

## Evil elements

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marketers, smugglers, hoarders and other anti-social elements will be dealt with severe punishment. If necessary, the government will promulgate harsher laws to try the anti-social elements. "If they don't desist from their evil activities, they will be gunned down," warns the prime minister.

Referring to the atrocities committed by the Pakistan army and their local collaborators, Bangabandhu says that they will be tried at any cost. He adds that a certain quarter inside the country is now trying to tarnish the image of the government. "They never supported Bangladesh's liberation struggle. While I was languishing in jail, they were hobnobbing with the Pak generals," says the prime minister. He asks people to be aware of the machinations orchestrated by these evil elements.

Bangabandhu informs that the government has already distributed relief materials worth Tk 100 crore. He assures that the relief and rehabilitation programmes will continue unabated and the government will ensure proper distribution of aid and relief materials. He reiterates that Bangladesh needs help from friendly countries but such assistance must be without any strings attached.

The prime minister calls upon the people to devote themselves to the task of building a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. He asks people to be patient and allow him three years to reconstruct the war-torn country.

**UNICEF WILL SET UP 22,530 TUBE WELLS**  
A spokesperson of the Department of Public Health Engineering informs today that Unicef will set up 22,530 tube wells in Comilla, Noakhali and Sylhet districts. This initiative will create access for the villagers to pure drinking water, he adds.

**SOURCES:** June 23, 1972 issue of *Purbodesh*.

## Phase-2

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dedicated to producing a coronavirus vaccine this year to prepare for China's future vaccine supplies.

As early as by the end of 2020, certain groups of people with special needs can use experimental vaccines under urgent circumstances, Gao Fu, director at the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, said last month.

The coronavirus, which was first detected in China late in 2019, has infected 8.81 million people globally and killed more than 464,000 people.

## Armed Forces

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Patients with mild symptoms, shifted from other hospitals, will be admitted there. They will be shifted to nearby specialised hospital if their condition deteriorates, said the release.

The Dhaka North City Corporation mayor will coordinate the hospital activities, it said.

A Brig Gen ranked officer of Bangladesh Army will be appointed as the hospital director. Doctors, health workers, administrative officials and a core group will be appointed from the Armed Forces to ensure its smooth management.

The rest of doctors and health workers will be appointed by the Directorate General of Health Services, the release added.

The Armed Forces will ensure all kinds of administration management and security issues of the hospital.

Meanwhile, another 300-bed specialised hospital with a 50-bed intensive care unit is being set up on the fifth floor of the market, which will be financed by the World Health Organisation and supervised by the health ministry.

If needed, ICU and pathology lab facilities for the ground floor isolation hospital will be provided by the 300-bed specialised hospital.

## ACC seeks

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ministry in this regard. The commission also sought information from the health ministry, Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD) about the purchase of N-95 mask and PPE.

The letter, signed by ACC director Mir Md Zainul Abedin Shebly, asked the secretary of the health ministry, director general of DGHS and director of CMSD to reply by June 30, confirmed ACC's Public Relations Officer Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya.

The ACC sought detailed information about the projects undertaken to procure masks, PPE, sanitizers, ICU equipment, ventilators, PCR machine and test kits to combat Covid-19.

ACC Chairman Iqbal Mahmood said the commission has taken a firm stance against corruption in the health sector.

"We hope the agencies will provide information in due time," he said, adding that anyone found involved in the corruption would be brought to book.



**A man places flowers next to the police cordon at the scene of multiple stabbings in Reading, Britain yesterday. British police said they were treating the stabbing spree in which a lone assailant killed three people in a park filled with families and friends as a "terrorism incident". Story on page 6.**

PHOTO: REUTERS

## First migrant charity ship reaches Italy since pandemic

AFP, Rome

An Italian collective brought dozens of migrants to safety Saturday in the country's first such arrival by a charity rescue ship since the coronavirus pandemic eased.

The arrival of the Mare Ionio ship in Pozzallo, Sicily, on World Refugee Day, was hailed by human rights organisations who noted the unusual speed with which Italy assigned the Mediterranean charity group a port.

"For once, the international law obliging the offer of a safe port, in a short time, has been respected," the

group's head Alessandra Sciarba said in a statement.

The Mare Ionio rescued 67 people Friday after their boat ran into difficulty some 40 nautical miles (70km) off Lampedusa. The group said the migrants had been without water for two days.

"For the first time for years, a 'place of safety' has been assigned in less than 24 hours. It should be automatic," Italian journalist and migrant specialist Nello Scavo tweeted.

Mediterranea called for a port of safety to be extended also to the crew

and migrants aboard the German Sea Watch 3 vessel, which took onboard around 100 people off the coast of Libya earlier this week.

The Pozzallo arrival was the first by a charity vessel since April, when Rome said it was closing its ports owing to the coronavirus pandemic, which prompted a nationwide lockdown in March, IOM said.

The Italian group said it was patrolling the central Mediterranean because European governments were failing to fulfil their responsibility "to safeguard human lives".

The International Organization for Migration's spokesman Flavio Di Giacomo said at least 227 people had died while attempting the perilous crossing since the start of the year.

"It remains dangerous, with two shipwrecks last week and one today," he told AFP.

The last few days in particular in the central Mediterranean "have been some of the most frantic this year", Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said on Twitter.

"At least 800 people tried to escape (from) Libya," MSF Sea said.

## LatAm hits 2m virus cases

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Brazil is the second worst-affected country with almost 50,000 deaths and more than one million cases, helping to push Latin America's total infections beyond the two million mark, according to an AFP tally yesterday.

With the highest single-day spike of 15,413 new cases in the last 24 hours, the Covid-19 tally in India crossed 4 lakh mark yesterday. The total death toll in the country stands at 13,254 and 306 deaths were reported in the last 24 hour. The recovery rate in India is at 55.48 percent.

Russia reported 7,728 new cases of the coronavirus, pushing its nationwide case tally to 584,680 since the crisis began. The virus has now killed more than 464,000 people and infected almost nine million worldwide.

**'ON OUR GUARD'**  
Although the spread has slowed in Europe, the continent is still the worst-affected with more than 2.5 million cases.

Spain has been among Europe's

hardest hit nations, but yesterday it lifted a slew of restrictions in a bid to get its tourism industry back up and running.

As well as opening its border with France, officials confirmed that EU nationals, those from the passport-free Schengen zone and Britons would not have to quarantine.

"We must remain on our guard and strictly follow hygiene and protection measures," Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Saturday, highlighting that the danger has not passed.

In France, millions of children are preparing to return to school today after three months away. Cinemas and other cultural institutions are also getting set for reopening.

Concert halls and other institutions in Germany, however, have had to slash their events calendars and drastically reduce capacities.

Musicians such as Cristina Gomez Godoy, a member of Berlin's Staatskapelle orchestra, have taken to playing in highly unusual settings.

"It is a pleasure for us as musicians to play together again, despite the

smaller format, and I think the audience will enjoy it too," she told AFP as she tuned up for a concert with four colleagues in the courtyard of an apartment building in Berlin.

Health Minister Matt Hancock said yesterday Britain will outline its plans to ease the lockdown this week, potentially relaxing the two-metre rule on social distancing, allowing many businesses to reopen in early July.

**'LIKE ZOO ANIMALS'**  
Thousands of miles away on the fringes of Eastern Europe, cases have spiked again in Azerbaijan, forcing the government to institute another lockdown -- much to the irritation of local workers.

"The government again cages us in like zoo animals and gives not a damn to the consequences," taxi driver Shahin Mamedkuliyev told AFP.

Clusters have also emerged in Morocco, which opened a field hospital yesterday capable of handling 700 patients, and in Beijing.

Local authorities in the Chinese capital have set up more than 2,000 testing sites across the city that

had obtained 2.3 million samples, according to state news media.

China banned imports from a top US poultry producer and ordered a Beijing Pepsi factory to close yesterday as authorities clamped down on food production and distribution.

Iranian health authorities reported over 100 new deaths yesterday for the third day running, stressing that the outbreak had not yet peaked in the hard-hit country.

The Palestinian Authority announced on Saturday it was temporarily closing the cities of Hebron and Nablus in the occupied West Bank after a sharp rise in infections.

Only goods will be allowed in, Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayeh told journalists. Authorities have reported a total of 687 cases in the West Bank, including two deaths so far.

A vaccine remains months off at best despite several trials. Scientists are still learning more about the virus, its symptoms and the extent to which it may have spread before being identified.

## Hundreds run riot in Germany's Stuttgart: police

AFP, Berlin

Hundreds of people ran riot in Germany's Stuttgart city centre in the early hours of yesterday, throwing stones and bottles at police and plundering stores after smashing shop windows.

"Police are currently securing leads and are interrogating more than 20 people who have been provisionally arrested," said authorities from the southwestern city in a statement.

More than a dozen police officers were also hurt in the clashes, added the statement.

Sascha Binder, a leading local MP of the Social Democratic Party, sharply condemned the violence.

"It is absolutely unacceptable, that in the middle of our country civil war-like scenes are breaking out. We don't know street battles of such scales in Baden-Wuerttemberg."

Tensions built up shortly after midnight over police checks on drug

consumption by some people who had gathered close to the city's biggest square, the Schlossplatz.

Clashes then broke out, as the groups went on a rampage, using sticks or poles to smash windows of police vehicles parked in the area.

Police estimated that around 500 people were involved in the riot, which also left shops along the neighbouring Koeningstrasse, a key shopping thoroughfare, attacked and looted.

Police called in reinforcements, and were only able to quell the violence several hours later.

Videos posted on Twitter showed people breaking shop windows, with their goods strewn on the streets.

A jewellery store was completely emptied and a mobile phone shop wrecked, according to regional broadcaster SWR.

Smaller scale clashes had broken out downtown last week between police and groups of young people.

## Yemen southern separatists take control of Socotra island

AFP, Aden

Yemen's southern separatists have seized control of the strategic island of Socotra, which had been in the hands of pro-government forces, and have begun implementing self-rule, officials on both sides said.

The move at the weekend deepens the crisis between separatists and the government after the failure of a power-sharing deal in areas beyond the control of Huthi rebels, who hold the capital Sanaa and much of northern Yemen.

The Southern Transitional Council (STC) declared self-rule in southern Yemen on April 26, accusing the government of failing to carry out its duties and of "conspiring" against their cause.

Senior STC official Salem Abdullah al-Socotri congratulated the separatist forces for "normalising the situation" in Socotra, in a statement issued late Saturday.

A government spokesman said the STC had mounted a "full-fledged

coup" on the Indian Ocean island, located near major shipping routes and renowned for its biological diversity.

Its fighters had targeted state institutions and raided military camps and government quarters, he said, according to the official Saba news agency.

He called on the Saudi-led military coalition -- which intervened in the Yemen war in 2015 to support the government against the Iran-backed Huthi rebels -- to stop the STC's "tampering, chaos and attacks" and compel them to implement the power-sharing Riyadh Agreement signed last December.

Socotra's governor, Ramzy Mahrous, said the STC forces "overthrew" state institutions, after which "they raided the city of Hadibou", the island's capital.

Military sources told AFP that the STC took control of the island on Saturday after an operation that began the day before, with only limited clashes with pro-government forces.

## Italian

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block the sun's rays.

"This area is continuously shrinking, so we cover as much of it as possible," explains Davide Panizza, 34, who heads the Carosello-Tonale company that does the work.

From around 30,000 square metres (36,000 square yards) covered in 2008 when the project began, his team now places 100,000 square metres under wraps.

The coverings are "geotextile tarpaulins that reflect sunlight, maintaining a temperature lower than the external one, and thus preserving as much snow as possible," he told AFP.

On the border between the Lombardy and Trentino Alto Adige regions, workers unroll the sheets in long strips, covering an area at an altitude of 2700 to 3000 metres (8,800-9,800 feet).

They move methodically down the mountain under clear blue skies to pull the coverings taut, and sew

them together to ensure warm drafts do not slip underneath. Bags of sand then act as anchors against the wind.

Once in place, the sheets, which measure 70 metres by five metres (230 by 16 feet), are hardly distinguishable from the packed white snow beneath.

"There are glacier cover systems similar to ours on a few Austrian glaciers, but the surface covered by the tarpaulins is much smaller," Panizza said.

The Austrian-made tarps cost up to 400 euros (\$450) each and it takes the team six weeks to install them -- and another six weeks to remove them before winter sets in again.

Franco Del Pero, 48, leads the operation and says technological improvements mean contemporary tarps protect better than earlier versions.

"When we remove them in September and we see that they did their job, we feel proud," he says.

## Biman

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Since the middle of February, Biman gradually suspended flight operations on all 18 international routes due to Covid-19 pandemic.

On March 30, Biman operated its last flight from London-Dhaka route.

On June 11, CAAB permitted Biman to operate flights on Dhaka-London-Dhaka.

It also permitted Qatar Airways to operate transit flights from June 16.

Four more foreign carriers -- Emirates, Fly Dubai, Air Arabia and Turkish Airlines -- have also sought permission from the CAAB to resume flights from Dhaka, the CAAB chairman told The Daily Star.

The CAAB has already permitted Emirates to operate transit flights from Dhaka and it will start operating three flights a week on Dubai-Dhaka-Dubai from June 21.

Emirates would operate one flight each on Saturday, Monday and Thursday, said CAAB sources.

Turkish Airlines and Air Arabia have also shown interest to start flight operation, the CAAB chief said, adding that they were discussing the issues.

"As flight operations on international routes from Bangladesh resumed on a limited scale on July 16, we'll consider allowing other airlines to operate flights if they seek permission," Mafidur said.

On June 1, Civil Aviation authority permitted operation of all domestic flights maintaining social distancing and following health guidelines.

## Just 255 cars

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"We decided to allow only the enlisted four-wheelers. No motorcycles, because maintaining physical distance is not possible on it," he said.

The development comes after the prime minister's Principal Secretary Ahmad Kaikus on Saturday held a meeting with stakeholders over the issue.

Bus and other modes of public transport hit the roads on June 1, but ride-hailing services remained suspended. Companies, including Uber and Pathao, recently wrote to the BRTA, requesting permission to resume operations.

After that did not bear any fruit, Uber Bangladesh Ltd requested the Prime Minister's Office to intervene.

In Saturday's meeting, Uber officials requested permission to resume operation and said they would need some time to get all of their vehicles enlisted with the BRTA, a participant said.

According to a BRTA document, there are some 1.23 lakh vehicles and motorcycles associated with different ride-hailing companies. Of them, 1.04 lakh are motorcycles.

However, only around 1,300 are enlisted with the BRTA under the 12 companies, and most of them are motorcycles, BRTA officials said.

Only 15 cars and 111 motorcycles of Uber and two cars and 116 motorcycles of Pathao have the enlistment certificates, BRTA record shows.

Asked about motorcyclists picking up commuters on the streets, the BRTA acting chairman said mobile courts and law enforcers will take action against them soon.

Meanwhile Bangladesh Ride Sharing Association (BARSA), a platform of 11 ride-sharing service providing companies, said they were deeply disappointed by the BRTA's decision.

It called for immediate resumption for ride sharing service involving all vehicles, including motorcycles, subject to the compliance with the standard operating procedure they proposed to the BRTA, it said in a press statement.

It also asked the BRTA to allow operations of all vehicles registered on ridesharing applications until the enlistment process is fully implemented over a one-year timeline.

## Indonesia's Mt Merapi erupts, spewing ash 6 km high

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesia's Mount Merapi, one of the world's most active volcanoes, erupted twice yesterday, sending clouds of grey ash 6,000 metres into the sky, the country's geological agency said.

The two eruptions lasted around seven minutes, according to the agency, and prompted local authorities to order residents to stay outside a three-kilometre no-go zone around the rumbling crater near Indonesia's cultural capital Yogyakarta.

The agency did not raise the volcano's alert status after the eruptions, but it advised commercial planes to be cautious in the area.

Local media reported that people in neighbouring areas including Sleman and Klaten heard strong rumbling sounds this morning.

Mount Merapi's last major eruption in 2010 killed more than 300 people and forced the evacuation of some 280,000 residents from surrounding areas.

That was its most powerful eruption since 1930, which killed around 1,300 people, while another explosion in 1994 took about 60 lives.