

UP CHAIRMEN, MEMBERS ACC to probe allegations of rice graft against them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has decided to launch an inquiry into corruption allegations against 30 Union Parishad (UP) chairpersons and 64 members. There are allegations against them of misappropriating rice and relief materials allocated for poor during the coronavirus pandemic, said ACC.

Following recommendations of an evaluation committee led by ACC Director General AKM Sohel, the commission has decided to initiate an inquiry, ACC Public Relations Officer Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya confirmed yesterday.

ACC Chairman Iqbal Mahmood said they have already filed 21 cases against the UP chairmen and members for their alleged involvement in corruption in social safety programme.

"Many have already been arrested and investigation is being continued," he said, hoping that everyone will perform their duties with utmost honesty in this critical time.

So far ACC has filed 21 cases over misappropriation of rice and relief. In most cases, UP chairpersons and members were made accused.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



URBAN TARZAN ... After being stuck at home for months, this boy finally got a chance to go out for some time under the strict supervision of his guardians over the weekend. And he made the best out of every single moment by either swinging from a tree branch or running around in Hatirjheel. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

It's just a scam

Police on 'disinfecting cards' sold online

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Open the packet, put the card around your neck and it will work as a disinfectant."

This is the sales pitch that a group of people, after opening social media pages, made and started selling a card called "Virus Shut Out". They claimed that the "card" will not allow virus or bacteria to come within three feet of the person wearing it.

Taking opportunity of the panic buying phase during the Covid-19 pandemic, they sold this so-called card on digital platforms. Visiting different social media groups, this newspaper found that these cards were selling for Tk 275 to Tk 900.

They claimed that these cards remain active for 30 days after opening the packet, and are able to kill bacteria and viruses "by spreading chlorine-dioxide".

Law enforcers first learned about this during a drive in the capital's Mouchak area on April 20.

One Tipu Sultan was trying to sell the card through a Facebook group called "Gimama".

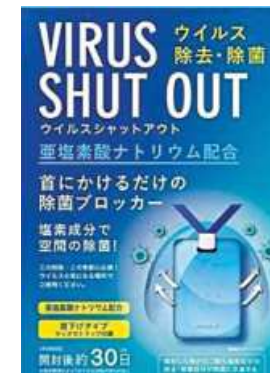
A mobile court of Dhaka District Administration, led by executive magistrate Mahnaz Hossain Fariba, seized around 50 of these cards and fined Tipu Tk 1 lakh for selling the fake product on online platforms.

"It's nothing but a scam," she said.

Fariba told The Daily Star that at the time, Tipu confessed to selling these cards to some government and private organisations. The card is harmful to public health as it spreads CIO2.

She said CIO2 is mainly used for cleaning medical equipment. If anyone breathes in CIO2, it would harm their lungs.

"We are now once again noticing advertisements on social media for



Cops involved with narcotics will be 'removed like cancer'

Says IGP Benazir Ahmed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed issued a stern warning to all members of the force of dire consequences awaiting anyone involved with narcotics in any way.

"When a person has cancer in a part of the body, that part has to be surgically removed," he said after inaugurating the newly-constructed barrack building of Uttara Regional Police Lines of Dhaka Metropolitan Police at Diabari in Uttara.

"If any member of the police is involved in narcotics, they will be ruthlessly removed from Bangladesh Police; no concession will be given in this regard," he said.

Speaking about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the police force and their strategy, the IGP said since the virus was first detected in the country on March 8, police started working to protect people from it, without waiting for protective materials.

"We have prepared a pandemic policing standard operating procedure suitable for Bangladesh Police, by collecting pandemic policing guidelines through embassies of different countries posted in Dhaka, World

Health Organization and international and regional guidelines," he said.

"Now even our police constables know how to do pandemic policing."

The national death rate from Covid-19 infection is around 1.3 percent, but in the police force it is only 0.5 percent, as standard treatment facilities were ensured at police hospitals.

"We have converted the 250-bed central police hospital into a 500-bed hospital within two weeks. We rented a private hospital and set up a PCR laboratory in the central laboratory within 12 days, for treatment of Covid-19 infected police members," said the police chief.

"We are working on bringing Covid-19 infection down to zero," the IGP said.

At the beginning of his speech, the IGP expressed deepest condolences to family members of martyred frontline doctors, health workers, journalists, and others.

DMP Commissioner Shafiqul Islam presided over the programme. Moinur Rahman Chowdhury, additional inspector general of Police Headquarters; and Md Abu Sayed Chowdhury, deputy managing director of Abul Khair Group; also spoke at the ceremony.

Turn Covid-19 challenges into opportunities

Experts tell webinar

UNB, Dhaka

Experts at a virtual dialogue have discussed ways to convert the current challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic into opportunities through proper recovery measures, keeping Bangladesh on the right track of development.

They said Bangladesh must pursue this track as it's a silver lining amid this "truly global catastrophe".

Cosmos Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Cosmos Group, organised the webinar as part of its "Cosmos Dialogue" series. Titled "Impact of Covid-19 on Bangladesh: Prognosis for Recovery" the webinar was held on Friday night, connecting experts from home and abroad virtually.

The programme was chaired by former caretaker government adviser Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, the Principal Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore. Cosmos Foundation Chairperson Enayetullah Khan delivered the welcome speech.

Speakers of the webinar included prominent economist and Chairman of Policy Research Institute Dr Zaidi Sattar, Prof Haider Khan, founder and Chairman of Summit Power International Limited and Summit Holdings Ltd.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

JAHANGIRNAGAR UNIVERSITY Of goats and burglars



Photos of goats walking about JU's SSB Hall premises caused a stir on social media, prompting Provost Azam Ali Talukder to move his livestock from the dorm.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

It's been more than three months since Jahangirnagar University's (JU) lone residential campus has been empty. On March 17, the university authorities asked students to vacate all dormitories due to the coronavirus pandemic.

However, this is not a standalone case, as all educational institutions across the country have remained closed during this time.

What's different about JU is the sheer disarray of its deserted dormitories. For example, if one was to visit the Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall at the beginning, one was more likely to find a goat pen there, rather than the usual hustle and bustle of students.

Alongside the goats, the security of the dorms are another sorry tale. On the night of June 11, at least 17 rooms of Pritilata Hall -- one of the female dormitories -- were broken into and stolen from by yet unidentified burglars.

Meanwhile, students from Jahanara Imam Hall -- another female dorm -- have also alleged that valuables are being stolen from their empty rooms every now and then.

Unable to be present physically, the students are passing their days at home worrying about all the valuables they've left at their dorm rooms, which they didn't really have the time to take home when they left the campus in a hurry.

In light of this, Jahangirnagar Cultural Alliance and Samajtrantik Chhatra Front demanded security on the campus and compensation for the victims of burglary in a press release issued on June 15.

Asked about the security issue, JU Provost Committee President Prof Bashir Ahmed said, "We are facing something of a crisis as some of our guards have

tested positive for Covid-19. However, though understaffed, we have already given direction to all provosts to take appropriate steps to ensure security at the halls."

To investigate the incidents at Pritilata Hall, a four-member probe body has been formed, said Ayesha Siddika, provost of the hall.

She also said the university authorities will ensure compensation in case any student lost any documents.

And as for the goats -- on June 20, a residential student of Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall posted some photos of the benign herbivores on social media. Following his post, this somewhat sensational news made a round on social media this month.

The goats belong to hall provost Prof Ali Azam Talukder. Sources at the hall told this correspondent that Prof Azam started rearing the cattle as a hobby since the dormitory closed.

Requesting anonymity, a guard of the hall said, "We are rearing these animals according to our provost's direction. We are just following orders."

Contacted, the provost confirmed the goat rearing but denied pressuring guards over it.

"Rearing goats is a hobby of mine. But I never pressurised anyone to take care of them," he said.

Some students who have come to visit the hall during the vacation have complained of unhygienic conditions around hall premises. Not only has it become really dirty, it now reeks of goat droppings, they complained.

However, after the news broke on the media, the goat rearing project has been shifted back to the provost's own premises, hall sources told this correspondent.



BACK IN BUSINESS... With the wind on their side, boatmen row these makeshift sailboats on the Buriganga to ferry people from Dhaka to Keraniganj yesterday. Since movement restriction has been eased, these out-of-work boatmen have started to ply their trade on the river, ferrying people from one side to the other for Tk 10.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Three-wheeler driver stabbed dead in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A three-wheeler driver died early yesterday, several hours after he and his friend were stabbed allegedly by a youth following an altercation over hiring his vehicle in Chattogram city's Halishahar area.

Mohammad Sagor (18), driver of a three-wheeler locally known as "tom tom", succumbed to his injuries at Chattogram Medical College Hospital, said police.

Sagor's friend named Raju (18) was undergoing treatment at the same hospital.

The altercation took place between Sagor and a local youth named Fahad in Aziz Mia Masjid area of Tiger Mor at Madham Halishahar on Friday evening.

Fahad apparently wanted to hire his vehicle to go somewhere and the driver did not agree with

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Truck accidents kill 2

STAR REPORT

Two people died in separate truck accidents yesterday, report our correspondents.

In Mymensingh, a truck driver was killed while another truck driver was injured in a road crash at Ramgopalpur area on the Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road yesterday morning, reports our Mymensingh correspondent.

The victim was identified as Md Captain Mia (40), hailing from Sherpur district, police said.

Quoting locals, Officer-in-Charge of Gouripur Police Station Md Borhan Uddin Khan said the accident occurred around 9am as a stone-laden truck bound for Mymensingh collided head-on with another truck coming from the opposite.

The collision critically injured drivers Captain Mia and Liton Mia. Both were rushed to Ishwarganj Upazila Health Complex where doctors later declared Captain Mia dead.

Liton was later referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said the OC.

Police have seized both the vehicles. A case was lodged with Gouripur Police Station in this regard, the OC further added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Zero tolerance for human trafficking: expats' minister

Bangladesh improves on US watchlist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad yesterday said his ministry has been working as per directives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to ensure safe, regular, orderly and responsible labour migration.

The ministry will show zero tolerance against any illegal activities in this regard, he said.

Besides, he reiterated his ministry's stance to overcome shortcomings in the elimination of human trafficking, said a press release.

"The government has zero tolerance policy against heinous crimes like human

trafficking," he said.

He said Bangladesh has been upgraded to "Tier 2" from "Tier 2 Watchlist" in the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report 2020, because of the PM's apt leadership.

Besides, licence suspension of different recruiting agencies for illegal activities, government's awareness campaign and law enforcement agencies' mobility played significant roles in such achievement, he further said.

Alongside different ministries and government agencies, roles of International Organization for Migration, development partners, civil societies and media helped with the zero tolerance policy, he added.



Uttara Bank's 37th Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday at Digital Platform in Dhaka. The meeting was presided over by the Chairman Mr. Azharul Islam. The Vice-Chairman of Uttara Bank Mr. Iftekharul Islam, Director Badrunnessa Sharmin Islam, Managing Director & CEO Mr. Mohammed Rabiul Hossain and other Directors also attended the meeting.