

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

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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.

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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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