

COVID-19 ICU IN SYLHET DIVISION Unaffordable, inaccessible

The poor left to suffer as 32 out of 46 dedicated ICU beds are at private hospitals; all in Sylhet city

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

Heart patient Syed Shofiqul Alam, 75, from Habiganj's Nabiganj upazila, was admitted at the general ward of Sylhet's North East Medical College Hospital on June 11 with fever.

A day later, he was shifted to the private hospital's intensive care unit (ICU) which is for coronavirus patients. There he passed away on June 14. Tests showed Shofiqul was Covid-19 positive.

His grandson Fakhrul Alam said it cost them over Tk 1 lakh, which includes that for two-days' ICU support and medicine bought from pharmacies outside.

While Shofiqul's family could bear the cost, such expenses are unaffordable to many in Sylhet division.

Dr Naseem Ahmed, the president of Private Hospital and Diagnostic Centre Owners Association, at a press conference on June 8 encouraged Covid-19 patients to look for treatment at government hospitals, where the cost is almost zero while private medical care is expensive.

But the reality is 32 out of the 46 ICU beds for Covid-19 treatment in Sylhet division are at private hospitals -- 20 at NEMCH and 12 at Mount Adora Hospital. All of the 46 are in Sylhet city.

The only public hospital with ICU facility for coronavirus patients in the division is Sylhet Saheed Shamsuddin Ahmed Hospital, managed under MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital (SOMCH).

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Two men sitting atop the furniture and luggage being carried on a truck. Middle- and lower-income families leaving the capital has become a common sight lately, as the financial fallout from the Covid-19 outbreak and shutdown has made it impossible for many to cover living expenses. The photo was taken in Gabtoli area yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

CASE UNDER DSA Journo Kajol denied bail by Dhaka court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A virtual court in Dhaka yesterday rejected photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol's bail petition in a case filed under the Digital Security Act.

Metropolitan Magistrate Dhiman Chandra Mondol of Virtual Court-4 passed the order after Kajol's lawyer submitted the petition in an email.

During yesterday's hearing held over video link, Barrister Jyotimoy Barua told the court that Kajol has been in jail since his arrest on May 3.

Moreover, the charges against Kajol are false and fabricated, he said and appealed to the court for bail.

The prosecutor said the accused committed a crime by making derogatory remarks on Facebook about a lawmaker and the bail petition should be rejected.

The court then rejected the bail petition.

On Tuesday, Kajol was named as the accused

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Birdem doctors outraged over salary cuts

Say authorities made the decision arbitrarily

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Resident medical officers of Dhaka's Birdem General Hospital said the authorities cut their monthly salaries and other benefits although they were treating patients amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Such arbitrary decisions came as a blow to the morale of trainee physicians who are working tirelessly in this diabetic hospital, they opined.

In a letter to the hospital authorities on June 9, the RMOs mentioned that the authorities did not even consult them while slashing their monthly pay and festival bonuses. They added that they did not get the newly introduced Baishakh festival bonus in April.

Each RMO receives a nominal monthly pay of Tk 30,000. According to the RMOs, they were not paid their full salaries for the last two months.

Birdem authorities, however, said their payment was not cut; instead it was being delayed and would be given soon.

The authorities added that they were compelled to make the decision as their

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangladesh's bid for UN membership



A scientist of the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research presents a newly-invented jute-made clothing product 'juton' to Bangabandhu on June 22, 1972.

June 25, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGLADESH WILL SEEK UN MEMBERSHIP IN THE UPCOMING GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

A spokesperson of the foreign ministry informs that Bangladesh will apply for UN membership in the upcoming session of the General Assembly which will begin in the third week of September. According to UN rules, Bangladesh will submit its application 35 days before commencement of the session.

Diplomatic sources observe that Bangladesh's inclusion in the UN is almost certain as four out of five permanent members of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

ROHINGYA REFUGEES Dozens died at sea during voyage to Malaysia

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

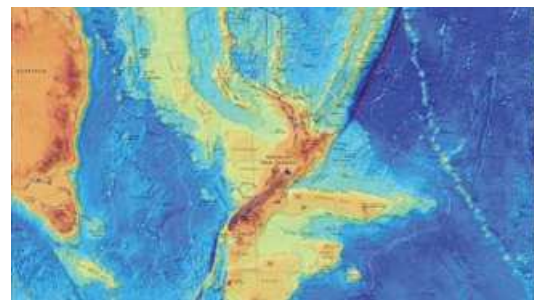
Survivors from a boat crammed with over 300 Rohingya Muslim refugees told Malaysian authorities that dozens of their people perished and their bodies were thrown in the sea during a tortuous four-month voyage.

The head of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) described the ordeal suffered by Rohingya whose damaged boat had made land on the Malaysian island of Langkawi on June 8, with 269 people aboard.

More than 300 Rohingya had been transferred to this boat from a larger "motherboat" half-way through a voyage that began close to the Myanmar-Bangladesh border back in February,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Maps reveal new details about NZ's lost continent



CNN ONLINE

Under New Zealand, there lies a vast continent on the sea floor.

Once part of the same land mass as Antarctica and Australia, the lost continent of Zealandia broke off 85 million years ago and eventually sank below the ocean, where it stayed largely hidden for centuries.

Now, maps reveal new research about the underwater continent where dinosaurs once roamed -- and allow the public to virtually explore it.

GNS Science, a New Zealand research institute, published two new maps and an interactive website on Monday. The maps cover the shape of the ocean floor and Zealandia's tectonic profile, which collectively help tell the story of the continent's origins.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

2 killed in 'gunfights' with law enforcers

STAR REPORT

An alleged drug peddler was killed in a "gunfight" with Rab in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat early yesterday.

The dead is Rabiul Islam Mintu, 40, son of Abdul Jalil, of Uttar Gopalpur village in Joypurhat Sadar upazila.

Mohaimenur Rashid, commanding officer of Rab-5 in Joypurhat, said Mintu was made accused in at least 19 cases with different police stations. Drug peddling, abduction and attacking the BGB members were some of the charges brought against him.

According to the Rab officials, a team conducted an anti-drug raid near Sluice Gate at Ratanpur village in Panchbibi upazila around 3:30 am. Sensing their presence, the drug dealers' gang opened fire, forcing them to retaliate.

At one point of the "gunfight", Rab members found Mintu's body lying

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

CMCH doctor dies of Covid-19

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

Associate professor and head of the orthopedics department at Chattogram Medical College Hospital, Dr Samirul Islam died from Covid-19 yesterday afternoon.

Dr Sheikh Fazle Rabbi, Chattogram Civil Surgeon, said 220 doctors in Chattogram tested positive. Of them, eight, including Samirul, died.

He was undergoing treatment at CMCH since May 21 and was given plasma therapy on May 26.

After testing negative for Covid-19 two consecutive times, his lungs were still in bad shape, said

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Staffers of a jewellers' in New Market sitting outside the shop, idling away time. Even though the shutdown for Covid-19 was partially withdrawn nearly three weeks ago, large businesses and shops are yet to see the usual turnout of customers.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Covid crisis sinks global economy

IMF predicts world GDP to plunge 4.9 percent as cases soar in Asia, Americas

AFP, Washington

The IMF yesterday laid out the unprecedented economic devastation caused by the coronavirus pandemic, with \$12 trillion forecasted to be wiped out worldwide, even as infections surge in Latin America and across large parts the US.

The International Monetary Fund said that this "crisis like no other" would send the global GDP plunging by 4.9 this year -- and the prospects for recovery were steeped in "pervasive uncertainty".

As many countries emerge from lockdowns hoping to resurrect their economies, the IMF warned that a second wave of infections could mean its already grim World Economic Outlook update underestimates the damage.

It said that many countries will face a recession more than double that which they suffered during the global financial crisis in 2008-2009.

The IMF forecast that China, where the virus emerged late last year, would be the only economy that grows this year, by just one percent.

The United States was forecast to shrink by eight percent, Germany slightly less, while France, Italy, Spain and Britain would all suffer double-digit contractions.

On top of erasing an astonishing \$12 trillion (10.6 trillion euros) over two years, the report said the crisis

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

PRAYER TIMING JUNE 25

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:05	12:45	5:00	6:52	8:17
JAMAT 4:50	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION