass militarisation allows the police to be more violent. Meanwhile, new technologies allow them to access evermore aspects of our private lives, putting modern societies at greater risk from poorly monitored police. This is why police harassment has become more frequent. Instead of acquiring new and more powerful weaponry for the police to suppress crime, governments would be better off investing that money in social services that automatically reduce lawbreaking, such as building better schools.

Instead, political leaders opt to use heavily armed police to suppress the population and safeguard the interests of influential quarters.

While issues of training and diversity often come up in reform discussions, Vitale argues that what we really need to rethink is the role of the police in society. Empty police reforms ultimately have always failed. Only “a robust democracy that gives people the capacity to demand of their government and themselves real, nonpunitive solutions to their problems,” can address the shared grievances that exist—and have existed—in regards to policing.

The book contends that policing is in many ways a form of social control that disproportionately targets poor and ethnic minority communities. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the War on Drugs. For example, Bill Clinton’s crime bills in the early 1990s increased the number of drug offences and provided more money for the Drugs Enforcement Agency and the prison estate. It transformed policing, and led to an “explosion in SWAT teams and other militarised forms of policing [...], racial profiling and racist enforcement patterns.” Yet, some of the

changes Vitale recommends are not unique, such as the proposal that in areas such as drugs and sex work, decriminalisation would save considerable sums of money that could be better invested in communities to reduce inequality.

Vitale doesn’t just highlight problems; he offers solutions. He emphasises that in order to address the underlying issues, a political response is necessary. However, where the will for that political response would come from is not something he is clearly able to frame.

Although the book focuses almost entirely on the US police, the evils Vitale speaks of exist in almost every country. And the concerns he shares concern all. His book provides practical solutions to all these many, long-existing problems of policing, and the social ills that give rise to them.

Erish Omar Jamal is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*.
Twitter handle: @ErishOmarJamal

WORTH A RE-READ

Notes on a shared history

SELIMA SARA KABIR

In the weeks following George Floyd’s death—murdered in Minneapolis by a police officer who knelt on his neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds—the conversation around diversity and inclusion has returned to the forefront, as has the role that persons of colour can play in challenging White supremacy. The events unfolding now merit revisiting author-filmmaker Vivek Bald’s *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America* (2013), to remind ourselves why we owe allyship and solidarity to the Black community.

Most scholars track the South Asian influx after The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, a law that undid the Immigration Act of 1917 that barred all immigration to USA from the Asia-Pacific zone. Bald’s investigations led him to uncover the forgotten narratives of peddlers and sailors who illegally snuck into the country while the anti-Asian immigration laws were still in place. In order to survive in an unwelcome America, South Asians assimilated and quietly became a part of some of America’s most iconic neighbourhoods of colour, from Tremé in New Orleans to Detroit’s Black Bottom, from West Baltimore to Harlem.

This book was a truly introspective journey for me. Bald is an expert researcher and story-teller—he critically analyses historic documents, reports and census records, yet no chapter feels flat or ‘academic’. Through vignettes of stories and historical assumptions, Bald paints a picture of what life was like for the illegal Bengali salesman. He tells us, for example, of South Asians who negotiated boundaries and travelled into traditionally ‘White’ areas by performing ‘Orientalist caricatures’, crafting tales of ‘magic’ and ‘mysticism’ to sell their wares—think along the lines of the merchant at the beginning of Disney’s 1992 *Aladdin*. However, ultimately, they



PHOTO COLLAGE: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

were bound to the areas segregated for Blacks and coloured people by Jim Crow laws. As such, much of the Hooghly peddlers’ network was based in Tremé, where they married into Creole communities. Their New Orleans native wives helped develop their local knowledge and connections, which in turn helped create space for the Bengali Muslim trader’s businesses.

Bald’s use of photographs helps us visualise and familiarise ourselves with these characters, and learning their names—Sofur Ally, Abdul Hamid, the many Monduls, and Habib Ullah who inspired the book—keeps us thoroughly invested in their lives. It’s a difficult task to effectively share the story

of another person, another family, capturing their experiences and voices while being factually accurate. This is Vivek Bald’s greatest achievement in *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America*.

Indians, despite their performances and negotiations, lacked the one thing that would truly welcome them into America: the ‘right’ skin colour. The discriminatory laws in place affected our ancestors just as much as it did the Black community. Bald notes that this binary caused problems for census takers and other officers, as South Asians were considered as dark as the Black nationals, even though their features and hairs shared Caucasian characteristics. In an interview with *CityLab*, Bald acknowledged, “There was a lot in the lives of this particular group of South Asian immigrants to counteract anti-Blackness—the experience of living and working side-by-side [...], of becoming part of African American and Puerto Rican extended families, [...] of recognizing shared daily struggles.”

As the world amplifies an existing ‘us versus them’ rhetoric, Bald’s book teaches us the need for community-building to support the marginalised. In 1917, and until 1965, the Black community could have chosen to turn in the illegal South Asian immigrants who entered America through the seas, to protect their own at-risk community. Instead, they welcomed our ancestors and fostered safe spaces that paved the way for naturalisation and opening of the borders.

Now, we have a choice—and chance—to return that solidarity and support.

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‘Masud Rana’ goes to court

EMRAN MAHFUZ

Among the most iconic characters of popular Bangla literature, Masud Rana’s name is synonymous with that of its author, Kazi Anwar Hossain. Now, following a verdict passed by the Bangladesh Copyright Office on June 14, 2020, it will also have to be associated with that of Sheikh Abdul Hakim. A published author who writes frequently for *Prothom Alo*’s thriller supplements, Hakim has been recognised as the actual author of 50 books from the *Kuwasha* series, and 260 installments of the Masud Rana series released after the first 11 books. He filed the case on July 29, 2019, as did Iftekhar Amin, who also claims to have ghostwritten some of the stories. The latter’s case is still ongoing as per the copyright office.

Kazi Anwar Hossain wrote the first Masud Rana story—*Dhonsho Pahar*—in the 1960s in his Shegunbagicha residence. Once it gained popularity, Hossain started ‘borrowing’ from thriller stories published abroad, until the series gained iconicity. That is when he brought Sheikh Abdul Hakim into the project. Deprived of payment for many of the stories he wrote, Hakim decided to take legal action. Writer Bulbul Chowdhury, translator Shawkat Hossain, cover illustrator Hashem Khan, and former Sheba Prokashoni sales manager Israil Hossain Khan all spoke as witnesses in the case.

“I was 18 when I started writing for the series. I didn’t understand matters of copyright and the law,” Abdul Hakim has told the media. “I wrote because I needed the money. I did receive some royalties, but not all of what I deserved. That is why I’m now seeking this legal reform.” This latest is an intriguing development in a series that has, infamously, long borrowed from the works of Ian Flemming, Robert Ludlum, Alistair MacLean and more—both for its text and book covers.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

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Patients continue to be denied treatment

Take strict and immediate actions to prevent any further loss of life

DESPITE orders from the government directing all public and private hospitals to ensure treatment for patients irrespective of whether they are infected with coronavirus, many hospitals are still failing to provide life-saving medical care during this time of crisis. Yesterday, we featured two harrowing photos in this daily depicting the sufferings of ordinary people—a grief-stricken grandfather mourning the death of five-year-old Shaon, who was hit by a three-wheeler and denied treatment in at least four hospitals and clinics, losing his life 15 minutes before he reached Chattogram Medical College Hospital; and cancer patient Amena Begum and her mother, who travelled to Dhaka on June 8 and have been sleeping on the floor of the National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital since then, waiting for the results of her Covid-19 test without which she is being denied essential treatment.

According to health ministry circulars from May 11 and 24, all private and government hospitals must have separate arrangements for treating suspected Covid-19 patients and cannot refuse treatment to patients, Covid-19 or otherwise, if they have the requisite facilities of equipment. Regardless, hospitals are continuing to demand Covid-19 negative certificates before providing treatment, which can take days, if not weeks, to arrive. How morally bankrupt must we be to allow innocent children like Shaon to die, simply because they lack a certificate? Why should women like Amena Begum lose their chance to fight their diseases simply because of a backlog in paperwork?

Unfortunately, following a petition filed by the government, the Supreme Court has stayed almost all the High Court directives on this matter, including the directives on death of or denial of treatment to a patient due to negligence being a criminal and punishable offence, and on taking legal action against those displaying negligence while treating patients in a hospital. So far, the only directives that have been upheld are the submission of a report by the DGHS by June 30 on whether the health ministry circulars have been implemented properly, the formation of a monitoring cell to ensure private hospitals provide treatment, and regulation of the prices of oxygen cylinders.

But while these reports are being filed and monitoring cells are being formed, ordinary people’s lives are being put at risk every day. Strict and immediate actions are required to ensure there is no more suffering and unnecessary loss of life due to such negligent practices. The government must show its commitment not only towards fighting coronavirus, but also towards providing critical healthcare for all the citizens of this country during this crisis period.

Rare example of communal harmony set by volunteers

Those succumbing to Covid-19 deserve proper burials

AS deaths from Covid-19 have been increasing steadily across the country, arranging the last rites of the deceased and ensuring a proper burial of their loved ones have become a big issue for the families. People are still confused as to how to bury their loved ones who have succumbed to the virus due to apprehension about the virus’s possible spread from a dead body. There are instances where the families of the deceased have left the bodies in fear of contracting the virus. Amid such a crisis when the family members of the deceased are not finding the courage to participate in the burial rituals and the communities are also not coming forward with help, the volunteers of Quantum Foundation in Pabna have taken up the responsibility to arrange the last rites of the Covid-19 victims, irrespective of their religious identity.

A 12-member team of the foundation has already arranged funerals of nine deceased including seven Muslims, one Hindu and one Christian—all of them died with Covid-19 or Covid-19 like symptoms. By taking up the responsibility of the burial, they have also made the job of the local administration easy as the latter has claimed that they do not have the manpower to arrange the burial service of the Covid-19 victims.

It should be mentioned here that the WHO issued a guideline on March 24, 2020, in which it mentioned that “to date there is no evidence of people becoming infected from exposure to the bodies of those who died from Covid-19.” However, it has urged the managers of healthcare facilities and mortuaries, religious and public health authorities, and families—who tend to the bodies of persons who have died of suspected or confirmed COVID-19—to take necessary precautions as the safety and well-being of everyone who tends to bodies should be the first priority. The organisation has also discouraged hasty disposal of a dead body. It is, however, unfortunate that there is a lack of awareness among people in Bangladesh about these directives, which is why proper burial of the deceased is being hampered in many cases.

Therefore, we are humbled by the humanitarian spirit of the Quantum Foundation team who believe that everybody, irrespective of their religion, deserves to be buried with honour and dignity. We hope that the example set by them will encourage other voluntary organisations to come forward with such humanitarian services. We believe such selfless services can break the social stigma and fear associated with Covid-19 and the burial of the dead from the disease.

Why we should make farming more market-oriented

SM BOKHTIAR

ONE of the most serious challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic is the threat to agriculture and therefore to food security. So far, the government has been able to ensure a steady supply of essential food items like vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and so on across the country. But in the near future, sustainability of food production and supply might be hampered because of the continued containment measures adopted to fight Covid-19 that restrict free movement of labourers and allow limited access to the market.

In spite of the ongoing health crisis, Bangladesh has made it possible to achieve a record “Boro dhan” production (204.36 lakh tons) and expects to have 31.13 lakh tones of “Aus dhan” and 163.08 lakh tones of “Aman dhan”, as targeted for 2019-20. Besides, production of wheat, maize, potato and other crops also increased compared to previous years. As per the data of the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), Bangladesh earned about USD 9 crores and 96 lakhs during 2018-19 by exporting vegetables. During the first nine months (July to March) of 2019-20, export earnings of vegetables increased by 80 percent and it reached USD 14 crores and 67 lakhs. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the prime minister has categorically stressed that crops have to be grown on every inch of land to fill the nation’s food basket. The exclusive and timely allocation of Tk 200 crores for purchase of farm machinery like combined harvester, ripper, power tiller, power thresher, etc. paved the way to achieve 100 percent harvesting target of “Boro dhan”. Besides, an amount of Tk 9,500 crores has been allocated for fertiliser and agricultural mechanisation in the proposed budget for FY 2020-21 to benefit the farm sector.

Bangladesh has emerged as not only self-sufficient in food production, but also created its image as a food surplus country to the rest of the world. It is hoped that agriculture will become a great platform for supporting the livelihood of people amidst the coronavirus-induced crisis in industrial and service sectors. In order to elevate the agriculture sector to commercial scale, and to increase Bangladesh’s capacities to deliver commodities at the global market, there is an immediate need for an in-depth analysis of our priorities and policies.

Agriculture is the engine of the nation’s economy and around 41 percent of the population are engaged in this sector—with a growth rate of 3.7 percent every year—although cultivable land is declining by 0.73 percent per year. Agriculture shares about 14 percent of Bangladesh’s national GDP.

Bangladesh is fortunate because 60 percent of its total land is cultivable and occupies top position among the Asian nations in that regard, but the contribution of agriculture in its national GDP is a mere USD 41 billion. In terms of agriculture’s contribution towards national GDP, other frontrunner countries are India (USD 397 billion), Indonesia (USD 133 billion), Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam. It is noteworthy that Indonesia’s agriculture sector contributes significantly to the nation’s GDP despite its having a mere 13 percent of cultivable land. A comparative analysis clearly indicates that the volume of agriculture GDP is three times higher in

to say, Bangladesh agriculture is self-sufficient today in spite of several challenges. The majority of the farmers are unable to undertake “Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)” due to inadequate knowledge and resources as regards usage of advanced farm machinery, storage and quality control measures, and further processing to produce value-added products. In this endeavour, the country’s agriculture sector should move towards “safe food production” followed by “value addition” to make it export-oriented.

Farm mechanisation is one of the important elements of modern agriculture that ensures timeliness of

Bangladesh can make a transition from subsistence agriculture to market-oriented agriculture. A private-sector friendly policy can be framed to reduce the regulatory burden on the production of farm inputs such as seed, fertiliser, pesticides, farm machinery, etc.—which will attract potential investors. Environmental sustainability of agricultural production can be strengthened. The quality of public agricultural programmes can be improved and allocations to more effective programmes can be increased. The government can set up a number of large-scale agricultural and food processing hubs across the country through the



Farm labourers hold Boro crops harvested from a flooded field in Chalan Beel area of Natore's Singra, in May 2020.

PHOTO: STAR

Indonesia than in Bangladesh despite an equal (%) share to the overall GDP. On the other hand, the volume of agriculture GDP of Thailand is equal to Bangladesh, even though the former shares only 8 percent of national GDP.

In view of the above scenarios, the question is, how is Bangladesh lagging behind several countries on the volume of GDP despite its having more areas of cultivable land? If we look at the export figures of Bangladesh during 2018-19, total export was USD 40.5 billion. Out of this, readymade garments contributed USD 34 billion, almost 84 percent of the total export earnings. The export earnings by agriculture were only USD 2.2 billion.

So how can we enhance the agriculture sector’s contribution to GDP? Needless

farm operations and increases work output per unit area, and has direct impacts on land productivity and farm income. On the other hand, agricultural processing has multiple benefits such as increasing GDP through the addition of goods and new processed products; providing income and employment in rural areas (because of their strong backward linkages); creating a source of exports and foreign exchange; and stimulating agricultural production by creating new stable intermediate markets for raw agricultural products, and assisting producers to improve their farming know-how in some processing activities through vertical integration and production contracts with processors. There are many ways through which

Agro-Processing Accelerator, a one-stop shop for agro-processors targeting both domestic and export markets involving more private entrepreneurs. Small and medium-sized storage facilities can be established—combined with adopting the best practices in post-harvest handling and storage—to improve food safety, extend the shelf life of produce, and reduce farm losses and post-harvest waste. Last but not the least, a Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering (CIAE), for continuation of R&D with support from the government and development partners, can be initiated.

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Confronting anti-blackness in our community



ZAHRAH HAIDER

WE’VE known for a long, long time that colourism is rampant in South Asia. And now, in light of everything that is happening in the world, we should acknowledge that

we are also some of the worst perpetrators of anti-black racism. We may fall under the same People of Colour (POC) umbrella, but we are not yet the allies we need to be.

Recently, cricketer Daren Sammy, who played for the IPL team Sunrise Hyderabad, posted a video on Instagram where he described being called “*kalu*” by some of his teammates, under the impression that it was a harmless nickname. In the video, he shared how, whenever he was called *kalu*, there would be laughter around the room, which he thought nothing of. After learning the true meaning of the word, he urged the individuals responsible to reach out to confirm whether they were using the word in a derogatory sense or not. Unsurprisingly, there are people justifying casual racism, refusing to accept that it’s a racial slur, saying it’s just a nickname. And therein lies the problem.

Several Bollywood actors have also faced criticism for showing support for the Black Lives Matter movement while also promoting skin lightening products. I remember those fairness cream adverts from when I was a little girl, and having that seed planted in my mind that “fair = lovely”. That light skin was something to strive towards, and that dark skin was something that needed to be fixed. Fair skin was associated with affluence, as only the rich could afford to stay indoors out of the shade and avoid manual labour. To have dark skin meant that you worked outdoors, and therefore meant you were poor. For these celebrities, activism seems to consist of merely posting a black square on social media with a hashtag, without putting the effort and resources into combatting discrimination and the stereotypes they’ve profited from and helped perpetuate for years. And I think part of the reason for this is that people don’t want to admit that they were or are part of the problem. People do not want

to be held accountable, and that in turn limits progress.

There are Bangladeshi rappers who use the n-word as if it adds authenticity to their image. There is a sense of entitlement there, because to them it is part of hip-hop culture and thus an essential component of the music. They feel justified in using the n-word, because to them it is something that is reserved for all POC, not just for black people. There is very little regard for the history of the word. It has been reclaimed by black people and black people *only*, and should only be used by them. Being non-white doesn’t automatically mean us brown people have the right to use a word that had been used for hundreds of years to degrade and

long as they are not black”). That is the attitude that so many Bangladeshi families hold, and I have seen this first-hand. It harks back to colonialism and the caste-based discrimination which is still so prevalent in our communities. We already have a problem with putting more emphasis on academic achievements than judging people by their character, and then we add race on top of that and end up breeding this incredibly harmful mentality that black people are just undesirable as in-laws. We create this hierarchy that places black people right at the very bottom, with absolutely no logic to support it.

It’s as if black people only exist for us to benefit from their contributions to



PHOTO: REUTERS

discriminate against black people, and is still used to this day to racially abuse black people. Similar to the Daren Sammy incident, it’s not the intent that matters. Whether it’s used harmlessly or merely as an attempt to emulate black musicians is beside the point—the word is rooted in racism and as long as non-black people continue to use it in whatever context, it will serve as a reminder that we feel more entitled to use a single word than we have empathy for the injustices that black people have faced for centuries. There is no debate. It is a word that is simply not ours to use.

Our anti-blackness is also evident in the way we would rather have a white foreigner marry into the family than a black foreigner—“*Kalo na hoilei holo*” (“as

sport, film, literature, music, art, food. We celebrate the things they create while simultaneously ignoring their plight, and limiting our allyship to a few performative acts on social media.

Black people should not have to die for us to realise that there is still a massive prejudice issue at home and in South Asian diasporas. We should not have to rely on black people to draw elaborate analogies to explain why they deserve equality. Black people are being murdered with impunity by the very people who are meant to protect them. It shouldn’t take acts of senseless violence against black people to spark conversation about our anti-black racism and how we are contributing to the systemic oppression of black people around the world. Our

silence is equivalent to complicity.

Through acts of micro-aggressions, casual racism, and then *actual* racism, we South Asians are allowing white supremacy to thrive. Comedian Nish Kumar put it succinctly: “We can either stand in support of the Black Lives Matter movement or we can be the foot soldiers of white supremacy.” We need to check our behaviour on a regular basis. We need to confront racism and biases in our everyday lives and have those uncomfortable conversations with family members. We need to educate ourselves, our elders and the younger generations, and challenge ignorance in its many, many forms at every step of the way. Racism isn’t just shouting slurs at minorities—it is systemic and institutionalised. It’s a global and multi-faceted issue that doesn’t exist in a monolith.

To focus our attention on our own relationship with it does not negate or undermine the struggles of other minority groups around the world. We should be capable of having conversations about multiple issues—it is incredibly exhausting to keep up the activism and to constantly be learning, but it’s a fraction compared to how people who experience it daily feel. We must be able to talk about things without resorting to whataboutisms. The crux of this article is specifically about the anti-blackness in the South Asian community, but it does not mean there aren’t other forms of prejudice present.

As targets of discrimination ourselves, we have every responsibility to look out for our brothers and sisters in other marginalised groups. This movement is about justice and solidarity. We know all too well what it feels like to be oppressed because of the colour of our skin, which is all the more reason to unite in the fight to dismantle the systems built to keep us down. We can’t effect change on a global scale if we do not adjust our attitudes at home.

There is currently a colossal paradigm shift taking place. The events of the last few months will, hopefully, be studied for generations to come. We are witnessing perhaps the largest civil rights movement in history, and it is up to us to decide which side we want to take.

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What Covid-19 has taught the banking industry in Bangladesh



KHALED AZIZI

There is no point in repeating how Covid-19 has been wreaking havoc around the world over the last couple of months. Some say Covid-19 didn't break the system—it only revealed what was already broken. This is a perspective that merits some thought.

Remember the countless hours all of us used to waste in traffic gridlock just a few months ago? We commuted to our workplaces, educational institutions, markets and shopping malls, hospitals, banks, restaurants and numerous other places. But was all this commuting really essential? What is stopping us from digitising the service sector drastically, so that people and businesses can do the majority of their activities anywhere and anytime? At least in the banking sector, much of this can be achieved simply by adopting some regulatory and legal reforms, without the need to invest millions of dollars.

In Bangladesh, all banking transactions are still heavily dependent on paper or documents. To open an account, one has to fill out pages of forms, submit copies of identity documents, photographs, TIN certificate, etc. in paper with wet signature. To file taxes, the taxpayer needs to visit the bank to collect physical statements and various certificates that must be furnished to the tax authorities. To buy a car or a piece of land, it becomes necessary to visit the branch to get a pay order issued. If a person receives remittance from overseas, supporting documents and forms must be submitted to the bank so that they can credit his account. If a factory owner needs to import raw material, it would become necessary for him to visit the branch to submit the LC application form. When the shipments arrive, shipping documents must be collected from the bank and submitted to customs to release the goods. The list

goes on and on.

For almost everything related to banking, it is essential to visit the branch.

The obvious question is, why? Why do banks in our country love paper documents and physical interaction with customers so much? The answer lies in the fact that these practices and requirements evolved over many years, before computers and smart phones

(physical) signature on hardcopy documents. Despite being a relatively weak control, it continues to be almost mandatory to prove authenticity of the instruction/mandate, particularly within the legal framework. The ICT Act of 2006 provides legal acceptability of electronic and digital signature in Bangladesh. Adopting this can be a big step towards digitising banking transactions.



PHOTO: REUTERS

A digital revolution for banks in Bangladesh is long overdue.

became integral parts of our lives. Our business practices, regulations and the legal framework have not yet been comprehensively updated to keep pace with the advancement of technology.

Making necessary reforms and removing obstacles to enable widespread digitisation can eliminate the dependency on physical branches. Doing so will help banks to improve customer experience and redefine their roles from transaction processors to solution providers. Drawing on the possibilities highlighted above, here are some proposed reforms that are essential to enable this in Bangladesh.

Electronic signature: As a country, we are still heavily dependent on wet

Reduction of physical paper flow: With the wet signature made optional, an opportunity will open up to reduce the physical flow of paper. We can allow documents to be signed and exchanged electronically through email, host-to-host connectivity, Application Programming Interface (API), and other digital channels. Two-factor authentication, encryption, blockchain technology and other security protocols can be adopted to ensure authenticity, data confidentiality and security of documents.

Integration and interconnectivity of systems: With the drive towards automation, many of the manual processes have been computerised in

recent years. What is missing is the real-time integration/connectivity between these systems.

For example, if all fields in the Election Commission's NID database were available in English and there was real-time API connectivity between banks and NID database, we could have a mechanism where citizens would only have to update static data (for example, address) in one place. Banks and other organisations could easily fetch data from the EC database, eliminating the need for citizens to update the data with all their service providers. Similarly, if the National Board of Revenue had real-time connectivity with banks, life could become easier for both banks, customs and clients. Along the same line, if banks could fetch Credit Information Bureau (CIB) data through API, the speed of granting loans could be improved manifold.

Electronic payments: Bangladesh has made significant progress in digitising payments through the implementation of electronic fund transfer systems (EFT, NPS and RTGS) and massive popularity of mobile financial services. Yet, for many government payments, cheques and pay orders continue to be the preferred instruments. We can mandate all government payments to be electronic.

Regulatory returns and correspondence: Banks are required to furnish hundreds of regulatory reports. While some have been moved to electronic format, a large number of them continue to be paper-based. In addition to returns, various regulatory circulars and letters continue to be dispatched in hardcopy format. Banks also rely on hardcopy to respond to regulatory queries, seek various approvals, etc. There is no reason why such correspondence cannot be converted to electronic channels, particularly email.

Digital record retention and archival: Current regulations mandate transactional documents to be retained for at least five years from the closure of an account. This takes up a huge amount of storage space and cost. If courts accepted electronic images of old

records in case of litigation, old records could be scanned, stored in digital format and paper could be destroyed.

Flexible working and work from home: Although not directly linked to digitising banking transactions, another lesson from Covid-19 worldwide is that it is not necessary to physically go to office for everything. With proper tools and connectivity, it is possible to remain productive and efficiently conduct most of the work from home. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many of the bank employees have been doing so at all levels, except those having customer-facing roles that require face-to-face interaction. Allowing continued work from home can reduce health risks and traffic congestion, while improving job satisfaction and productivity of banking professionals. The industry will be able to diversify workforce by recruiting more women who often can't pursue full-time career due to family needs. Banks will also be able to recruit professionals who are not based in big cities, where the majority of banking jobs are concentrated at present.

These initiatives don't require a huge technological investment. Most have to do with policy, legal and business practice related reforms. However, the dividends can be substantial, if not game-changing.

End-to-end paperless flow of information will result in substantial improvements in financial inclusion, speed of transactions, accuracy, convenience, improved security, health and safety, and a massive improvement in the ease of doing business index for the country.

Humanity is slowly but surely overcoming the Covid-19 challenge. But in doing so, we are having to rip up the old playbooks and reimagine our society anew. The banking sector, an integral part of modern life, will need to set the pace in this transformational journey.

This can be the start of a digital revolution for banks that is perhaps overdue.

Khaled Aziz is Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, Standard Chartered Bank, Bangladesh.

The price of a migrant worker's dream



TASNEEM SIDDIQUI

MAY 27, 2020 marked another dark chapter in the history of global migration. On that day, 26 sons of Bangladesh were brutally murdered in Libya. The crime for which they paid this ultimate price was that they dared to dream! They dreamt of having a better life. They had the audacity to reject the rigid class-based society of theirs, which offers little scope to make an upward transition in life. Had fate been kind to them, they would have made it to Italy, or Spain, or some other European nation. They gambled with their life and lost the game. How long can such gambling continue?

Unfortunately, we have no answer to that because the odds are always stacked against these young men. Think of Asadul, one of those hapless victims. There was no land for him to cultivate. What job prospects did he have? Are education and individual capabilities sufficient to secure a job? Did he have the right political contact or money to bribe his way into a job? Was business an option for him? Where would he get the capital needed? Would any bank offer him loan without collateral?

But don't we, one may ask, have the anti-trafficking law of 2012 that is supposed to stop these tragedies?

So many judges, lawyers and police personnel have been trained to enforce the law. So many NGOs have taught the villagers how to file FIRs. So many tele-dramas have been aired to highlight the plight of migrant workers. In reality, rules to implement the law were only framed in 2017. The majority of the special courts are yet to be established. Trafficking cases are tried in special courts of women and children. There have been so many cases of abuse against women—dowry-related violence, acid throwing, physical torture by husband or in-laws, etc. Our understaffed judiciary cannot handle all these cases, let alone cases against traffickers. Till 2019, out of 5,700 cases, only 250 were resolved. The kingpins remain above the law. Who will dare to give evidence against them? Fifty-four petty foot soldiers were convicted.

One cannot help but think how brave those young men were. Asadul went from Madaripur to Kolkata via Benapole by bus, and from Kolkata by plane to Mumbai, Dubai, Cairo, Benghazi, and finally almost there to Tripoli. It is hard to believe that this young man had never stepped out of Madaripur before this journey.

There are so many questions that come to mind. Why have the western powers made such a mess of countries like Iraq, Iran, Kuwait and Libya where our men used to go for work? Why have the western powers enacted a policy of "Fortress Europe" when employers of those countries are so happy to use irregular migrants? Why have the developed states not treated trafficking

with the same vigour as they did radical extremism? Perhaps, they feel they have played their due part by shuffling Bangladesh between tier 2 and tier 3 in the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.

Our law enforcement agencies have cutting-edge surveillance equipment. Yet they have failed to apprehend the masterminds who traffic innocent youths by preying on their hopes and dreams.

Take the case of a young man named Zillur. He was also stranded in Libya while trying to go to Europe. Zillur left Bangladesh on a tourist visa to Sudan through the Chittagong airport. Isn't it strange that our immigration officers did not think it odd that an illiterate person, with no history of travel and a brand new passport, should suddenly decide to go to Sudan for tourism? Did border and coast guards spare a thought as to why hundreds of poor Bangladeshis and Rohingya men, women and children were migrating to Thailand by boat? Can you recall any case where a member of law enforcement or of the civil administration was held accountable for these tragedies? In political science, we call this impunity.

I call migrant workers "today's freedom fighters". In 1971, freedom fighters gave us independence. Today, migrants are pushing the country forward by earning foreign exchange. For so many years, we have been honouring the achievements of migrants and their left-behind families as *shonar manush*—the golden sons and daughters of Bengal. We even framed a slogan: "The sweat of

the migrants earning, keeps the wheels of our country turning."

I have dedicated 25 years of my life to this cause. But today, I can celebrate migration no more. My heart has been broken along with the mothers of all those poor young men. I can no longer paint migration as a life-enhancing

experience for many. Neither can I call it a tool for development with the conviction I once did. For the poor rural families, it has turned into an enticement to enter the jaws of death—or at best, the quickest path to impoverishment.

Tasneem Siddiqui is Founding Chair, RMMRU, and Professor of Political Science, University of Dhaka.



This handout picture released and taken on June 17, 2019 by the Turkish coastguard shows illegal migrants being rescued after their boat sank in the Aegean sea, off the coast of southwestern Turkey. Today the odds are heavily stacked against young people from Bangladesh and other poor countries seeking a better life in Europe.

PHOTO: AFP/TURKISH COASTGUARD

ON THIS DAY
IN HISTORY

BATTLE OF WATERLOO
June 18, 1815

Napoleon was defeated in the Battle of Waterloo, ending 23 years of recurrent warfare between France and the other powers of Europe.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Gush

5 Track event

9 Celler stock

11 "Pal Joey" writer

13 Broadway backer

14 Man of Madrid

15 Bud

16 Bring to life

18 Affix, in a way

20 Racket

21 Pasty

22 Silicate mineral

23 Holds

24 Soccer's Hamm

25 Walk unevenly

27 Woes on toes

29 Outback runner

30 Support, with "for"

32 Slight

34 Finished

35 Drummer's partner

36 Take place

38 Disparaging

39 Clipped

40 Adam's grandson

41 Travel stops

DOWN

1 Ex-changes

2 Target at a party

3 Breakfast item

4 Miniature

5 Violinist's stuff

6 Attention-

7 Breakfast item

8 Hot

10 Quenches

12 Game site

17 Dijon denial

19 Bloke

22 Painter Joan

24 Guiding maxims

25 Pages (through)

26 "It's only a scratch!"

27 Take in

28 Titan circles it

30 Skirt inserts

31 Shorebirds

33 Make over

37 Greek X

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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BEETLE BAILEY
BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES
BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

CENTRE STAGE

Popular actors Jaya Ahsan and Masuma Rahman Nabila have been maintaining social distance and staying indoors. In this interview with Star Showbiz, the talented actors shared what they miss the most during quarantine and what they have been doing for their physical and mental healths.



JAYA AHSAN

Have you been working on any short film or project during this lock-down?

A few artists have been working from home, but I have not done anything of that sort. There are a few reasons behind that. Firstly, everyone has been under a lot of mental stress due to the current state of the world, which is why it is not possible to take on any such project. Secondly, shooting is not a one-man job. Every single person, from light technicians to hairdressers, play a crucial part on set. Without them, no one can make it as a star.

Did you undertake any activity, such as donating to charities, during these difficult times?

I don't want to discuss this in detail as this crisis has affected the entire world. So, I believe that any contribution I have made are insignificant. However, I have been trying to reach out and provide some support to street dwellers, especially children. I have also made an effort to help stray dogs during these times.

Have you participated in any awareness campaign?

I have appeared in a few awareness videos

in both Bangladesh and India. For instance, I took part in an event during Eid which was aiming to collect funds for artists. There will be an event in Kolkata called *Concert for Bengal*, which I am a part of as well.

How have you been taking care of your physical and mental health?

Initially, I didn't have a routine. However, I felt distressed and realised that working-out helped me. I try to do it regularly now as it helps both my physical and mental state. Like I mentioned earlier, I am under a lot stress, which has been making it difficult for me to focus on reading books. So, to pass my time, I have been watching a lot of movies.

Do you have any message for the readers?

Fear of death has currently occupied all our minds. While it is difficult, I would want everyone to focus on the good aspects of life. The crisis has also created a setback for the goals we may have set to achieve within this year. However, it is important to remember that staying safe is our biggest priority and surviving this global pandemic is an accomplishment in itself.

Shreya Shomoyeeta

Nabila

What have you been doing in quarantine?

I think I'm just doing what everyone else is doing; nothing special. I'm doing household chores. Mostly, I'm just waiting and praying for all of this to be over so that we can go back to our previous way of life.

Have you acquired a new skill?

Since my childhood, I have known that I can recreate the human face on paper. When my husband found out about this, he persuaded me to practise it. So, I've spent some time drawing his face. This isn't honestly a new skill; it's an old skill that I've began working on again. I've also been trying out new recipes which I haven't been able to do before. For example, I had made a cake for the first time for my husband's birthday.

What aspect of life before are you missing the most?

I'm basically missing everything. I miss going to work on shoots. I terribly miss acting. I haven't been able to spend time with my friends, so I'm really missing that. I love travelling. Now I don't even know when I can go abroad or even outside of Dhaka. What is the first thing that you'll do when quarantine ends? The first thing I want to do is go on a shoot, so I'll look for a good project. I also want to travel somewhere, no matter how near or far, so that I can feel that everything is back to normal and we've overcome a deadly pandemic.

Do you have any message for the readers?

I would request all the readers to be safe and cautious. We all know what to do to keep ourselves and others safe, so we should maintain them strictly. I know that many people are tired of this. I want them to know that they're not alone. Even I become depressed sometimes. I would like to ask you to be patient. We have waited before, and we have to wait some more. Only then can we overcome this. If you are feeling depressed, you should definitely talk to family and friends and share any problem you have. This pandemic has shown us that people are there for each other, so we should all be open about whatever we're going through.

Amina Hossain



GRAPEVINE

Fortunate Farooki

Legendary Indian composer A R Rahman has joined Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's directorial venture, *No Land's Man*, as co-producer and music composer. Farooki said, "I feel that A R Rahman is the only person fit to match the global standard for the film. After completing the shooting, I showed him the rough draft of the film. He liked it and we had several conversations and idea-sharing sessions. I feel fortunate to have him associated with this project, not just as the music composer, but also the co-producer." *No Man's Land*, a joint production of the US, India and Bangladesh, stars Indian actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Australian theatre actor Megan Mitchell and



Bangladeshi musician-actor Tahsan Rahman Khan. Eighty percent of the shooting has been completed in India, New York and Australia. The post-production of the film was suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic.



ACTOR TURNED
DIRECTOR

After presenting *Monta Bojhena* to his audience, popular actor Arifin Shuvoo is coming up with a documentary film, *The story behind the hard work for Mission Extreme*, this Eid-ul-Adha. Besides acting for the film, he is also directing it. Shuvoo said, "I have worked hard for *Mission Extreme*. I have not taken any other work over the past two years as I dedicated my full focus on this project. Before shooting for the film, I trained myself for nine months and reduced my weight from 98 kg to 82 kg. On-screen, the

audience will notice my weight loss, but the change of food habit, sleep cycle alteration, getting injured and all the struggles I have been through for this project will remain untold. The purpose of this documentary is to bring forth my journey with *Mission Extreme*." The documentary will be released on Arifin Shuvoo's official YouTube channel. *Mission Extreme* is co-directed by Sunny Sanwar and Faisal Ahmed. The cast also includes Jannatul Ferdous Oishee, Sadia Nabila and Taskeen Rahman.

Bubly's Bidrohi

Bidrohi, starring popular actor Shakib Khan and Shobnom Bubly, will be released for the audience this Eid-ul-Adha. The movie was supposed to be released during Eid-ul-Fitr, but the ongoing crisis delayed the release. As an alternative to the cinema hall, the director Shahin Sumon is planning to release the film on the production house's online streaming app. Regarding the film, a representative from the production house said, "The app is being made based on the current crisis and the sustainability of the entertainment industry. Ninety-nine per cent of the work has already been developed and currently, it's going through the trial process. The application will be launched by the end of June."



GUESS THE CELEBRITY

Guess who the celebrity is?

HINT: HE IS A VERY STRANGE DOCTOR



ANSWER FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE:
"KIM KARDASHIAN"

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.

Sweet Magnolias

Sweet Magnolias is a romance drama web television series on Netflix, which has been based on the eponymous novels by Sherryl Woods. It has been developed by Sheryl J. Anderson, produced by Matt Drake, and stars JoAnna Garcia Swisher, Brooke Elliott and Heather Headley, among others. It tells the story of three childhood friends as they navigate their way through life and balance their family, relationships, and careers. The series premiered on Netflix on May 19, 2020.



I Know This Much Is True

I Know This Much Is True is a tragedy-drama miniseries, based on the eponymous novel, written by Wally Lamb. It was written by Derek Cianfrance and Anya Epstein, directed by Derek Cianfrance, produced by Jeffrey T. Bernstein, and stars Mark Ruffalo, Melissa Leo and John Proacciano, among others. The story follows Dominick Birdsey, as he narrates his relationship with his schizophrenic twin brother. It was aired on May 10, 2020 on HBO.

Shreya Shomoyeeta & Amina Hossain

UPLOAD

Upload is a science fiction comedy web television series on Amazon Prime Video. It has been created by Greg Daniels, who also produced the series alongside Howard Klein, and stars Robbie Amell, Andy Allo

and Allegra Edwards, among others. It is set in a futuristic world where people can choose their own virtual afterlife, and tells the story of a man who chooses to do so. The series premiered on May 1, 2020.



Coman's 9th league title at 24

AFP, Bremen

Three days after turning 24, Bayern Munich's Kingsley Coman celebrated winning the ninth league title of his career.

The France attacker clinched his fifth straight Bundesliga crown following the Bavarians' 1-0 victory at Werder Bremen to add his two Serie A successes and two Ligue 1 titles. Coman made his debut for the Bavarians in Bundesliga in 2015.

Coman was an unused member of Paris Saint-Germain's squad as a 16-year-old in 2013 and played just once for Juventus three years later.

In 2015-2016 he had two domestic top-flight titles after featuring for Juve before joining Bayern during the same campaign.

He can claim a third German Cup win in July as Bayern face Bayer Leverkusen in this year's final in Berlin.



BAYERN IN EIGHTH HEAVEN: Robert Lewandowski (C) celebrates his 31st goal of the league with teammate Leon Goretzka during their 1-0 win over Werder Bremen, which ensured an eighth consecutive Bundesliga title for the Bavarians. The Polish international, who has now scored 46 goals this season in all competitions, expertly chested down Jerome Boateng's lob before drilling home past Bremen keeper Jiri Pavlenka in the 43rd minute of the game. The win took Bayern to 76 points from 32 games, 10 clear of Borussia Dortmund, with two games in hand.

PHOTO: BAYERN MUNICH

Covid-19 tests before isolated training camp

SPORTS REPORTER



and coaching staff for Covid-19 before August's training camp for the World Cup Qualifiers.

The decision was made at a meeting of BFF national teams committee (NTC) yesterday, with an eye on the national team's qualifying fixtures against Afghanistan and Qatar on October 8 and 13 respectively.

"Considering the Covid-19 situation, we are going to hold a six-week training camp for the national team after June-July. We have decided to test all players

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to test all national team players

and support staff and keep them in isolation for 14 days at the start of August before the camp, which will begin on either August 20 or 22," BFF vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed told reporters in a virtual press conference after an online meeting.

"We have already signed contract with Jamie Day for two more years and discussion with assistant coach Stuart Watkiss is going on. We are hoping the coaches will arrive in Bangladesh in the middle of August and have seven days' isolation before joining the camp," Nabil said. "We will initially call 44 players for the camp so that the camp isn't hampered due to the unavailability of players due to the Covid-19 tests."



The game's local governing body is also looking for a suitable place for the Isolation camp in or around the capital. It has been learnt that Bangabandhu National Stadium, BKSP, Sara Resort in

Gazipur and Army commanding camp in Sylhet are in NTC's consideration for the residential camp.

"The coaches want to have training aboard but we don't

know whether the countries we want to train in will accept us and what would be the situation at that time. But we are trying to communicate with some countries for the camp," Nabil added.

Replying to a query, Nabil said, "If we don't go outside to play practice matches, we will train two teams so that they can play practice matches among themselves to prepare for the qualifying fixtures."

The BFF vice-president also informed that they would communicate with Bashundhara Kings to release their players for the camp as there may be a clash of training between the national team and Bashundhara Kings, who are also supposed prepare for the AFC Cup, starting from October 23.



Barcelona captain Lionel Messi gets taken down by a rugby tackle from Leganes captain Unai Bustinza during their La Liga fixture at Camp Nou on Tuesday. The Argentine superstar, however, had the last laugh as he scored one in their 2-0 victory.

World 100m champion Coleman suspended

REUTERS, Undated



anti-doping whereabouts rules.

The American sprinter, in a lengthy statement on Twitter on Tuesday, said he could be hit with a ban from the AIU after missing a test on Dec. 9, 2019.

Three failures to properly file whereabouts information in a 12-month period can result in a one- or two-year suspension.

"The AIU confirms a provisional suspension against Christian Coleman of the USA for whereabouts failures, a violation of the @WorldAthletics Anti-Doping Rules," the AIU said in a tweet.

Coleman, who also helped the United States to 4x100m gold at the World Championships in Doha, acknowledged the failure would count as his third in a 12-month span but said he was willing to take responsibility for only one.

"And now this might result in me being

World 100 metres champion Christian Coleman was provisionally suspended by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) on Wednesday and could miss next year's Tokyo Olympics after violating

suspended from other filing failures that occurred well over a year ago at this point." The two other failures occurred on January 16, 2019 and April 26, 2019.

"Don't tell me I 'missed' a test if you sneak up on my door (parked outside the gate and walked through...there's no record of anyone coming to my place) without my knowledge," said Coleman. "Knocked while I was Christmas shopping five minutes away at the mall (I have receipts and bank statements) and didn't even bother to call me or attempt to reach me."

"I was more than ready and available for testing if I had received a phone call," adding he believed it was "a purposeful attempt to get me to miss a test."

Coleman escaped suspension last year when USADA, after receiving guidance from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) on how to calculate the 12-month window, withdrew the charge.

The sprinter later demanded an apology from USADA. "I have never and never will use performance-enhancing supplements or drugs," said Coleman. "I am willing to take a drug test every single day for the rest of my career for all I care to prove my innocence."

Solution lies in the towel

REUTERS, New Delhi

England's premier ball manufacturer has some advice for bowlers worried about being unable to generate swing due to a ban on the use of saliva to shine the ball: "Carry a cotton towel."

Dilip Jajodia, managing director of British Cricket Balls Ltd, which produces the Dukes balls used in test matches in England, says they need not worry.

"The ball has to be right in the first place. Whether you apply saliva or perspiration or whatever,



these are small things that help," Jajodia told Reuters by telephone.

"We have a proper ball with a hand-stitched seam. It's designed to swing as long as you have the skill."

"And now that ICC has confirmed that you can use perspiration, I don't see any problem."

When a player vigorously rubs the Dukes ball against his clothes, it releases the wax in it to permeate through leather and shine the ball, said Jajodia.

His advice for English and West Indian bowlers in their upcoming series is to carry a cotton towel like Barbadian great Malcolm Marshall.

"The great Malcolm Marshall was always seen with a little cotton towel hanging from his waist."

Stars back, but will they align?

Manchester United take on Tottenham today

SAMAMA RAHMAN



There will be no voices to cheer on the stars as they return to the pitch, but the sense of anticipation felt by Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspurs fans will be at a fever-pitch when the teams, reinforced by the returns of their best players, lock horns in a battle for a place in the top four tonight.

With just eight points separating Chelsea in fourth from Arsenal in ninth, the neck-and-neck race looks certain to continue over the remaining nine fixtures that each team will play, but tonight's fixture will certainly set the tone for at least one of the chasing pack.

Times were bleak during the coronavirus pandemic for obvious reasons, but as teams, these two in particular, return to the fold, they appear filled with a sense of optimism that had been missing for large chunks of their season.

Before the enforced break, Tottenham looked unmotivated. Mauricio Pochettino, the mild-mannered Argentinian who had nurtured most of the squad and taken them to the Champions League final last year, was suddenly sacked and the sport's most prominent anti-hero, Jose Mourinho, had failed to get his squad going after taking over.

Spurs spiraled ahead of the shutdown, going six games without a win, a period that saw them slip to eighth in the Premier League and meekly exit the FA Cup and Champions League. Their final game ended in a chastening 3-0 loss to RB Leipzig that left Lucas Moura in tears. The break was unkind as well, with Dele Alli banned for today's match after an inappropriate tweet.

Now, Spurs look a rejuvenated side, with Mourinho getting the time to work with his players -- even sneaking in a few sessions during the lockdown at a local park, courting the controversy he so thrives on. Nevertheless, their

preparations and the return of England and club captain Harry Kane, alongside influential midfielders Moussa Sissoko, Steven Bergwijn and electric winger Son Heung-Min -- possibly the fittest player in the Premier League after completing a mandatory four-week basic soldiers' training course in South Korea and passing with flying colours -- has left them feeling a top four place is well within their grasp.

On the flipside, United went into the break following a purple patch that saw them win eight and draw three of

summer holidays, a scheme the government had previously said it would not carry on over the summer.

The major product of the shutdown, other than a sharp fall in fitness levels, has been inconsistency despite the combination of superstars. Tottenham split their friendly against Norwich into four parts and if that did not show that players still have to get up to speed, the 2-1 loss provided a clearer indication. MU fared a little better, playing two games on the same day against West Brom, losing one 2-1 and winning the other 3-1.



their last 11 games after the immediate impact from Bruno Fernandes, who arrived in January. That allowed them to surge to fifth, three places and four points above Spurs.

They will also welcome back World Cup winner Paul Pogba and United's leading scorer Marcus Rashford -- who secured an immense win off the pitch by pressuring Boris Johnson to u-turn and pledge 120 million pounds to providing free school meals vouchers for poor kids in the UK during the

A fifth-place finish could be enough to seal a Champions League place if Manchester City's two-year ban from the competition is upheld, but neither team will want to leave anything to chance. Fitness levels and how well their stars can begin to gel will be key factors and that will set up another tantalising clash between Jose Mourinho and one of his former teams, even if the narrative in the post Covid-19 world is completely different.





PANDEMIC FALLOUT
 Slipping into period poverty
A WaterAid study shows how low-income women struggle to maintain menstrual hygiene

While the Covid-19 outbreak has impacted the lives of everyone, women and girls from lower-income families are having to face deeper struggles, especially when it comes to the issue of maintaining menstrual health and hygiene. Due to the devastating economic effects of the shutdown, access to sanitary products, which are still considered luxury items in the country, has become even more difficult than it used to be for women facing financial struggles. This correspondent spoke to a number of women and girls living in informal settlements of the capital, some of whom are resorting to cut-ups from old clothes to use as sanitary napkins. Since the Covid-19 outbreak began, they have been doing so in order to save money by prioritising food and other essentials over menstrual hygiene supplies. A recent study by the WaterAid Bangladesh revealed that there are far-reaching effects of the lockdown on menstrual health management for members of the lower-income group. Jhumur Begum, 32, of Bhashantek slums, and her 15-year-old daughter have been using old rags for the past two months. Jhumur used to make money for herself by sewing clothes for people.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Young people hanging out on the Central Shaheed Minar premises yesterday. Sitting in close proximity, some of them wore masks while some opted not to. Only yards away hangs a notice asking people not to mill around in the Shaheed Minar area during this time of the Covid-19 outbreak. Blatantly oblivious to the instructions, many were still seen huddling.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DMP summons goes against law, practice

DUI about notices on 10 journos over news on police high-up

Dhaka Union of Journalists yesterday expressed deep concern over summoning of at least 10 journalists by the police after the publication of a report on the immoral activity of a senior cop. Issuing a statement, the DUI said such a move goes against the country's law and practice. DUI President Qudus Afrad and General Secretary Sajjad Alam Khan Topu said this type of letter by the police created a kind of psychological pressure which was inconsistent with the free flow of news. Recently, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) sent letters to some journalists asking them to appear before an enquiry committee at the scheduled time to "enable it to conduct a proper investigation". The DUI leaders observed that summoning and questioning journalists

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

UNITED HOSPITAL FIRE
 Travel ban imposed on chairman, 3 others

Police have imposed a travel ban on the top officials of United Hospital following the fire incident that killed five patients at their isolation unit. The hospital's Chairman Hasan Mahmood Raja, Managing Director Faridur Rahman Khan, Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Faizur Rahman and Chief of Clinical Development and Governance Dr Abu Sayeed MM Rahman would not be able to leave the country. A high official of Gulshan Division Police yesterday told The Daily Star about the embargo. Five patients -- Vernon Anthony Paul, 75, Riyajul Alam, 45, Khadeja Begum, 70, Monir Hossain, 75, and Md Mahabub, 50 -- were burnt to death at

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangladesh gets membership of ILO



Bangabandhu addressing a mammoth gathering in Noakhali on June 22, 1972.

June 18, 1972
 SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGLADESH BECOMES A MEMBER OF ILO
 Bangladesh today gets membership of the International Labour Organisation. The decision was taken unanimously by the ILO member countries. The membership will be activated next week. INDIA PROVIDES TK 1.36 CRORE FOR HOUSE BUILDING MATERIALS
 Indian government today declares that

it will provide Tk 1.36 crore to Bangladesh for procuring house building materials. Earlier, India handed over a fund of Tk 13.97 crore to Bangladesh which had been allocated for building shelters for refugees during the war. India will also provide Tk 2 crore for purchasing clothing materials. 2,000 metric tonnes of lentils have also arrived recently from India.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

COVID-19 FALLOUT
 14,000 migrant workers return empty-handed since April 1

Over 14,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers have returned home since April from 10 countries, showed data of Expatriates' Welfare Desk at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Fakhru Alam, assistant director at the welfare desk, said the workers returned for various reasons but mostly for job cuts over coronavirus situations in those countries. Of them, nearly 4,900 returned from Kuwait, more than 3,500 from Maldives, around 3,000 from Oman and 2,500 to 3,000 from the United Arab Emirates since April 1. Besides, some 400 to 450 returned from Singapore, 223 from Saudi Arabia, 70 to 80 from Malaysia and 71 from South Africa, he told this newspaper over phone yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Hummingbirds can see colours invisible to humans



CNN ONLINE

When hummingbirds make decisions regarding food, evading predators or choosing a mate, they're influenced by the diverse colours they can see that are invisible to human eyes, according to a new study. These are known as nonspectral colours, or hues that come from largely separate parts of the colour spectrum. Humans can see one nonspectral colour, which is purple. But it isn't part of the rainbow. Instead, we see purple when the short-wave blue and long-wave red cones in our eyes are stimulated, but not the third green medium-wave cone. Birds, however, have a fourth cone that can detect ultraviolet light. Their four-colour cone vision is referred to as tetrachromatic.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Registration with EC to get tougher

Draft law contains stringent provisions for parties' inclusion

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR
 The Election Commission has prepared a draft of a law with stringent rules for political parties getting registered. Till now, a political party needs to meet at least one condition out of three given in line with The Representation of the People Order-1972. But according to the proposed law titled "Registration of Political Parties Act-2020", now political parties will have to fulfil at least two conditions out of three to get registered with the EC. The Representation of the People Order-1972 says all political parties should reserve at least 33 percent of all committee positions for women. The draft law says besides keeping 33 percent

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

CONVECTION IN BAY
 Coastal areas to experience rough weather

Stormy weather is likely to prevail in coastal areas of Bangladesh as a deep convection is taking place over the north Bay of Bengal and adjoining areas. Maritime ports of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Mongla, and Payra have been advised to hoist local cautionary signal number three, according to a weather forecast of Met office. Contacted, Meteorologist Bazlur Rashid said heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to occur at places in Barishal, Chattogram, and Sylhet

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING JUNE 18

	Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AMAR	4:05	12:45	5:00	6:50	8:15
JAMAT	4:40	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Farmers and traders with boats full of pineapples ready to be sold at the Samarita ferry terminal market in Rangamati, which operates every Saturday and Monday. Due to the shutdown, the growers are struggling to sell their seasonal produce. Even after having slashed the prices of the fruits, they are counting losses. Many are planning to form a syndicate together and drop the prices even lower so they won't have to take their produce back to their farms. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

RESUMING SERVICE AMID PANDEMIC

Uber seeks intervention from PMO

To hold virtual meeting with PM's principal secy June 20

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Uber Bangladesh Ltd has sought intervention from the Prime Minister's Office to be able to resume operations in Dhaka and other cities amid the government decision to suspend ride-hailing services until further notice. Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Ahmad Kaikaus is scheduled to hold an online meeting with a delegation of Uber on June 20 in this regard, officials said. Road Transport and Highway Division (RTHD) Secretary Nazrul Islam and acting chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) are also expected to take part in the meeting. BRTA acting chairman Yousub Ali Mollah said, "We have received a notice about the meeting... We think they [Uber] may raise the issue of resumption of their service at the meeting." However, at least two officials who were aware of the development said matters related to Uber's ride-hailing service would be the main agenda of the meeting. The Daily Star could not reach Uber for comment. This correspondent sent an e-mail to Uber via its PR firm on Tuesday seeking comments over the issue but it has not responded as of 5:00pm yesterday. The move comes after BRTA took a hard line on vehicles that had been providing the popular service without being

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1