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Silk business faces tough times

RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

Life for weavers and workers of handloom silk clothing in Chapainawabganj has taken a rough turn as sales of these dearer garments dipped due to the pandemic.

Since the countrywide shutdown began on March 25, the weavers in different villages of the district's Shibganj and Sadar upazilas have halted their operations, leaving hundreds of handloom workers temporarily jobless.

"I usually weave silk cloths and sarees at my four handlooms and supply the items to Rajshahi, Dhaka and other districts. But the business stopped after the government declared a countrywide shutdown for Covid-19 and I suspended production since then," said Bibhuti Bhusan Das of Horinagar village in Shibganj upazila.

"Even with the shutdown eased now, buyers are not showing interest in purchasing our products. So, I have not started production," he told this correspondent, who visited Horinagar last week.

Monojit Chandra Singha, owner of 15 handlooms in the Sadar upazila's Laharpur village, said, "Chapainawabganj is famous for traditional silk fabric, popularly known as Rajshahi silk."

Monojit's stock of silk clothing worth Tk 15 lakh has remained unsold since the shutdown.

Another handloom owner Samir Chandra Das of the same village also has unsold stock worth around Tk 7 lakh.

Owner of six handlooms, Samir has been running this ancestral business for a long time and never faced such a crisis. He said until now buyers have always shown interest in their product.

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This photo taken recently shows a man in Chapainawabganj working a handloom. Due to the coronavirus-induced shutdown, which ended at the beginning of this month, the sale of handloom-crafted materials had stalled for nearly two and a half months and handlooms such as these had remained unused.

PHOTO: ROBIUL HASAN

CHINESE MARKET

No tariff for 5,161 more Bangladeshi products

UNB, Dhaka

China gives duty-free access to 5,161 more Bangladeshi products in its market from July 1.

With the announcement made by the State Council of Ministry of Finance of China, a total of 8,256 Bangladeshi products will come under the 97 percent of products that would be exempted from tariff.

Bangladesh described it as a success of its economic diplomacy.

"We are glad to inform that as part of our economic diplomacy and the consequent outcome of exchange of letters between Bangladesh and China, Tariff Commission of the State Council of Ministry of Finance of the People's Republic of China issued a notice on granting zero treatment to 97 percent of Bangladeshi products," said a foreign ministry official.

He said Bangladesh is

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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC Latest outbreak in Beijing 'came from Europe'

Say Chinese officials; EU seeks recovery plan; lockdown re-imposed in Chennai

AGENCIES

EU leaders yesterday debated a giant post-coronavirus recovery plan as China raced to prevent a second wave that it said may have originally come from Europe.

The disease was meanwhile already present in Italy as far back as December, experts said, underscoring the difficulty of tracking and containing the pandemic.

But with the world trying to both limit the economic pain of Covid-19 even as it guards against a resurgence, top US expert Dr Anthony Fauci offered a ray of hope as he said he did not see America returning to fresh lockdown.

The disease has so far killed 454,000 people and infected 8.5 million people worldwide, as well as causing historic levels of economic disruption as countries and continents shut down to stop its spread.

Many European countries began reopening this month after painful

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangabandhu is a role model for Asians

June 20, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU WELCOMES INDO-PAK SUMMIT

In an interview with Reuters, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today welcomes the upcoming Indo-Pak Summit which will be held at Simla on 21 June.

"This is a bilateral summit between the two countries. Let them discuss their issues. I don't want to be a part of that," he adds. The prime minister categorically denies any possibility of talks with Pakistan unless and until the country recognises Bangladesh.

When asked if there is any possibility of abandoning the trial process, Bangabandhu reiterates that the trial of war criminals will be held on the soil of Bangladesh at any cost. "They have committed the worst forms of crimes against humanity in Bangladesh. They killed 30 lakh Bangladeshis, raped 2 lakh women and one crore people had to take refuge in India fleeing their atrocities. The world must know about the brutalities committed by the Pak Army," he adds.

He further says that India has no authority to hand over the prisoners of war to any other country since the POWs surrendered to the command of Bangladesh.

SD GOKHALE CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

SD Gokhale, the president of International Council on Social

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Man shot dead by criminals in Rajbari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A man was shot dead by a group of miscreants at Kazipara in Sadar upazila of Rajbari around 11:00 am yesterday.

The victim is Shaheed Sheikh, 55, son of late Ibrahim Sheikh, of Kholabaria village in the upazila's Pachuria union, said police.

Quoting witnesses, Pachuria Union Parishad Chairman Kazi Alamgir said three men were involved in the murder.

"The trio interrupted Shaheed's road with a motorbike in Kazipara area when he was returning from Khankanapur Bazar. The miscreants shot him there and fled the scene."

Shaheed died on the spot, he added.

Sawpan Majumdar, officer-in-charge of Rajbari Sadar Police Station, said they recovered the body on

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Deceitful plants! Scientists say plants can mask odours to avoid getting eaten



AFP, Paris

Plants in dense tropical forests are able to mask their chemical scents in order to avoid being detected and eaten by insects -- a key advantage in the "information arms race" between themselves and plant-eating herbivores, according to a new study.

International researchers from Europe and North America examined 28 species of insects and 20 plant species in Chamela-Cuixmala, a tropical forest reserve on the western coast of Mexico.

Their research -- published Thursday in the journal Science -- sheds light on how individual members of "complex plant communities" evolve to emit similar odours, a pack mentality that keeps

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BOLTON MEMOIR Trump moves court to stop publication

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump's last-ditch bid to stop former top aide John Bolton's book from publication goes to court yesterday, even though much of the damning contents, painting the president as corrupt and incompetent, is already out.

A federal court in the capital Washington will hear arguments from the government that ex-national security advisor John Bolton's 'The Room

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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 20

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:05 12:45 5:00 6:52 8:17
JAMAAT 4:40 1:15 5:15 6:55 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Virus claims life of one more doctor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Another doctor died of Covid-19 while undergoing treatment at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) in Barisal yesterday.



Emdad Ullah

Emdad Ullah, 58, a senior consultant at Barisal General Hospital, died around 5:35pm while receiving treatment at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

According to the Bangladesh Medical Association, 42 doctors have so far died from Covid-19.

Bakir Hossain, director of SBMCH, said he was admitted to the corona unit of the hospital on Thursday afternoon with Covid-19 symptoms.

Emdad was transferred to the ICU yesterday afternoon as his oxygen saturation level dropped below 70, he said.

Test results, which was

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A plethora of to-let stickers hung on the wall of a house just off Malibagh junction. The economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic has led to many tenants opting for lower-rent housing, leaving many landlords in the lurch. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

VIOLENT BORDER FACE-OFF China releases 10 Indian soldiers

Modi hosts all-party meet; US offers condolences to India over deaths of soldiers

AGENCIES

China has returned 10 Indian soldiers captured during a deadly border clash earlier this week, an Indian government source said yesterday, as two Asian nuclear powers sought to de-escalate tensions on their disputed border in the western Himalayas.

The Indian army did not comment on the release, which according to the source took place on Thursday evening, instead referring to a government statement that said all of its soldiers were accounted for.

In a briefing in Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian denied any Indian troops had been in its custody.

"As far as I know China hasn't seized any Indian personnel," Zhao said.

According to Indian media, the freed personnel include two officers of the rank of major.

Twenty Indian soldiers, including an officer were killed in vicious hand-to-hand combat on Monday night in the Galwan Valley, according to the government, making it the deadliest clash on the India-China border in more than five decades.

India has said the Chinese side also suffered casualties too, but the Chinese government has not disclosed any.

Despite the tensions, India yesterday said it will receive 750 million dollars from China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to cope with the effects of Covid-19

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