

Will take services to people's doorsteps

IGP reveals plan to mark each union parishad a police beat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed yesterday said every union parishad will be marked as a police beat to take services to people's doorsteps.

A police officer will be given charge of each beat to keep in touch with people and solve their problems, he added. The IGP said this while talking to chiefs of police units through video conferencing.

The IGP, however, said police members must be free from drugs to make it "people's police", according to a press release sent by Police Headquarters.

"No policeman will take drugs, be involved with drugs trade or have relations with drug dealers," he said.

Benazir said he would not accept police members' involvement with corruption. "If someone wants to be rich by corruption, they should quit his job," he said.

Referring to police service during the pandemic, Benazir said people do not have to come to police; police members have gone to the people and served them, going beyond their line of duty.

"We've delivered food, made arrangements for travel, and harvesting paddy. Police members have arranged burial and cremation when relatives of the deceased, infected with Covid-19, did not come near them," he said.



There is a strange connection between rain and football, embedded deep in our instincts. Be it in cities or villages, be it the rich or poor, children or adults, there is an unwritten urge to run outside with a ball and kick it around with friends in the mud and water, at the first sight of a drizzle. This group, spotted near Anandibazar beach area in the port city's Halishahar on Sunday, have the added bonus of the sweeping sea breeze in their background as they leave their worries behind for a brief spell of pure bliss.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

SHEIKH RUSSEL GASTRO LIVER HOSPITAL Covid-19 positive health workers to get priority treatment

BMA demands dedicated beds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sheikh Russel Gastro Liver Institute and Hospital in Dhaka has been designated for priority treatment of coronavirus-positive health workers.

Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has already sent a letter to the hospital authorities asking to take necessary steps in this regard, Aminul Hasan, director (hospital) of DGHS, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The order came on Saturday just hours after Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) wrote to the health minister urging him to dedicate Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University or any other hospital for treating doctors infected with the virus.

In the strongly-worded letter, BMA asked the health minister to do so within three days or else the ministry or the DGHS will be held responsible for "any situation that may arise".

Prof Faruk Ahmed, director of Sheikh Russel Gastro Liver Institute and Hospital, said he received DGHS's letter and would take necessary steps.

The DGHS letter signed by Aminul Hasan said that many doctors, nurses and other health workers who are working in the frontline of the battle against Covid-19 have already gotten infected and died.

But if health workers cannot be provided proper treatment quickly, healthcare services for all kinds of patients would face irreparable loss and the ongoing health service system would be hampered, read the letter.

"Against the backdrop, your hospital has been dedicated for providing health service to Covid-19 infected doctors, nurses and other health service providers and for providing all indoor and outdoor services. Take necessary step in this regard," the letter also read.

Contacted, BMA Secretary General Md Ehteshamul Huq Choudhury,

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Private universities demand cheap internet for students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Private universities in a statement yesterday called for introduction of special and affordable internet packages for students' convenience in attending online classes.

These special packages will be for students only and can be offered through the universities.

The Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB), in a statement yesterday also demanded that the decision of raising supplementary duty on mobile phone services be scrapped.

"We believe that costlier mobile internet will add to the burden of students, who are now taking classes online," APUB chairman Sheikh Kabir Hossain said in the statement.

"We urge the government to abolish supplementary duty for students. We also urge the government to provide high-speed internet for free at all public and private universities for the sake of students," he said.

Covid-19 testing at DU resumes today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University authorities are set to resume coronavirus testing facilities at its laboratories from today.

Prof Sharif Akhteruzzaman, convener of university's coronavirus response technical committee, confirmed this to The Daily Star, adding that DU will bear the expenses.

"Given the current situation of the country, we felt that we should stand by the countrymen, and the health ministry also requested us to resume testing. Besides, the laboratory apparatus were likely to be returned to the departments as there was a possibility of reopening of the university, so we postponed the decisions," said Prof Sharif, adding "Since the university has not reopened, we decided to resume testing."

Prof Sharif said the ministry will provide testing kits and PPE. The university authorities will bear other costs.

The testing will be conducted at the lab set up in Centre for Advanced Research at social sciences faculty building, he added. The DU authorities on June 1 stopped coronavirus testing facilities at its laboratories citing fund crisis and the need for returning the laboratory apparatus, which were being used in the labs, to the respective departments.

Raise awareness through religious establishments

MJF urges ministry about violence on women, children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights organisation Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) has urged the religious affairs ministry to raise awareness on violence against women and children through different religious institutions during the coronavirus pandemic.

It also expressed interest in taking part in the campaign with the help of the ministry.

"We have seen that people are keen to accept messages that are interpreted from a religious standpoint. People value information circulated from religious institutions," reads a press release of MJF, issued yesterday.

The ministry works with all kinds of religious institutions, the statement said, adding that MJF thinks the ministry

can spread these messages or slogans through mosques, temples, churches and monasteries.

A telesurvey report by MJF shows that a total of 13,494 women and children experienced domestic and other violence during the countrywide shutdown in 53 districts of the country last month.

An alarming 4,160 of the victims admitted that they were abused for the first time in their life.

MJF observed that the number of incidents of violence against women and children increased in May by 31 percent compared to April.

MJF also is preparing some slogans and messages and sending those to the ministry so that they can circulate it through the Islamic Foundation, the statement said.

Ducusu's extended tenure ends; Nur wants extension

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Central Students' Union's (Ducusu) incumbent committee's extended 90-day tenure ended yesterday. However, vice president Nurul Haque Nur has asked for further extension.

On the other hand, General Secretary Golam Rabbani and Assistant General Secretary Saddam Hossain said they would leave their posts.

AGS Saddam Hossain said it was "immoral and undemocratic" to hold office in violation of the constitution, our DU correspondent reports.

He said this in reference to Section-C of Article-6 of the Ducusu charter. As per the charter, after the end of the one-year tenure of Ducusu, it gets an automatic extension for another 90 days.

"The elected office bearers shall hold office for 365 days. In case the election is not held in time, the elected committee shall continue for a further period not exceeding 90 days or until holding of the election, whichever is earlier, after which the union shall stand dissolved automatically," according to the university charter.

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Bangladesh should raise voice for unpaid returnee migrant workers: experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As a major labour-exporting country, Bangladesh should raise its voice to realise unpaid dues of migrant workers, since many of them were repatriated arbitrarily in the wake of coronavirus pandemic, migration experts and advocacy groups said yesterday.

A global campaign called "wage theft" has been taking shape for quite some time, and Bangladesh should raise its demands there. For this, comprehensive documentation on migrant workers' grievances is required, they told a webinar.

Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) organised the webinar on "The other face of globalisation: Arbitrary return of Bangladeshi migrants and their unpaid dues", the first installment of a series.

Migration expert Prof CR Abrar said civil societies across Asia vehemently started the "wage theft" campaign. "We need to be part of it," he said, terming unpaid dues of migrant workers "lost remittance".

Many Bangladeshi migrant workers have been repatriated arbitrarily during the coronavirus pandemic, who have remained deprived of their due payments, he added.

William Gois, coordinator of regional civil society group Migrant Forum in Asia, said states were unfortunately not documenting their learning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As countries of origin began repatriation processes, it is important that they document grievances of repatriated migrant workers, he said.

The embassy should seek the power of attorney from migrant workers so that they can follow up with these cases even after the worker has returned to their home country, he added.

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HOMESPUN INNOVATION: Like every mother willing to go the extra mile to keep their children safe, this woman has fashioned a plastic face shield to give her baby boy some additional protection over the face mask. The duo were visiting Dhaka medical College Hospital on Sunday for a check-up.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



Prospective customers check electric mosquito racquets from a wide selection, at the Gulistan Sundarban Square Market in the capital. With the looming menace of mosquitoes at the start of the rainy season, sales of such products are peaking. The photo was taken earlier this week.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Brac University developing online learning platform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brac University is developing an online learning platform titled "buX", based on a world-class platform developed by MIT and Harvard.

It will enable students to learn wherever they are, whatever their internet connectivity is, and make learning interactive, said a press release yesterday.

Authorities recognised issues with online learning in the previous session, and have thus implemented this industrial, high-grade solution. Online learning on buX will be different from online classes conducted by faculty members, said Brac Vice Chancellor Prof Vincent Chang.

"The transition to online learning on buX will also allow us to start modernising our courses and bringing them up to international standards," he said.

"To make learning feasible for students with poor internet connectivity, we have been working to find proper solutions. These include internet packs and broadband solutions in some cases. In necessary cases, the university will provide hardware for the most at-risk students," the release said.

9 penalised for selling unlicensed sanitisers

Mobile court seizes product worth Tk 1 lakh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

A mobile court of Barishal District Administration in association with the Drug Administration seized a huge quantity of fake hand sanitisers and penalised nine persons in the city's Hemayetuddin and Chawkbazar areas yesterday.

The court fined seven retailers a total of Tk 23,000 and seized the sanitisers worth Tk 1 lakh from their possession, confirmed Executive Magistrate Ziaur Rahman who led the drive.

Moreover, it sentenced two people -- Sajol Samadder Rajib (34), and his associate Mostofa Kamal -- to one year's imprisonment each for supplying such sanitisers.

The executive magistrate told The Daily Star that the two convicts confessed to supplying the items after having those delivered from Dhaka by a courier service company.

"When we conducted the mobile court, the retailers let us know about Sajol and Mostofa. Later, we asked them over mobile phone to come here," said Ziaur.

The duo collect those fake items from a man, who is a medicine trader in the capital's Mitford area, Ziaur quoted Rajib as saying.

Auditi Swarna, drug superintendent of the Drug Administration, said "During the raid, we found that the products were being sold in the name of many reputed manufacturing companies."

The operation will continue, she added. Earlier on June 15, fake medicine and sanitisers worth Tk 10 crore were seized in the city's Sagardi Dargabari area and two people were sentenced to one year's imprisonment each in this regard.