

Simla Conference

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the process, relationship between India and Pakistan is now intertwined with the resolution of the unsettled issues between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Pakistani president Bhutto has been insistent on the return of the 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war detained in India. India has been unwilling to release them without Bangladesh's concurrence. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has reiterated that Pakistani recognition of Bangladesh must precede any other steps towards reconciliation, and he has sought the return of Bangladeshis detained in Pakistan immediately. He has also insisted that India must respect Bangladesh's decision on the fate of Pakistani prisoners of war. Bangladesh is determined to hold trials of the Pakistani war criminals on the soil of the country.

WHO REGIONAL DIRECTOR CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

Dr Gunarathna, South Asian director of the World Health Organisation, calls on Bangabandhu at his official residence. Bangladesh has recently joined the world health body.

RUMANIA RECOGNISES BANGLADESH

Southeastern European country Rumania today accords recognition to Bangladesh. So far 80 countries have recognised the newly-born Bangladesh. Rumania supported Bangladesh's candidacy for membership in World Health Organisation. Rumania also assures Bangladesh of its support for the UN membership.

SOURCE: June 29, 1972 issue of Purbodesh.

Suspect killed

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taking drugs and gambling there" opened fire, forcing police to retaliate, he added.

Sohel suffered bullet injuries during the "gunfight" and died on the spot while his cohorts managed to flee, the OC said.

Police recovered a light gun, alcohol and 65 yaba pills from the spot.

Sohel was accused in two cases -- including one for the murder -- filed with the police station, OC Soful said.

On June 22, Mosaddekur and his younger brother Faisal were stabbed allegedly by Soheli after they protested against drug trading in Bardona area of the upazila. Later, Mosaddekur succumbed to his injuries at Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

RU suspends

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with Motihar Police Station under Sections 25, 29 and 31 of the DSA.

The case statement said, that teacher "criticised" Nasim in two posts on his Facebook profile on June 1 and 2.

At that time, Nasim was battling for life at a hospital after being infected with the coronavirus. The veteran politician died on June 13.

80 homes

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Marma, officer at the Rowangchhari fire station, said two fire engines from Rowangchhari and Bandarban Sadar upazilas doused the flames after fighting the blaze for about three hours.

Mau Sang Marma, a local resident, said his house was burnt down and he couldn't save anything.

Nandon Baua, who lost his house and three shops to the fire, said he had invested Tk 40 lakh in his shops and there was nothing left now.

Trump signs

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Executive Order protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues - and combatting recent Criminal Violence," Trump tweeted.

"Long prison terms for these lawless acts against our Great Country!"

He added: "I was going to go to Bedminster, New Jersey, this weekend, but wanted to stay in Washington, D.C. to make sure LAW & ORDER is enforced."

In Washington, protesters have pulled down a statue of Confederate general Albert Pike, while others this week were unsuccessful in their attack on a statue of President Andrew Jackson, a slave owner, near the White House.

Those who have pulled down or defaced monuments "seek nothing more than to destroy anything that honors our past and to erase from the public mind any suggestion that our past may be worth honoring," the White House said.

The order calls for "enforcement of laws that carry firm penalties of incarceration for those found guilty of desecrating public monuments" -- without announcing any new regulations.

"President Trump will never allow violence to control our streets, rewrite our history, or harm the American way of life," the White House said. The White House announced the cancellation of Trump's weekend trip to Bedminster just hours before he was due to board Air Force One, as concerns grew over a new surge in coronavirus cases across the country.



An Indonesian policeman stands next to Rohingya women at an immigration detention house in Lhokseumawe, Aceh province yesterday. Nearly 100 Rohingya asylum seekers stranded off the coast of Indonesia were pulled to shore on Thursday by locals.

PHOTO: AFP

Volcano that rocked ancient Rome found

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historians now think that an eruption of Alaska's Okmok volcano more than 2,000 years ago was responsible. The massive explosion created a 10-kilometer-wide crater that is still visible today.

"To find evidence that a volcano on the other side of the Earth erupted and effectively contributed to the demise of the Romans and the (ancient) Egyptians and the rise of the Roman Empire is fascinating," said Joe McConnell, a research professor of hydrology at the Desert

Research Institute in Reno, Nevada, and an author of the study, in a news statement.

"People have been speculating about this for many years, so it's exciting to be able to provide some answers," McConnell said.

Caesar's stabbing by Rome's senators triggered a power struggle that ultimately ended the Roman Republic, leading to a shift from a more democratic governance to the dictatorship of the Roman Empire. It also ultimately led to Egypt coming under Roman rule.

The study said that crop failures, famine and disease resulting from the eruption likely exacerbated social unrest and contributed to political realignments at this "critical juncture of Western civilisation."

"While we can't actually prove how the extreme weather and resulting crop failures, food shortages and epidemic disease contributed to the downfall of the Republic 2,000 years ago, it seems only logical that it must have played a significant role," McConnell said.

The team analysed volcanic ash, known as tephra, found trapped in

Arctic ice cores taken from Greenland and Russia to link the period of unexplained extreme climate in the Mediterranean with the massive eruption of Okmok volcano on Unimak Island in the Aleutian Islands chain.

"The tephra match doesn't get any better," said Gill Plunkett, co-author and a reader at the School of Natural and Built Environment at Queen's University Belfast. The study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

2 'NIDs' for 72 names!

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list contains the names of 41 more workers against the same NID.

On the list of Shamsheernagar tea garden workers, Satyanarayan Rajbhar is the 110th entry with his NID listed as 5815685. This is followed by 29 other workers' names against the same NID, including that of Nunu Mia, who is a microbus driver from Singrauli village in Shamsheernagar.

NIDs usually have 13 digits or 17 digits (with the addition of the birth year), with the exception of smart card NIDs which have 10 digits.

"I found allegations of nepotism and irregularities in the list. Besides, few of the listed are not even registered tea garden workers," said Nipendra Bauri, president of Shamsheernagar Tea Garden Panchayat.

Along with Srikanta Kanu, Panchayat General Secretary Nipendra

filed a complaint with the upazila nirbahi officer on June 16. In their complaint, they stated that tea workers' names were omitted with the UP chairman and ward UP member including names of their choosing instead.

According to the Kamalganj upazila office of the social services department, these lists were prepared by the workers' representatives and local officials. The lists were signed by the respective tea garden panchayat president, local union parishad chairman and member and manager of the tea garden concerned.

For example, the union parishad chairman of Shamsheernagar union, the manager of the tea garden, and the tea garden panchayat president, signed the tea garden workers' list on November 2 last year after checking and sorting the prepared lists.

US hits record daily cases

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Much of the Western world is pressing ahead with lifting restrictions on daily life despite warnings from health officials that haste could cost more lives.

"We are facing a serious problem in certain areas," leading US immunologist Anthony Fauci said at the first briefing in two months by the White House's Coronavirus Task Force.

"The only way we're going to end it is by ending it together," he said of the outbreak.

The US is recording more than 30,000 cases daily. With nearly 125,000 lives lost, it has by far the highest confirmed death toll in the world.

Texas had been among the most aggressive states in easing curbs but its strategy has backfired with the nation's second most populous state seeing several daily records in the number of new infections.

"It is clear that the rise in cases is largely driven by certain types of activities, including Texans congregating in bars," Governor Greg Abbott said.

BORDER WRANGLING
European diplomats said they planned to exclude the US from travel to the continent when the bloc's external frontier reopens on July 1.

EU envoys have argued on drawing up criteria and sources told AFP a meeting on Friday ended with a tentative list of about 18 countries free to travel.

With nations around the world at different stages on the outbreak curve, agreeing on "travel corridors" has proved tricky.

Britain said it will lift its two-week quarantine rule for visitors arriving from some "low-risk" countries after pressure from airlines.

Sweden lashed out at the World Health Organization for listing it among countries deemed at-risk. The

country made headlines for its high death toll after opting not to introduce a strict lockdown.

"We have an increase in cases because we have begun testing much more in Sweden the past week," said Swedish state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell.

More than 494,000 people worldwide have now died from the virus and the number of cases is expected to reach 10 million in the next week.

Much of the global count has come from Latin America, where Brazil, the hardest-hit nation in the region, has logged almost 55,000 deaths and more than 1.2 million cases.

In neighbouring Argentina President Alberto Fernandez announced a tightening of lockdown measures in the capital as cases spike, adding people could only leave home "to fetch provisions for daily life".

With much of the world under

lockdown for months, the virus has crippled economies and signs of the damage have been widespread.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned the country's economic problems will worsen if the virus spreads unchecked, saying the initial momentum to contain it had since "waned".

The Islamic republic has struggled to curb the outbreak since it reported its first cases in the Shia holy city of Qom in February.

It shut down non-essential businesses, closed schools and cancelled public events in March, but the government gradually lifted restrictions from April to try to reopen the country's sanctions-hit economy.

Egypt lifted many of its restrictions yesterday while continuing to apply certain precautionary measures. The religious endowments ministry reopened mosques as churches prepared to receive worshippers once again.

Govt mulls

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exams would begin 15 days after return of normalcy from the coronavirus situation. As it is a public exam, it may put lakhs of people, including students, guardians, and members of law enforcement agencies, at health risk.

"So we are considering to cut short exam days and subjects of the HSC exams," she said.

The HSC and its equivalent exams were scheduled to be on April 1. More than one million students are expected to take the exams at over 9,000 educational institutions across the country.

Dipu Moni said they may expand the academic calendar for the secondary students to February next year to make up for academic losses caused by the school closure.

Other alternatives like reducing the school syllabus and shortening holidays were also under consideration, she said.

"We cannot take classes for more than 140 to 142 days in an academic year as there are various vacations and programmes. So we are thinking about cutting the holidays for the rest of the tenure of the 2020 academic year and 2021 academic year," she added.

Emeritus Professor Manzoor Ahmed of Brac University proposed cancelling the Primary Education Completion Examinations (PECE) and equivalent exams after class-V and Junior School Certificate (JSC) and equivalent exams after class-VIII for at least the current academic year.

Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education, demanded the government cancel its decision of raising supplementary duty on mobile phone services so that students can avail online education without having any additional financial burden on them.

Dipu Moni said she believes that the government would reduce the supplementary duty on mobile phone services.

Secondary and Higher Education Secretary Mahbub Hossain and leaders of Education Reporters Association of Bangladesh, Mostak Ahmed and Sabbir Newaj, also spoke at the programme.

Rain, river

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The char areas and the low-lying areas along the river have been submerged. Many varieties of vegetables, nuts, maize and aman seedbeds have been submerged under the floodwaters.

Nazrul Islam, 55, a flood-hit farmer at Shiberkuti village in Dharla River shoul of Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila, said their aman seedbed and nuts had been submerged. He and his family members took shelter on the WDB dyke with their cattle as the water level of the Dharla river water rose yesterday morning.

Contacted, Lalmonirhat's deputy commissioner Abu Jafor said the district administration has already started distributing the relief materials among the victims and that they have enough stock.

In the north-eastern region, many low-lying areas of Sylhet and Sunamganj have been inundated by the flash flood.

Over one lakh people of the two districts have been marooned, said WDB officials.

The Surma was flowing 40cm and 46cm above the danger level respectively in Sylhet's Kanaighat and Sunamganj's Sadar upazilas yesterday, according to WDB officials.

The Jadukata river was flowing 121cm above danger level in Laurer Garh area of Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila.

Sabibur Rahman, executive engineer at BWDB in Sunamganj, said road communication was being disrupted due to the flood.

Meanwhile, a 10-year-old boy and a 60-year-old man died after a boat capsized in the stormy wave at a haor near Dhar village of Derai upazila in the district, said KM Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Derai Police Station.

The water levels of all rivers surrounding Sylhet are rising fast, and therefore, the flood situation may be prolonged, said Shahiduzzaman Sarkar, executive engineer of BWDB in Sylhet.

In Jamalpur, low lying areas in Islampur and Dewanganj upazilas have been inundated by flash flood causing immense sufferings to people.

The Jamuna was flowing 25cm above the danger mark at Bahadurabad Ghat point in Dewanganj upazila yesterday, according to WDB officials.

Flood water has already engulfed 1,575 hectares of jute fields, 113 hectares of Aus, 10 hectares of vegetables and 1.5 hectares of seedbeds in the district, said Aminul Islam, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension in Jamalpur.

In Netrokona, fresh areas of at least six unions of Kalmakanda upazila were inundated due to onrush waters from across the border yesterday morning.

Some 300 families were marooned and around 250 ponds were affected so far. Roads at some areas have also been damaged.

Contacted, Kalmakanda Upazila Nirbahi Officer Sohel Rana said they were preparing a list of the flood-hit people to distribute relief materials.

Our correspondents from Lalmonirhat, Sylhet, Jamalpur and Mymensingh contributed to this report.