

Your Right to Know

16 Pages Price: Tk12.00

DISTANCE LEARNING DURING PANDEMIC

## Digital divide leaves many behind

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Many students from rural and poor families are not being able to access the distance learning adopted by schools due to the pandemic.

As students who do not have TV or internet at home are being left behind, the educational inequalities will exacerbate, experts fear.

Only 44 percent of the children aged between 5 and 11 in rural areas have a TV at home. In urban areas, it is 75 percent, according to the government's Covid-19 Response Plan for Education Sector.

In the richest and poorest quintiles, just 6 percent and 90 percent of the children have a TV at home, it adds. Similarly, only 3 percent of the children

in rural areas and close to 0 percent from the poorest quintile are blessed with a computer at home, it reveals.

Internet access is limited to 30 percent of them in rural areas, and 7 percent in the poorest quintile, says the plan finalised

**HAVE TVS AT HOME** 

>> **44**% 5-11-year-olds in rural areas

>> 75% in urban areas

>> **6**% from poorest quintile

>> **90**% from richest quintile

HAVE COMPUTERS AT HOME >> 3% of homes in rural areas

>> Almost **0**%from poorest quintile

recently **DEEPER DIVIDES** 

Siddiqur Rahman, a chief consultant of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board, said the biannual assessment for grade 3, 5, 6 and 8 students has repeatedly found a gap between rural and urban students'

Rural students also lag behind their urban counterparts in public exams, and the Covid-19 pandemic will aggravate the SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Women most of whom are domestic helps pleading with an officer to let them into a neighbourhood in Wari. The authorities locked down the area yesterday for 21 days to curb the spread of coronavirus. But underprivileged women are the ones who get hit the hardest during such situations.

### Wari goes into 21-day lockdown

Unb, Dhaka

The capital's Wari was put under strict lockdown for 21 days from yesterday morning as it was identified as a "Red Zone" due to high Covid-19 infection

Tipu Sultan Road, Jahangir Road, Dhaka-Sylhet highway (Joykali temple to Baldha Garden) in outer road and Lalmini road, Hare Road, War Road, Rankin Street and Nawab Street in inner Wari went under lockdown from 8:00am.

The lockdown will remain in force until July 25 to contain the transmission of the virus.

Earlier on Tuesday, Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh explained in detail about putting Wari under lockdown.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

BANGLADESH New cases in 24hrs





1,59,679 Total cases





## **70,721** Recoveries

## Wake up and halt virus

WHO urges countries as global coronavirus cases rise to more than 11 million

The World Health Organization has urged countries hit by serious coronavirus outbreaks to "wake up" to the realities on the ground instead of bickering, and to "take control" as global coronavirus cases exceeded 11 million.

"People need to wake up. The data is not lying. The situation on the ground is not . lying," WHO emergencies director Michael Ryan told journalists at a briefing on Friday hosted by the UN correspondents' association in Geneva.

Touching almost every country on Earth

since it emerged in China late last year, the coronavirus has hit more than 11 million people and killed nearly 530,000 people worldwide. The number of cases is more than double

the figure for severe influenza illnesses recorded annually, according to the World Health Organization. Many hard-hit countries are easing

lockdowns put in place to slow the spread of the coronavirus while making extensive alterations to work and social life that could last for a year or more until a vaccine

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3 NEW STRAIN MORE INFECTIOUS -- PAGE 6

#### **BUSINESS ISPs threaten**

internet blackout

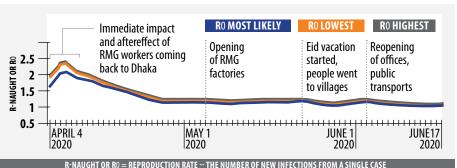
**Broadband** service providers are threatening to switch off internet connectivity for one or two hours every week from August if the government does not enforce the same VAT rate for them and their customers.

Currently internet usage comes with a 5 per cent VAT while the businesses pay 15 per cent on bandwidth purchase and 15 per cent on transmission purchases. The ISPs say they would otherwise pass the bill onto end users, meaning the most popular Tk 1,000 monthly package could end up costing Tk 1,300. As of May, Bangladesh had 80.84 lakh active broadband connections.

STORY ON B1

## VIRUS REPRODUCTION RATE

## Data shows drop, experts doubtful



MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Government data shows the reproduction registered on April 9, shows the data. rate of the novel coronavirus has declined over the past few weeks, but experts doubt it, saying the number of Covid-19 tests has been inadequate to come to such conclusions.

The rate, also called the R-naught, dropped to an average of 1.05 by the end of last month from the average of 1.6 in April and 1.17 in May, according to data of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

It was recorded further down at 1.03 on July 2 while the highest -- 2.1 -- was

representation of the number of new infections estimated to result from a single case. Lower R-naught score means fewer new cases and higher score means the opposite.

It gives insightful information that helps policymakers decide when to enforce strict lockdowns and when to lift the restrictions, said experts.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

### Covid-19 death toll almost 2k

3,288 more test positive; 29 die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-nine people died from Covid-19 in the 24 hours till 2:30pm yesterday, said the Directorate General of Health Services.

The death toll rose to 1,997, which is 1.26 percent of all confirmed cases.

Besides, 3,288 more people tested positive for the coronavirus, taking the number of confirmed cases to 1,59,679, said Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general of DGHS,

during vesterday's briefing Over the same period, 2,673 more Covid-19

patients recovered. The total number of recovered patients has now reached 70,721 -- 44.29 percent of all confirmed cases in the country. SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Two boys helping their

grandmother sit in

## Latifur Rahman

1945-2020

#### When Great Trees Fall

By Maya Angelou

When great trees fall, rocks on distant hills shudder. lians hunker down in tall grasses, and even elephants lumber after safety.

When great trees fall in forests small things recoil into silence, their senses eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die, the air around us becomes light, rare, sterile. We breathe, briefly. Our eyes, briefly, see with a hurtful clarity. Our memory, suddenly sharpened, examines, gnaws on kind words unsaid, promised walks never taken.

Great souls die and our reality, bound to them, takes leave of us. Our souls, dependent upon their nurture now shrink, wizened, Our minds, formed and informed by their radiance, fall away. We are not so much maddened as reduced to the unutterable ignorance

of dark, cold caves. And when great souls die, after a period peace blooms, slowly and always irregularly. Spaces fill

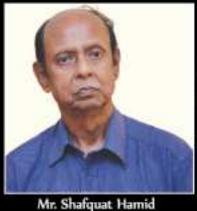
with a kind of soothing electric vibration Our senses, restored, never to be the same, whisper to us. They existed. They existed. We can be. Be and be better. For they existed.

> With love and respect Erum, Imran, Faiza

front of Mugda General Hospital in the capital. The woman, aged over 65, has underlying medical conditions. She has been suffering from breathing difficulties for a few days. She went there to get tested for Covid-19 yesterday, but fainted while waiting outside in the scorching heat.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## IN MEMORIAM



1939-2020

Mr. Shafquat Hamid (81), the last survivor (elder son) of Moulvi Abdul Hamid (Ex-Education Minister of East Pakistan 1947-54) and Jamalara Begum and grandson of Moulvi Abdul Kadir, Pathantoola Ministerbari expired on June 1, 2020, with kidney complications. Large hearted, generous and a good soul Shafquat Hamid retired in 1996 after serving PIA, KLM and GULF AIR. He also worked with Carlowitch & Co. (Germany), Bexmico, Highspeed and Rangs Group. May Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala grant him Jannah.

- Loving daughter Rafiqa Hamid (Nazrana)

### DENGUE THIS YEAR

## Danger not over yet

HELEMUL ALAM

Though the number of dengue cases reported is so far low compared to last year, experts are warning of an outbreak as July to September is the period when cases are likely to peak.

"We are still getting high density of Aedes mosquito at different parts of the capital for which we may say there is a possibility of increasing dengue cases in August," said Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist of Jahangirnagar University.

Under a Jahangirnagar University project, his team worked in six areas of Dhaka city in June -- Uttara, Gulshan-Banani, Paribagh, Lalmatia-Shyamoli, Shakharibazar and Khilgaon-Taltola -- and found the Breteau Index (BI) over 20, which is an alarming level of Aedes mosquito density. SEE PAGE 2 COL 1 after 7 years

She was around 11-year-old when she first came to Dhaka in 2012 to work as a domestic help from Dinajpur.

On September 27, 2013, Khushi Ara Akter suddenly go out from her employer house no 91 of Block-B of Gulshan without informing anyone.

Rajshahi to meet with her parents,

very relieved the girl can finally be returned Masuduzzaman Sarker, Khushi's employer and a businessman.

national media platforms, according

But Khushi's father Azizur Rahman, a day labourer, issued a complaint against Masuduzzaman, his wife Shawkat Ara Sheuli, his brother Sayed Ali Shah and their driver Khogendra

said the girl went missing, said District

report with court and the case the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI).

with the court after investigation, and the plaintiff again issued a noconfident petition. The court then handed over the investigation to the Criminal Investigation Department. The CID had been investigating the case for the past seven years.

After the rescue, Khushi informed police that she forgot her way back after she left the house seven years ago. Monowara Begum, a cleaner of Gulshan-1 DCC market, had found her on the street crying, said DC

As Khushi couldn't give any specific information to Monowara, she took the girl home and raised her for the last seven years, he said.

Anwar Hossain Khan, sub-inspector Gulshan police, who rescued

the girl, said Khushi recently told Monowara that she was able to identify the house where she worked.

On June 29, Khushi was searching the area to locate her employer's house. When she was about to return to the slum after no luck, a security guard of the house identified her

and informed Masuduzzaman, said SI

then submitted an Masud application to Gulshan police, after which Khushi was rescued.

Investigation Officer and CID Sub-Inspector Jabirul Islam produced Khushi in front of Dinajpur court on Thursday. But her parents were missing and the court then ordered to keep the girl in a victim support centre, said police.

SI Anwar said the victim's father allegedly made a settlement with Masud after not getting any trace of his daughter for the last seven years and also took some money.

When Aziz learned about Khushi, he went into hiding, claimed SI Anwar, adding, "We are suspecting that he is hiding in fear of the settlement and returning the money [he took from Masud].

Police is now looking for Aziz to hand over Khushi to her family, he



A man plays in a flooded road during heavy rains in Mumbai, India, yesterday.

## Data shows drop, experts doubtful

The IEDCR said it has been gathering data on R-naught since early April, and it has so far worked on more than 50,000 coronavirus cases and those who came in their contact. The Daily Star has obtained the data.

The development comes amid a continuous surge in Covid-19 infections and deaths in the country. Till yesterday, 159,679 have been found coronavirus positive, and the death toll reached 1,997. The first coronavirus case was reported on March 8.

Talking about the IEDCR data, its Principal Scientific Officer ASM Alamgir said, "The R0 is going down because people are following the health guidelines to some extent."

He, however, admitted that the Covid-19 situation was not under control. "The R0 should have been below 1," he said.

The R0 trend appeared to be similar in neighboring India. According to a recent report of The New Indian Express, the R0 was 1.22 before June 7, but it came down to 1.15 in the week of June 7-14.

It happened despite a rapid and worrying surge in Covid-19 cases in several parts of the country.

Some experts have meanwhile questioned the credibility of the DCR data and its ability to depict the real Covid-19 situation.

Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed, former

control at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said R0 depends on data quality. "I don't know whether the contact tracing was done properly.'

Dr Jahidur Rahman, virologist and assistant professor at Shahid Suhrawardy Medical College, said, "We can't be complacent about this data. The R0 is low as the number of tests is also low. The data will be significant only when there will be massive testing.

According to www.worldometers. info, 5,070 out of every one million people in the country have so far been tested, whereas the number is 109,668 in the United States, 92,222 in Italy and 6,913 in India.

The government has managed to test only about one out of every 250 people, which is direly inadequate to get any conclusive picture of the real Covid-19 situation on the ground, said experts.

Asked, ASM Alamgir contested these observations and said, "People have a misconception that we don't do any contact tracing. We certainly do this.'

He also claimed that sample size did not matter for getting credible

He said the R0 had increased after a two-month-long shutdown, driven by the coronavirus, was relaxed in May. "If you see the data, you will

director of communicable disease find that the R0 was rising when the shutdown was eased. But then it declined again gradually.

> was spreading mainly by those were not showing any symptoms.

> Replying to a query, Alamgir said, The number of covid-19 cases did not surge suddenly. So, the case numbers will also not fall abruptly."

> The lead virologist at the IEDCR hoped that the ongoing zone-wise lockdown would bring good results in the fight against Covid-19 and that the R0 would continue to fall till the end of this month.

He, however, feared it might rise again in August during the Eidul-Azha holidays when people's

Husain, IEDCR consultant and epidemiologist, said, "R0 above one means it is still dangerous. Although the infection rate is decreasing, the number of infected patients is increasing horizontally.

He also said the asymptomatic cases would be at least 10 times higher than those confirmed by laboratory tests.

R0 for Covid-19 in Germany was 0.75 in May, but it rose to 2.88 on June 22, according to the Robert Koch Institute.

In Brazil, the R0 now stands at 1.51, according to the local media.

## Wake up' and halt virus

is available.

Some countries are experiencing a resurgence in infections, leading authorities to partially reinstate lockdowns, in what experts say could be a recurring pattern into 2021.

Asked about the dire situations in nations like Brazil and Mexico, which have been moving away from lockdowns despite ballooning numbers of infections and deaths, Ryan cautioned that "too many countries are ignoring what the data is telling them".

"There are good economic reasons that the countries need to bring their economies back online," he said.

"It's understandable, but you can't ignore the problem either. The problem will not magically go away.

While he acknowledged that countries facing explosive outbreaks had some "pretty stark choices" ahead, he insisted that "it is never too late in an epidemic to take

under lockdown, he suggested that countries could try to break down the problem. It could be possible to loosen

restrictions in areas with lower transmission rates and still contain the outbreak through things like physical distancing, hand-washing, testing, isolating cases and contact

But in areas where the virus is spreading uncontrollably, strict measures could be unavoidable, he

opening up without the capacity to cope with the likely caseload, then you end up in a worst-case scenario,'

He said there could be places in Mexico and in other countries "where it may be important to slow down or to reverse some of

the measures aimed at opening up

"It is looking at: can you control lockdown.

almost 1.5 million confirmed cases, Ryan meanwhile said that the numbers had "stabilised", meaning they are no longer rising as steeply,

fighting a large number of cases for a long time now," Brazil's hospitals and intensive care units had not yet

what has been a long battle against this virus."

## Among the yesterday's deceased, 21

Covid-19 death

DHAKA **SUNDAY JULY 5, 2020, ASHAR 21, 1427 BS** 

BSF kills

border

upazila.

Bangladeshi

along Chapai'

Our Correspondent, Chapainawabganj

Shibganj upazila yesterday.

A Bangladeshi national was shot dead

by Indian Border Security Force along

the Telkupi border in the district's

The dead, Jahangir Alam, 50, was

from Telkupi village in the same

. Lt Col Mahmudul Hasan,

commanding officer of Rohonapur 59

BGB Battalion in Chapainawabgani,

said BSF men from Gopalnagar camp

under 24 BSF Battalion shot Jahangir

dead inside the Indian territory, about

50 yards off the zero line, around

9:45am and dumped his body into

He said they were yet to know why

The BGB official said they sent a

Quoting locals, Shahbajpur Union

Parishad Chairman Tozammel Haque

said Jahangir went to Telkupi area

around 9:00am to cut grass for the

livestock. Called by some BSF men, he

crossed the border. They picked him

About an hour later, the BSF

Informed about the incident, some

Speaking to The Daily Star over

the phone, victim's nephew Masud

Rana said his uncle suffered bullet

wounds to his left thigh. There were

injury marks on his right hand also,

locals recovered the body from the

border area and took it to his village

members dumped Jahangir's body

into Bangladesh's territory, the UP

protest note to the BSF and asked it to

Bangladesh's territory.

Jahangir went there.

sit in a flag meeting.

up and shot him dead.

home around 10:30am.

chairman added.

were male and eight were female, while 25 died at hospital, one at own house and three were brought dead to the hospitals, said the DGHS official.

One was aged between 11 and 20, one between 31 and 40, four between 41 and 50, nine between 51 and 60, 11 between 61 and 70, one between 71 and 80, and two were between 81 and 90.

Nine of them were from Dhaka, four from Chattogram, three from Khulna, seven from Rajshahi, two from Barishal, and three from Sylhet and one from Mymensingh.

According to the DGHS data, 43.52 percent of all 1,888 deceased was over 60 years old, while 29.04 percent was aged between 51 and 60, 14.72 percent between 41 and 50, while others were from under 10 to 40 years old.

Prof Nasima added that there were 6,075 general beds and 149 ICU beds for Covid-19 patients in Dhaka city's Covid-19 hospitals or hospital units.

In the country, there were 14,775 general beds and 401 ICU beds for Covid-19 patients in Covid-19 hospitals or hospital units.

Besides, there were 11,785 oxygen cylinders, 207 high-flow nasal cannulas, 98 oxygen concentrators in the Covid-19 hospitals across the

country. As of yesterday noon, 4,770 Covid-19 patients were admitted to general beds of hospitals while 221 were to ICUs.

In the same 24 hours, 489 patients were admitted to Covid-19 hospitals or hospital units while 374 were

14 feared dead in

## nursing home as heavy rain lashes

AFP, Tokyo

Fourteen people were feared dead

The victims were found "in cardiorespiratory arrest" at the facility for elderly people that was flooded after a nearby river broke its banks, governor Ikuo Kabashima from the western

death.

"The Self-Defence Forces have launched rescue operations," Kabashima said, adding that three others at the home were suffering from hypothermia.

second floor Saturday morning, public broadcaster NHK said. Local officials separately said

cardio-respiratory arrest in landslides in Kumamoto. They had previously said two were feared dead. Elsewhere in Kumamoto, one person

was seriously injured and nine others were missing while about 100 people were stranded as roads were cut off by

Instead of placing an entire nation society."

tracing.

countries proceed with Ryan warned.

"If the health system stops coping, more people will die.'

## Digital divide leaves many behind The pandemic is upending the 50 percent of students. We have

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury students from poor families and rural areas often do not get private tutors and assistance from parents -things that are taken for granted in most affluent families.

the primary and mass education ministry, "The government is aware.... and working on the issue of the digital divide. But we cannot solve the problem overnight."

the plan says. They have the digital literacy to support their children with technology-based learning modalities, it adds.

reopen, children from hard to reach areas and disadvantaged children -- including those from households which cannot afford such modern and costly facilities -- will find themselves even further behind their peers," reads the plan.

worst-case scenario, it adds.

Girls are more likely to fall behind than boys, especially in disadvantaged families. They are more likely than boys to be involved in domestic chores and they are much less likely to have access to a smartphone or other

-- short term for six months, mid term for one year and long term for two years -- to address the challenges. Around 90 million US dollars will

be needed to implement the plan. There should be a contingency plan for a situation in which

examinations get postponed. Special make-up classes, adjusted lesson plans and assessments will be needed to prevent loss of an

academic year. Reaching children in rural areas, especially in the poorest households everywhere will require special

learning, we are reaching more than

academic activities and may result plans to introduce recorded lessons in a complete gap of one year in the through radios available at feature and smart mobile phones and toll free hotline 3336, to make this distance learning inclusive," Akram said.

WAY OUT Education of about four crore

students is suffering as all schools remain closed since March 17. government It proposed a three-phase plan broadcasting classes on TV through

Sangshad TV channel for primary and secondary students in late March and early April. Some of the renowned schools in the capital and other cities and

towns are offering online classes, mostly through social media sites. Siddiqur Rahma said extending the academic year to February next year may help. "There will be a learning gap if the students are

promoted before completing the

He also proposed giving teachers special incentives and cutting down on unnecessary vacations.

Government should more in addressing the disparity in

problem, he added.

Akram-Al-Hossain, secretary to

THE RESPONSE PLAN

The educated and wealthy families are likely to be able to better sustain their children's learning at home during the coronavirus restrictions,

"This means that when schools

consideration and alternative delivery mechanisms, it added. "We already started distance

education, Prof Serajul Islam said.

does not emerge in the city, a large-scale This is because many people in in seven days.

She had been missing since then. Seven years after the incident, a Gulshan police team finally managed to rescue Khushi from a house in the capital's Karail slum last Wednesday, Chakrabarty, commissioner of Gulshan Division Police told The Daly Star. Khushi, now 19-year-old, is now waiting at a victim support centre in

said the deputy commissioner.

"We have been experiencing unbearable pain for the past seven years. We are to her parents," said

THE INVESTIGATION

On September 28, Khushi Ara Akter 2013, a day after Khushi went missing, Masuduzzaman filed a general diary with Gulshan Police Station. He also searched for her in different areas of Dhaka and published missing reports on different

to police and the employer.

Nath Roy with Dinajpur court. The court ordered local police to register the complaint as a case on May 5, 2014 and submit a report. A month after an investigation, local police submitted a final report that

Commissioner Sudip Chakrabarty. But the plaintiff Aziz filed a noconfident petition against the final investigation charge was handed over to

The PBI also submitted a final report added. Danger not over yet

containers found infested with Aedes larvae or pupae. Kabirul suggested the authorities concerned immediately take necessary measures on an immediate basis to control Aedes mosquitoes -- which

The Breteau Index measures the number

of positive containers per 100 houses

inspected, essentially water-holding

carry and spread the dengue and chikungunya viruses. NUMBER OF CASES LOW THIS YEAR According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), a total of 326 dengue cases were reported in the country as of yesterday, 69 of which are

from outside Dhaka. The number of cases reported last month was 20. This time last year, the number of dengue cases was 2,208 till June -- but in July there were 16,253 cases, and 52,636 in August alone, said Dr Aysha Akhter, assistant director of the DGHS

control room. In total, 1,01,354 dengue cases were reported across the country last year -of which 49,554 were outside Dhaka -- and the number of deaths resulting from dengue was 179, she said.

While it is true the number of

compared to last year's number, there are a number of factors contributing to this, said Kabirul. Less cases of dengue are being reported as people are reluctant to go to the hospital with fever as hospitals

dengue cases this year is relatively low

in many cases do not want to admit patients with this common symptom, fearing them to be Covid-19 infected. In addition, those admitted for

Covid-19 treatment are not in many cases being tested for dengue, he said. Another reason is that people are going out of their homes less which means the viral transmission rate is

lower compared to previous years, added Kabirul. Chowdhury, Monzur fellow entomologist and former president of the Zoological Society of Bangladesh, also said dengue cases usually peak in August but can also happen in July or September. So, there is still a chance of increasing dengue cases in the coming

So, the concerned authorities should be aware about this and take the

necessary measures, he said. Countries like India, Singapore, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, are getting dengue cases in Covid-19 patients, he said, so there are chances of Covid-19 patients here also being infected with

Dr Meerjady Sabrina Flora, director of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), said the institute does not predict a large outbreak in Dhaka this year like last Last year, serotype-3 was the main

outbreak is not expected. Dhaka have developed antibodies for

cause of the outbreak, she said, and

as long as a new serotype of the virus

serotype-3 and this serotype of the virus

is still pre-dominant. Aside from this, people are leaving their homes less and more alert about keeping their homes clean, due to which the rate of transmission is lower than before. The city corporations are also taking various measures for which the number of dengue cases is very low

this year, she added. However, there are chances of getting more dengue cases from outside Dhaka, have to take necessary steps to control Aedes mosquitoes there too, said Dr

Chief Health Officer of DSCC Brig Gen Sharif Ahmed said the DSCC has been undertaking mosquito control activities under a master plan since June

"But we will start mobile courts from August 1 to take actions against owners of places where Aedes mosquito larvae is found," he said. Brig Gen Mominur Rahman Mamun, chief health officer of Dhaka North City Corporation, said the DNCC has

conducted combing operations twice since June to destroy Aedes mosquito He said they are also going to

conduct another combing operation against Aedes mosquitoes from July 4. "We are doing follow-up at houses according to the data collected from previous combing operations and if we find Aedes mosquitoes at these houses

#### or places again, we will go for legal action against them," he said.

Wari goes into

Association.

A control centre has been set up there. Besides, booths will be built for sample collection and there will be an isolation centre as well.

"Everything will be closed there," said the mayor, adding that pharmacies and grocery stores would remain open. Arrangements have been made to supply daily essentials to local residents in coordination with the E-Commerce

local committee members putting up barriers with bamboos at all entrances to the area. Earlier on June 30, the Local Government Division issued a letter to

DSCC to implement strict lockdown in

Visiting Wari on Friday afternoon,

a UNB photojournalist found DSCC

representatives in coordination with

On June 22, Health Services Department of the health ministry announced Ward-41 of Dhaka city, covering Wari, as "Red Zone". Dhaka North City Corporation

put West Rajabazar under lockdown

from June 10 to contain the spread of

Meanwhile, World Organization said Bangladesh on Friday ranked 8th in terms of global weekly increase in new coronavirus cases. The country saw 26,598 new Covid-19 cases He then pointed out that the virus

movement is likely to increase. Mushtuq Meanwhile,

transmission by any other means other than transmission? If you can't, you may not have an alternative" to In the case of Brazil, which counts

second only to the United States, but they are "still rising". He also stressed that despite

been overwhelmed. "We want to see them intensify efforts and we want to see more progress," he said, "but we also have to pay credit to the health system in Brazil for its capacity to cope for

western Japan

at a nursing home in western Japan yesterday as record rainfall triggered massive floods and landslides, forcing authorities to issue evacuation advisories for more than 200,000 residents.

region of Kumamoto told reporters. Authorities in Japan often use that term before a doctor officially certifies

Some 60 to 70 people were in the home as water rushed in to the

another person was also found in

floods and landslides, NHK reported.

#### ANTI-MOSQUITO DRIVE **DNCC** fines house owners Tk 1.55 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday found Aedes larvae in 91 houses and establishments during the first day of the 10-day "combing operation" to destroy breeding grounds of mosquitoes.

The operation began in all the 54 wards under the city corporation simultaneously to protect city dwellers from the

The DNCC team visited at least 12,619 houses and establishments during the drive and found Aedes mosquito larvae, carrier of dengue and chikungunya, in 131 of those, said an official of DNCC.

Stagnant water and breeding ground of the mosquito were found at 8,764 establishments including houses and under construction buildings in the city area.

During the operation, DNCC mobile courts also fined owners of 12 houses Tk 1.55 lakh.

The drive will continue from 10am to 1pm every day except Friday, dividing a ward into ten sectors and



THE OLD MAN AND THE MARSH... Every monsoon, low-lying land in Baishtila area on the outskirts of Sylhet city get inundated, and fish of all sizes swim into the freshwater from overflowing ponds. It is at this time of year that Ahmad Miya brings out his bamboo angling rods, puts bait on the hook, and sits motionless for hours by the waterbody, almost as if in meditation. The 75-year-old says this has been his annual routine without fail for 40odd years, and even though there aren't nearly as many fish as there used to be, his habit remains unchanged.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## Drug traders rear head as movement restrictions ease

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The pandemic is leaving an adverse impact on almost every sector, but when it comes to drug smuggling, Covid-19 has just been a reason to come up with newer, more innovative ideas and techniques.

During the government-induced shutdown, top dealers have reserved narcotics at bordering districts after smuggling those from neighbouring countries Myanmar

At the time, they tried to send small consignments to different districts from the border areas using emergency product carrying service.

Since the shutdown has been relaxed, the smugglers are becoming more and more active, according to law enforcers and sources among narcotics dealers.

In April, when the shutdown was in full force and movement was heavily restricted, only 81 cases were filed on narcotics charge and 88 people got arrested across the country, shows a database of the Department of Narcotics

But when the shutdown was relaxed during Eid in May, around 480 cases were filed and 519 people were arrested

Before the shutdown, around 1,677 cases were filed against 171 people in January, 1,767 cases filed against 1,840 people in February and 1,412 cases were filed against 1,468 people in March by the DNC, shows the

Data from police headquarters show, number of narcotics cases have started to increase in May after the shutdown relaxed. Around 7,625 narcotics cases were filed across the country in March.

However, only 1,640 narcotics-related cases were filed in April, while the figure increased to 2,465 for the month

Khorshid Alam, assistant director of DNC, told The Daily Star that narcotics dealings had slowed down due to the heavy restriction on movement during April.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Rigorous community engagement a must to fight Covid-19

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an online dialogue yesterday stressed the need for rigorous involvement of local communities in fighting coronavirus spread across the country.

Bangladesh chapter of The Hunger Project, a global charitable organisation committed to sustainable end of world hunger, organised the virtual dialogue on "Coronavirus Resilient Villages: Interactions with Community Volunteers", said a press release.

Addressing the dialogue, noted public health expert Prof M Muzaherul Huq said, "Fighting coronavirus is not possible without the community's involvement."

He said works needed to be executed properly after involving communities in the containment initiatives.

Those who developed mild Covid-19 symptoms have to be isolated at home while those with moderate symptoms should be shifted to upazila health complexes, he added.

Referring to a method followed in India's Kerala, The Hunger Project Country Director Badiul Alam Majumdar said authorities there achieved success in fighting the virus and reasons for the success was local government's role and community involvement.

He said at the beginning of the coronavirus spread, "rapid responder" teams headed by elected members were formed at each ward under village panchayat, a form of local government system in India.

Health workers, volunteers and panchayat staffers were included in the teams. Broadly, the team members worked on three fronts-- communication, coordination and

community involvement, he said. As part of communication, they generated awareness among people about hand washing, health guidelines, use of face masks and necessity of social distancing, he added.

Badiul, also a noted good governance campaigner, said volunteers under The Hunger Project in Bangladesh were working on various grounds in fighting the pandemic involving local communities.

## A two-wheeled blessing

Bicycle sales boom as many choose it to commute maintaining physical distancing

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Every day, Rubel Hossain, a staffer at Bangladesh Water Development Board, would get ready and keep on waiting for a bus to reach his Motijheel office from his Keraniganj residence. But the pandemic has changed his lifestyle, maybe for the better, as he started commuting on his bicycle for the last few weeks.

"Due to increased bus fare and lack of social distancing on public transport, bought the bicycle to commute every day," he said. And his bike solved both these problems, as he now commutes for free, and that too while being away from

Rashidul Islam, a resident of Nawabpur's Taherbagh, who bought his bike for Tk 8,200 from Old Dhaka, said, "It takes only 30 minutes to reach Keraniganj's Jinjira from the capital's Nawabpur on the twowheeler, which would take around two hours by bus or boat."

Since he started commuting like this, life has become easy and smooth, although there are risks of accidents as there is no dedicated cycling lane, he said.

It is not only Rubel and Rashidul, many Dhaka city residents have bought these trusty two-wheelers to make them their main mode of transport, as it is faster, saves money and allows riders to maintain social distancing.

With increased demand, bicycle sales have also gone up by 10-15 percent at the capital's Bongshal, the main retail hub for cycles in the country, said local traders.

Earlier, demand for children's bicycles was huge, but since the pandemic, large quantities of bicycles were sold to adults,

especially in May, they said.

But this craze has not only taken over the capital; across the country, demand has also increased.

Mosharraf Hossain, an NGO sales representative, recently purchased his bicycle for Tk 16,500 from Bongshal for "I used bus and rickshaw for moving

from place to place with my product samples, but now, I can travel on my bike, which will save me around Tk 250 every day," said Mosharraf, who goes to his Shahjadpur office from Hazaribagh and then to different areas. Saiful Islam, owner of Kashfian

Enterprise in Bognshal, said bicycles from Bangladesh, India and China are available there, but the Chinese ones are in high demand. He said a huge number of residents

purchased bicycles in May. Demand has slightly dropped in the capital but still good across the country. Prices of Indian and Chinese bicycles

have increased by around Tk 1,000, but prices of local ones did not change, he further said. The lowest priced bike was Tk 6,500, while the highest was Tk 25,000, he added

According to traders at Bongshal and Kazi Alauddin Road, 70 percent of demand is fulfilled by imported bicycles, especially from India and China, and the rest by the local industry. There are around 200 bicycle shops (both wholesale and retail) in the two areas.

Joynul Abedin, chief operating officer of RFL Bike Industry, which manufactures SEE PAGE 4 COL 2 Animal Sacrifice for Eid-ul-Azha

## **Experts suggest** following Saudi Arabian model

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an online press conference yesterday urged authorities to arrange animal sacrifice during upcoming Eid-ul-Azha in the country under a system followed in Saudi Arabia, to avoid environmental and health hazards.

Recently, the country's health experts warned that slaughtering animals in open spaces during the festival may increase the risk of coronavirus infection. Islamic clerics have also urged a change in festival traditions to prevent further spread of the virus. During yesterday's press conference, arranged jointly by

Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba) and Sadaqah Foundation USA, Saudi Arabia-based researcher Shaikh Ismail Hossain Makki said each vear over 12 lakh animals are sacrificed during Hajj, according to a press release. "Some 16,000 employees work round-the-clock at

government slaughterhouses to process animals, and that method could be followed in Bangladesh as well," he said. In Mecca, devotees first ensure their purchase of

sacrificial animal via a slip. Later, government authorities purchase the animal under its own management, then arranges the slaughter and distribution of meat, he said. "That option is there if people want to see the process of

sacrifice and wish to collect meat," he said. If animal sacrifice in Bangladesh is arranged following

this method, then it can benefit both devotees and the government, he added.

Poba Chairman Abu Naser Khan said people have to be sure that their sacrificial animals are not ill and harmful for public health.

Organisers urged the government to immediately finalise separate rules for animal slaughter management and municipality solid waste management under the environment ministry. They also urged to ensure everyone involved in meat processing during Eid-ul-Azha remains safe from infectious disease.

## CU campus goes under lockdown for 14 days

Seven Covid-19 cases detected at university premises in 24hrs

Unb, Ctg

The authorities of Chittagong University (CU) have put the campus under 14-day lockdown to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Confirming that matter esterday, Registrar Prof SM Monirul Hasan said the decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the syndicate members with Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Shirin Akhter.

He said CU is under lockdown for 14 days from July 4-18 due to rapid transmission of coronavirus on the campus.

In the last 24 hours, seven coronavirus cases have been detected on the campus, according to sources.

During the lockdown period, all emergency administrative activities of the university will be conducted from the office of the Institute of Fine Arts, situated off-campus in Chattogram city.

WATERWAYS ACCIDENTS

## 153 killed, 84 injured in six months

Say two organisatinos STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 153 people were killed and 84 other injured in 106 waterways' accidents in the last six months, two nongovernment organisations said.

Besides, 22 people went missing in those accidents between January and June, according to National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads & Railways (NCPSRR) and Green Club of Bangladesh.

The number of such accidents has increased compared to the same period last year, when 71 people were killed in 76 accidents, it said. The organisaation prepared the report

on the basis of news in 24 national and 10 regional dailies and nine online news portals, said a press release.

Of the six months this year, the highest 59 people were killed in 26 accidents in At least 34 people died after the

Mayur-2 launch hit and sank a relatively smaller launch Morning Bird in Buriganga on June 29. Ashis Kumar Dey, general secretary of NCPSRR, said although the number of

launch accidents has reduced lately, but

accidents of trawlers and other small-size vessels are going on. The main reason behind it is lack of proper monitoring, huge number of illegal vessels and unskilled masters and drivers,

said the statement.



previously called Satrasta-Tejgaon Railgate Road, of illegal parking. Transport workers from Tejgaon Truck Terminal had heavily resisted the initiative. but in the end, Annisul persisted, and the road was named after him for his contributions. But his efforts might go in vain, as lack of monitoring is allowing trucks to occupy more than half the road again. This photo was taken recently.

## 6 die with Covid-19 symptoms in Cumilla Medical College Hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Six people have died with Covid-19 symptoms over the last twenty four hours in Ćumilla.

All of the deceased were admitted to Cumilla Medical College Hospital (CuMCH) with shortness of breath, cold and fever, said hospital officials.

Dr Istiaque, assistant surgeon at the hospital, said, "Out of the six, three died in ICU while the others died in isolation facilities between 8am on Friday to 8am on

Two of them were female. They were all between 50 and 75 years old."

The deceased are Lutfunnesa (62) from Gopalganj, Jamal Uddin (53) from Cumilla, Nazma Rahman (50) from Chandpur, Basudeb (72) from Chandpur, Abdul Khalek (60) from Cumilla, and Abdul Karim (75) from Cumilla. Lutfunnesa, Jamal, and Nazma died in ICU.

As of yesterday, there are 116 patients admitted at the Corona Unit of CuMCH. Of them, 34 have tested positive while the rest are suspected Covid-19 patients, according to hospital sources. In the 24 hours between Friday 8am to

Saturday 8am, 17 patients have been newly admitted while 11 were discharged, added Dr Istiaque. With these six deaths, a total of 173

patients have died at the hospital since The hospital has so far seen 869

admissions, of whom 583 patients were discharged after recovery.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

#### **Justice Ansar** Ali's death anniv

Today is the 25th death anniversary of Justice Muhammad



Ali passed away while he was on duty at the Supreme Court on this day in 1995.

Qurankhwani and doa mahfil will be held at his home in Naogaon and at Banani graveyard in Dhaka to mark the occasion.

#### Death anniv of Abdul Hakim Bikrampuri

CITY DESK

Yesterday marked the 33rd death anniversary of Abdul Hakim Bikrampuri, former member of the undivided Bengal Legislative Assembly and Pakistan Provisional and National Assembly.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this year the occasion will only be marked with the religious ceremonies, while the annual commemoration programme and scholarship awards will take place at a later time, the press release added.

## Lower courts grant bail to 49,750 in 35 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 49,750 people including 608 children, accused of criminal charges, have secured bail from the lower courts across the country in the

Among the 608 children who were granted bail, 583 have been handed over to their guardians from three Shishu Unnavan Kendra (children development centres), Supreme Court sources said yesterday.

More than 300 courts have granted bail to the accused after holding virtual hearings of the petitions filed by them.

The subordinate courts have disposed of total 95,523 such petitions. In five days last week (June 28 to July 2), the courts have disposed of total 10,866 bail petitions and granted bail to total 4,960 accused, the

Most of the bailed accused have already got released from jail.

The virtual court functions started on May 11 after a gap of 46 days in order to deal with the urgent cases. The regular activities of courts across the country including Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court remained closed since March 26 due to ongoing coronavirus

On May 10, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain issued some directives for the courts about dealing with urgent cases through using information and communication technology during the ongoing closure.

## A two-wheeled

and markets Duranta bicycles for both Bangladesh and European countries, said demands have slightly increased since beginning of the

"Demand for bicycles for adults has increased, as many people now prefer to travel on them instead of public transport, but demand for children's bicycles has slightly dropped," he said.

Yearly transactions worth Tk 1,500 crore occur in the country's bicycle industry, 30-35 percent of which come from local companies, mainly RFL, a concern of PRAN-RFL Group, and Meghna Group, another local bicycle manufacturer and exporter, he said.

## Scholastica holds virtual graduation ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The three-day long virtual graduation ceremony of Scholastica, a leading

English-medium school, ended on Friday. Due to the pandemic, the event was organised online, school authorities said in a press release.

Certificates were awarded to 564 students of Scholastica Uttara and Mirpur senior sections. Among them, 333 students passed their O-levels and 231 their A-levels.

Dr Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, prominent writer and former professor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, was the ceremony's chief guest and addressed the graduates in a video message.

He urged students to be ideal humans first and foremost, saying, "You can use technology as much as you want. But remember, do not let technology use you."

Syeda Madiha Murshed, managing director of Scholastica; Wasima Parveen, director and COO; Farah Sophia Ahmed, principal and section head of Uttara senior campus; Nurun Nahar Mozumdar, section head of Mirpur senior campus; and Sabina Mustafa, academic affairs head of both senior campuses, congratulated the graduates through video.

Several alumni from home and abroad also delivered inspirational messages via video. Among them were Nazim Farhan Chowdhury, managing director of Adcomm Ltd and Tanjil Chowdhury, chairperson of Prime Bank.

## Five factories sealed off in a month for producing fake hand sanitisers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Five factories manufacturing and marketing fake hand sanitisers in Chattogram were sealed off by the district administration in the last one month.

The factory owners had been continuing their businesses without the approval of Directorate General of Drug Administration, said officials.

In the latest move last week, a mobile court of the district administration, led by Executive Magistrate Omar Faruque conducted a drive in the city's Dewanhat and sealed off "AR Chattola Chemicals".

It also fined the factory owner, Md Rashed, Tk 50,000 and jailed him for six months, Omar Faruque told this

"They were bottling hand sanitisers without the involvement of any lab technician," he said, adding that they destroyed a huge quantity of such sanitisers seized from the factory.

Hossain Mohammad Imran, assistant director of DGDA, Chattogram, said the ratio of chemicals used in those hand sanitisers was not appropriate. Besides, harmful ingredients were mixed in those, he added.

"We will continue our drives to stop such illegal trade," he said.

Earlier, "Taj Chemicals" in the city's Kalur Ghat, "Rupsazza Cosmetics" in Hazari Lane, "Sha Amanat Traders" in Khatunganj and "Annex World Wide Co Ltd" in Kazir Dewri area were sealed off by the district administration.

Those five factories were basically controlling the fake sanitiser market in Chattogram, said the executive



#### Jute ministry joint secy dies from Covid-19

Unb, Dhaka

Khurshid Alam, secretary to the Ministry of Textiles and Jute, died from coronavirus at a hospital in the capital early yesterday.

Alam was undergoing treatment at Hospital where he breathed his last around 12:50am, according to a condolence message of Officers' Club, Dhaka.

He was a member of the BCS 86th batch of administration cadre, said the message.

the condolence message, the club members prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul of the joint secretary and conveyed deep sympathy to his bereaved family members.

SHANTO-MARIUM UNIVERSITY

## **Prof Mostafizul** appointed board of trustees chair

CITY DESK

Professor Mostafizul Haque has been selected as the new chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology (SMUCT).

His appointment comes after the demise of former chairperson Md Imamul Kabir Shanto, who passed away of Covid-19 infection on May 30.

Late Imamul, also the founding chairperson of the board, was a valiant Freedom Fighter, said a press release. At the last meeting of the Board of Trustees on June 18, Prof Mostafizul was unanimously selected as the new chairperson. The meeting also passed a condolence motion

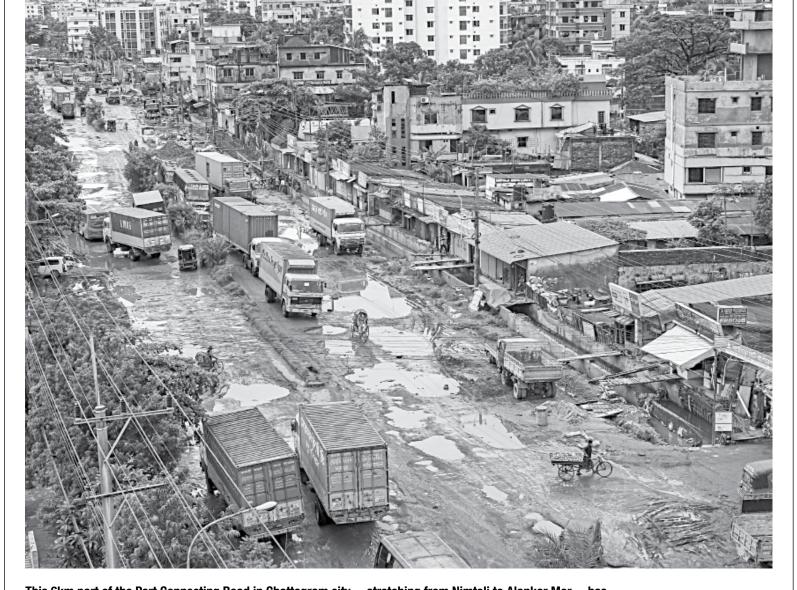
in the honour of Imamum Kabir Shanto Prof Mostafizul is a well-known painter, eminent children's painting expert, and a successful organiser.

He is a Senior Professor at the Department of Drawing and Painting, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. He graduated from the faculty (then known as Dhaka Art College) and then pursued higher studies in painting in Japan, the press release said.

Since the inception of the university, Prof Mostafizul has worked tirelessly as an aide of the founding chairperson of the university, it added.

#### প্লট ক্ৰয়

ধানমন্ডি/ বনানীতে ভবনসহ বা ভবন ছাডা নিঙ্কন্টক জমি ক্রয় করতে চাই বিক্রেতার সুবিধা মোতাবেক মূল্য পরিশোধ, প্রয়োজনে এককালীনও সম্ভব ভধুমাত্র জমির প্রকৃত আগ্রহী মালিকগন **শনি** থেকে **বৃহস্পতিবার** সকাল ১০ টা থেকে বিকেল ৫ টার মধ্যে যোগাযোগ করুন। ফোনঃ ৯৮৫ ১৫ ৬৫ মোবাইলঃ ০১৭১১-৫২১০৮৪, ই মেইলঃ southbayiere@gmail.com



This 6km part of the Port Connecting Road in Chattogram city -- stretching from Nimtoli to Alankar Mor -- has been in a sorry state for years. Even though a repair work was initiated back in 2017, indifference of the authorities concerned have made the situation worse. Not only the work remains unfinished, accidents have also become a daily occurrence on this muddy and pothole-ridden road. This photo was taken from Sarai Para area recently.

PHOTO:
RAJIB RAIHAN

#### **DNCC** fines

FROM PAGE 3

a sector into 10 sub-sectors he said.

A team comprising four garbage management workers and one sprayman is taking part in the operation in each subsector, while 40 garbage management workers and 10 spray-men are taking part in each sector in the drive every day.

The teams are visiting different establishments, construction sites to check breeding grounds of Aedes mosquitoes in the area.

They are also collecting pictures and addresses of houses and other establishments and phone numbers of owners if they find Aedes larvae or mosquito breeding sources there.

All data will be stored to prepare a database in monitoring the breeding sources properly afterwards, said a DNCC press release.

Nine entomologists of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) three entomologists and officials of health and garbage management of DNCC will remain present during the drives.

Earlier, DNCC carried out a similar operation partially before Eid-ul-fitr, covering only five wards and another one covering all the wards from June 6 to 15.



জডি-১০৭৮

#### গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ কেন্দ্ৰীয় পুলিশ হাসপাতাল রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা

## সংশোধনী দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেগুলেশন/০৮ (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনী) মোতাবেক চলতি ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বৎসরে কেন্দ্রীয় পুলিশ হাসপাতাল, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকায় বিভিন্ন মালামাল ক্রয় করার নিমিত্ত অত্রাফিস স্মারক নং-কেঃ পুঃ হাঃ/দরপত্র/২০২০-২০২১/২১৭৫ তাং ২৮/০৬/২০২০খ্রিঃ মোতাবেক প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি নিমুরুপভাবে সংশোধন করা হল।

বিবরণ	পূর্বের তারিখ	বিবরণ	সংশোধিত তারিখ
দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির সর্বশেষ তারিখ	তারিখঃ ২০/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত	দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির সর্বশেষ তারিখ	তারিখঃ ১৪/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত
দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	তারিখঃ ২১/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ, সমন্তঃ ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	তারিখঃ ১৫/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ, সময়ঃ ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	তারিখঃ  ২১/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ, সমায়ঃ ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা। দরপত্রদাতার বা মনোনীত প্রতিনিধিদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি ধাকে)	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	তারিখঃ ১৫/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ, সময়ঃ ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা। দরপত্রদাতার বা মনোনীত প্রতিনিধিদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি থাকে)

ডাঃ মোঃ এমদাদুল হক বিপি-৭৭০৫১১৯৮১৯ পুলিশ সুপার (প্রশাসন ও অর্থ) পক্ষে-পরিচালক (ডিআইজি) কেন্দ্রীয় পুলিশ হাসপাতাল বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, রাজারবাগ, ঢাকা ফোনঃ ৪৮৩২২৪০০/ফ্যাক্সঃ ৯৩৪২২৯৭

## Drug traders

"During this period, the supply from border areas to Dhaka declined, and the majority of narcotics were recovered at the border districts and the cases were also filed there," he said.

But in May, movement increased again as restrictions were relaxed, narcotics dealers managed to pick up their operations again. According to sources, narcotics

smuggling could never be stopped during the entire shutdown period.

"Yaba supply comes in from Myanmar as usual. But the majority of dealers used to preserve these pills in different places as they did not have a way to distribute those to Dhaka and other districts," this correspondent found out from a source who has connections with narcotics dealers.

Wing Commander Azim Ahmed, commanding officer of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-15) in Cox's Bazar, also said Covid-19 had no effect on narcotics smuggling.

"Consignments of yaba come from Myanmar and we also seized three consignments of phensedyl, which was going to Myanmar from Bangladesh," he told The Daily Star.

"We are conducting multiple drives to arrest smugglers," he added.

Detective Branch of Police seized around 1.80 lakh yaba tablets and arrested three alleged drug peddlers from Cox's Bazar's Ramu upazila on June 20.

On June 16, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB 34 battalion) in Cox's Bazar recovered around 1.20 lakh yaba from Rezu Khal. From January 1, 2020 till date, the battalion seized 16.29 lakh yaba pills and arrested around 287 people for involvement in narcotics smuggling.

#### HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Sources say narcotics dealers use courier like vegetable, fish and agricultural product peddling will continue," he added.

carrying vehicles to deliver the drugs to

Dhaka. Various items are used to conceal the drugs, such as brooms, fruit baskets, rice cookers, sacks of rice, vegetables and baby food containers, said law enforcers.

Last week, Rab-2 members recovered 3,750 pieces of yaba tablets hidden inside pick-up van and arrested two from New Market area.

During interrogation, the arrestees said that they used to bring the pills from Cox's Bazar to Dhaka by concealing them inside different everyday items.

Rab-2 also arrested a couple and recovered 500 grams of heroin hidden inside a basket of mangoes and a pressure cooker from a courier service at the capital's Elephant Road recently.

On May 18, a team of Rab-4 arrested four people and recovered 40 kilogrammes of marijuana, which they were smuggling hiding inside rice sacks.

The next day, a team of Rab-2 recovered 190 bottles of phensedyl, 1,375 pieces of Yaba and 17 kg marijuana from a pick up van which was smuggling the drugs inside a gas cylinder.

Mohiuddin Faruqe, Mohammed superintendent of police, who worked as a company commander of Rab-2 and was recently transferred to police headquarters, said, "They [narcotics suppliers and dealers] use cell phones that are registered under fake identity cards, so it becomes difficult to trace their location," said Faruqe, who conducted a number of drives.

Sohel Rana, assistant inspector general at Police Headquarters, said, "Police are aware that illegal drug traders and peddlers may be more active now in this repose of the coronavirus pandemic."

We have directed our units to remain vigilant to stop a spike in the drug trade," he told this newspaper, adding, "The drives services and emergency supply services and subsequent legal action against drug

## Cancel fees for Covid-19 testing immediately: BNP

BNP vesterday demanded immediate cancellation of coronavirus test fee set by the government.

Coming down strongly on the government's decision to set a coronavirus testing fee, the party's senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said, "It has now become clear that the government has taken the step to discourage people from undergoing tests."

He said it is the responsibility of the state to conduct free coronavirus tests on its own initiative in public interest. "We call upon the government to immediately take steps for conducting free coronavirus tests.'

The BNP leader made the demand at a virtual press briefing arranged from the party's Nayapaltan central

On Monday last, the government fixed the coronavirus test fee in an effort to avoid unnecessary tests of Covid-19. According to it, anyone who wants to conduct a test from government hospitals or Covid-19 dedicated booths have to pay Tk 200 while Tk 500 if samples collected from the home of a patient suspected to be infected with the

Opposing the government's decision, Rizvi said no government in the world officially charge fee for the Covid-19 test.

"The free Covid test is being conducted in Afghanistan and all other neighbouring countries. This test is free even in Burkina Faso, one of the world's poorest economies, in West Africa," he said.

He alleged that the government is trying to use the coronavirus pandemic as an opportunity to make money. "Many low-income people are unable to undergo coronavirus test even though they have symptoms."

The BNP leader called upon the government to extend the sample testing facility to district and upazila levels across the country.

He said most private hospitals are not testing Covid-19 at the rate of Tk 3,500 set by the government. "Private hospitals are charging Tk 5,000-6,000 for

this purpose, as the government is not trying to control them,"the BNP leader added.

## Tangail small traders pass hard days as sales drop

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Abdus Sattar, a small trader selling wooden chairs and tables beside a road in Tangail town, is struggling for survival for the last four months as the number of buyers sees a drastic fall due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation.

The 55-year old man from Pathrail village in Delduar upazila has already borrowed Tk 30,000 from others to feed his family.

"Normally I earned Tk 500 to Tk 700 from selling seven to ten chairs and tables in a day. Now I can hardly sell one or two as my usual customers, mostly students and low-income people living at hostels and messes, left for their villages due to closure of educational institutions and workplaces a couple of months ago.

"How can I survive in such a situation?"

Four others who sell furniture at the same place are in the same boat.

Abdul Koddus of Mirer Betka area runs a video business at Victoria Road in the town.

"People hired me for making video clips of various programmes including wedding parties. But I did not get a single order in the last three months as social programmes and parties are virtually stopped due to the coronavirus," he said.

"I could not pay rent, electricity and gas bills of my shop during the time. Now I am feeding my four-member family by borrowing money from friends and relatives. I am seeking a job but to no

result," he added.

Mintu Khan, owner of a decorator shop in Dhaka Road area of the town, is passing a hard time as he is not getting any order for the last couple of months.

"My employees have already left the job as I could not pay them in the last three

months. I have also loans from NGOs. The coronavirus has ruined my business," said the 60-year-old man, already sick amid tension about the situation.

Mohammad Ali, a fruits vendor in Bus Terminal area of the town, returned to his village after local administration declared lockdown in the district town on March 25 to prevent coronavirus infection.

"I maintained my family in the last four months with my little savings and the small payments that I got by working as a harvesting labourer at Boro paddy fields of my village. I want to return to the town for restarting my business but I don't have any capital for it," he added.

Mizanur Rahman Khan Mithu, owner of a steel-made furniture shop at Zila Sadar Road in the town, said sales saw an abnormal drop during the last few months due to the highly infectious disease.

"I am worried about maintenance of my big family as sale has not come to a normal despite easing of the lockdown. Mainly the middle-class people are buyers of my item but they are short of money now," he added.

Like them, hundreds of small traders are living in grave uncertainty over their livelihood due to the pandemic.



Tired of waiting for buyers, Abdus Sattar sleeps on tables at his makeshift furniture shop in Poura Udyan area of Tangail town.

РНОТО: MIRZA SHAKIL

## Most corona patients recover from home

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Most coronavirus patients in the district have successfully recovered from the disease after basic treatment at home.

Moulvibazar Civil Surgeon Dr Touhid Ahmed said as of Friday, 522 people in the district have been infected with Covid-19. Of the coronavirus patients, 243 have recovered after basic treatment at home and 231 are being treated in home isolation under the supervision of doctors. Meanwhile, of the total number of patients, only 21 have recovered after treatment at different hospitals while 22 are receiving treatment at the hospitals. Five coronavirus patients have died here till the date.

AKM Jaber, 35, a health care provider of Ghagtia community clinic in Kulaura upazila, who has recently recovered from the disease, said he was treated in home isolation under the supervision of the upazila health and family planning officer. After being diagnosed with the virus, he took a drink of ginger tea and warm water at least five times a day every day. He also

took medicine and fruits regularly.

Another Covid-19 patient Sadek Hossain, 30, a banker from Laghati village in Baralekha upazila, who also recovered from the disease, said he tested positive for coronavirus on May 23. He was treated in home isolation for 28 days.

"I took basic treatment at home following the doctor's advice. I did not need to take any medicine. Every day I took a lot of Vitamin C-rich fruits besides drinking tea and warm water during the time. Finally I've recovered from the disease after the primary treatment," said the banker.

According to the Kamalganj and Rajnagar upazila health complexes, a man of Rajnagar upazila died from coronavirus-like symptoms on April 4. He was the first man who died from coronavirus-like symptoms in the district. A few days after the incident, another tea worker with coronavirus-like symptoms died in Kamalganj upazila. Later, samples of the deceased were collected to be tested for coronavirus infection

and they were found positive. Since then, a number of people from different professions like doctors, health workers and police have tested positive for coronavirus, said the civil surgeon.

In some cases, the health workers visit home and observe the patient's condition, said Dr Nurul Haque, Kulaura upazila health and family planning officer.

He further said 98 people in Kulaura upazila have been diagnosed with the virus as of Wednesday. Of them, 60 Covid-19 patients have recovered after basic treatment at home while the rest are being treated in home isolation.

They are giving treatment to those Covid-19 patients over phone, said Dr Nurul Haque.

Civil Surgeon Dr Touhid Ahmed said a committee has been formed in each upazila of the district to fight coronavirus. The Covid-19 patients are being treated under the supervision of the committee.

Most Covid-19 patients in Moulvibazar have successfully recovered from the disease after primary treatment at home, said the civil



মুজিববর্ষ অগ্রাধিকার গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার



বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট

বাড়ি নং-৩৫, সোহরাওয়ার্দী এভিনিউ, ব্লক-কে, বারিধারা, ঢাকা-১২১২

www.atu.police.gov.bd

## উন্মক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

মরণালর/বিতাপ

জাবিখাত ০১/০০/১০১০খিত

মাভাবেক চলভি ২০২০-২১ অর্থ দালে এটি টেবরিজম ইউনিট এর অনুৰূলে বিভিন্ন অর্থনৈতিক কোডে বরান্ত্রক অর্থ ধারা ছকে বর্ণিত মাইটেমসমূহ ক্রয়োর নিমিত্ত বাংলাদেশী প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী,টিকালর/সরবরাহকারী মার্ম/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে আইটেম তিত্তিক পূথক থক শীলমোহরকৃত থামে উনুক্ত দরপত্র আইবান করা যাচেছ। স্বট্টে মন্ত্ৰণালয়/জননিৱাপত্তা বিভাগ

۹.	এ জেপি	এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, বাংগাদেশ পুলিশ, চাকা।
ø,	সঞ্চাহক স্বভার নাম	পুলিশ সূপার (প্রশাসন), পক্ষে-আডিশনাল আইজি, এন্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, ঢাকা।
8.	দরপরের বিষয় (কাজের নাম)	১৬নং ক্রমিকে বর্ণিত।
ŵ.	দরণত্র আহ্বানের সূত্র	৪৪.০১.০০০০.৯৮৫.০৬.৫৪৫.২০-২৫২ জারিখ্য ০২/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ
6.	দরপত্র আহ্বানের তারিখ	03/09/2020Bt
٩.	দরগত্র পদ্ধতি	উনুত দরপর পদ্ধতি।
br,	বাজেট ও অর্জের উৎস	পুলিশ হেডকোন্নার্টার্স হতে বরাদকৃত অর্থ।
ъ.	দরণত্র বিজন্তি প্রকাশের তারিথ	০২/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ।
30.	দরণত বিভিউল বিভারের শেষ ভরিশ	বিজ্ঞান্তি প্রকাশের জারিথ হচে ০৪/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ ভারিথ পর্যন্ত প্রতিটি কার্যনিবলে অধিন চলাকালীন সময়।
35.	দরপত্র দাখিলের করিখ ও সময়	০৫/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিব বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
25	টিওসি কর্তৃক দরণম বাক্স থোদার তরিব ও সময়	০৫/০৮/২০২০খ্ৰিঃ তারিখ বেলা ১২,৩০ যটিকা।
30.	দরপত্র সিভিউল বিভয়কারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	একি টেররিজম ইউনিট কার্বালর, বরিধারা, ঢাকা।
38.	দরণর দাখিলের স্থান	এক্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট কার্যালয়, বরিধারা, ঢাকা।
34.	ঠিকাদারের যোগাতা ও দরপরের সাথে দাখিলযোগ্য কাগলপরের বিবরণ	সরদাতাকে নিপ্রোক্ত কাণজপ্রাবি'র ছারালিপি ১ম দ্রেপীর কর্মকর্ত্তা ছারা সভ্যারিক্ত করে দাখিল করতে হবেঃ ব) হালনাথান ট্রেড লাইনেদদ, খ) নাগরিকত্ব সনলপত্র, থ) জায়কর ও ভাটি সনদপত্র, ঘ) বাংক কর্তৃক প্রদেশ আর্থিক স্বজ্ঞলতা সনদ (বেনদেন বিবরণীসহ), ও) ফার্ম/প্রতিষ্ঠানের মন্দিকাশা সনদপত্র, হ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সনদপত্র। এখাড়া অন্যান্য পর্তাবলী নিভিউলে উল্লেখ আছে।

				ণৰ্ম/প্ৰতিষ্ঠানের মাণিকানা স মন্যান্য শৰ্মাবলী নিভিউলে		নজের অভিজ্ঞতা
36.	লট	কাজের নাম/আইটেম	সরবরাহের	দরণত নিভিউদের	দর্পর জামানত	कारकत
	被		পরিমাদ	মৃল্ড (অফেরডযোগ্য)	(কেরভযোগ্য)	मघरामीघा
	21	স্বাছ্যবিধান সামগ্রী (স্যানিটেশ মালামাল) ক্রয়	ন চাহিদা মোডাবেক	2000/-	eo,000/-	২০২০-২১ অর্থ সাল
	41	অন্যান্য মনিহারি (টেশনারী মালামাল কর	) &	2000/-	60,000/-	3
	01	विविद्य श्रकात यावदार्थ <u>स्त्र</u> वार्ग क्रमा	में ले	\$000/-	2,00,000/-	3
	8	যন্তপতি ও সরঞ্জামানি ক্রব	- 3	\$000/-	3,00,000/-	9
	41	আসবাবপত্র ক্রম	- 5	2000/-	3,00,000/-	9
	61	কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী ক্রয়	à	2000/-	£0,000/-	76
	91	কম্পিউটার এবং আনুবাসিং তব্য	, g	3000/-	-\000,009	à
	b. i	LAN Products & Network Accessories बना	k de	3000/-	eo,000/-	76
	31	क्रीड़ा गांध्वी क्य	2	2000/-	60,000/-	75
	301	যানবাহনের কাঁচামাল ও পুচর যারাংশ করা	ा वे	3000/-	@o,oco/-	- Ja
	221	পোশাক সেলাই ও রিক সরবরাহ	ম ঐ	3000/-	eo,000/-	76
	341	প্রশিক্ষণের মালামাল ক্রম্ব	2	2000/-	£0,000/-	75
39.	দরণর	আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	মোঃ হাকিবুর রহমান।			
3b.	দরপত্র পদবী	আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার	পুলিশ সুপার (প্রশাসন), পক্ষে-আভিদনাল আইজি, এণ্টি টেররিজম ইউনিট, চাকা।			
35.	দরণত্র ঠিকানা	আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার	বড়ি ন্ম-৩৫, সোহরাওয়ার্শী এডিনিউ, ব্লক-কে, বারিধারা, মাকা-১২১২			
₹o.	দরণর	আহ্বানকারীর ফোন নং	04-86620988			
	-					

विरुप्त पर्वावनीः क) मतनरवत जनन कार्यक्रम "The Public Procurement Act-2006" & "The Public Procurement Regulations-2008" अरा, अत क्मीस महत्याधिक विवि ध्याकातक परिकाशिक दृद्ध । থ) নির্যারিত সময়ের পরে আর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

ণ) অন্তৰায়ী কৰ্তুপক্ষ কোন কাৰণ দৰ্শানো বাভিৱেকে যে কোন দৰণত্ৰ পূৰ্ণাল বা আংশিক গ্ৰহণ এবং বাছিল কৰার ক্ষমতা

মোঃ হাবিবুর রহমান বিশি-৭৭০৫১০৪৭০৫ পলিশ সপার (প্রশাসন) য়াডিশনাল আইজি, একি টেববিজন ইউনিট বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা ফোলা ৩২-৪৮৮১৩৭৪৩, স্যান্ত্রা ৪৮৮১৩৭৪৫ E-mail: atu.spadmin@police.gov.bd

### Man, son found murdered

Our Correspondent, Barishal

Police recovered bodies of a man and his son from Bakergani upazila vesterday and on Friday night. The deceased, Yeasin

Howlader, 21, and his father Helal Uddin, of Koladoania village in Pirojpur's Nazirpur upazila, used to sell fish traps (locally called chai). Officer in Charge (OC)

of Bakerganj Police Station Abul Kalam said they first recovered Yeasin's throatslit body from a jungle near Pandob river at Laxmipasha village on Friday evening.

Nearly 13 hours of the incident villagers spotted Helal's body at a nearby place around 7:00am yesterday, the OC said.

Police primarily suspects that criminals might have killed them and took away their trawler and money.



Six hundred families dependent on daily-basis work in Hemayetpur union of Pabna Sadar upazila received food items along with plants of various fruit trees and herbs yesterday as Pabna district Jubo League distributed the materials with the sponsorship from Square Group. Under the initiative of the conglomerate, 17100 needy families, who became jobless due to the coronavirus pandemic, have so far got such help in Pabna town and nine unions of Sadar upazila.

#### DOCKYARD & ENGINEERING WORKS LTD

BANGLADESH NAVY SONAKANDA, BANDOR, NARAYANGANJ

E-mail - commercial@dewbn.gov.bd, www.dewbn.gov.bd

Ref: 06.02.6758.165.07.193.20.07

Dated 02 July 2020

#### AMENDED INVITATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TENDER Ref:

DEW Ltd Tender no: 06.02.6758.165.07.193.20.1758 Dated 04 June 2020

Please be informed that we have amended the following tender schedule for procuring of All Terrain Mobile Crane with Telescopic Boom and accessories, 100 Ton Capacity against DEW Ltd Tender no: 06.02.6758.165.07.193.20.1758 Dated 04 June 2020:

SL	Procuring entity name	For	Read
01	Tender notice clause no: 05, Tender document last selling date	06 July 2020	21 July 2020
02	Tender notice clause no: 06, Tender closing Date and time	07 July 2020 time: 12:15 PM	22 July 2020 time: 12:15 PM
03	Tender notice clause no: 07, Tender opening Date and time	07 July 2020 time: 12:30 PM	22 July 2020 time: 12:30 PM
04	Annex-B, Technical speification of All Terrain Mobile Crane with Telescopic Boom and accessories	Technical spcification, serial no 15e II, 15e IV, 15 e V, 15e VI, 15 f III, 15 f V, 15gI b	Necessary amendments are available in webside www.dewbn.gov.bd

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

For Managing Director GD- 1076

### Three hundi traders held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Members Guard Bangladesh (BGB) detained three suspected international hundi traders along with 1.15 lakh US dollar from Khajura Bus Stand area in Jashore town on Friday night.

The arrestees identified as Shah Alam, 32, of Balunda village, Masud Rana, 28, of Ramchandrapur village, and Zakir Hossain, 36, of Gajipur village, under Benapole Port Police Station.

Lt Col Selim Reza, commanding officer (CO) of BGB 49 Battalion, said a BGB team, acting on a tip-off, intercepted a Dhaka-bound private car from Benapole around 10:00pm, and detained three passengers of the car.

After searching their bodies, the border guards seized 1.15 lakh US dollar from their possession, the CO added.

Russia welcomed a pledge of unity between Palestinian factions Fatah and Hamas against Israel's West Bank annexation plans. In a rare joint press conference on Thursday, the rival factions pledged a united campaign against Israel's prospective plans to annex territory in the occupied West Bank. "We noted with satisfaction the joint press conference held yesterday by representatives of Fatah and Hamas during which a decision was announced to jointly defend the interests of the Palestinian government based on the platform of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation," said Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday. Fatah, which controls the Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority, and Islamist group Hamas that runs the Gaza Strip have been plagued by divisions for more than a decade. The joint press conference was spurred by their common opposition to US President Donald Trump's Middle East plan. The plan paves the way for Israel to annex roughly 30 percent of the occupied West Bank, including Jewish settlements in the territory considered illegal under international law.

#### **Canada suspends extradition** with HK over China security law

Canada on Friday suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong to protest the tough new national security law China has enacted in the financial hub. Canada is also halting exports of sensitive military gear to Hong Kong and updating its travel advisory for the city so Canadians will know how the law might affect them, the foreign ministry said. The Chinese legislation enacted this week outlaws acts of subversion, secession, terrorism and colluding with foreign forces. Beijing has faced a groundswell of criticism, primarily from Western nations, over the law, which radically increases China's control over Hong Kong. China's leaders say the suite of powers will restore stability after a year of sometimes violent protests and will not stifle freedoms. But police have already begun arresting people for possessing protest flags and banners, and the government in Hong Kong has made clear certain political views, especially calls for independence, are now outlawed.

#### North Korea says no need for resuming talks with US

North Korea does "not feel any need" to resume talks with Washington, a senior diplomat for the country said yesterday, days after Seoul called for a summit as it seeks improved ties with Pyongyang. The statement by the North's vice foreign

minister Choe Son Hui came after former US national security advisor John Bolton on Thursday reportedly said President Donald Trump might pursue another meeting with leader Kim Jong Un in October. South Korean President Moon Jae-in -who has long backed engagement with the North -- on Tuesday also called for another meeting between Kim and Trump, saying the South would be making "utmost efforts" to make it happen. But Pyongyang does "not feel any need to sit face to face with the US", Choe said in a statement carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency. "The US is mistaken if it thinks things like negotiations would still work on us," Choe said.



Dakota, on Friday.

## 'Angry mobs' trying to erase history Trump attacks 'left-wing cultural revolution' in Mount Rushmore address

REUTERS, Mount Rushmore National Memorial

President Donald Trump on Friday accused "angry mobs" of trying to erase history with efforts to remove or rethink monuments to US historical figures and used a speech at Mount Rushmore to paint himself as a bulwark against left-wing extremism. On a day when seven US states posted a record

number of new COVID-19 cases, the pandemic moved further into Trump's inner circle. Kimberly Guilfoyle, a senior campaign official and the girlfriend of Donald Trump Jr, tested positive in South Dakota before the event, according to Sergio Gor, a Trump campaign official. Trump Jr tested negative, Gor said.

The pre-July 4 holiday event drew 7,500 people, packed into an outdoor amphitheater. Many did not wear masks, defying the advice of health officials who have urged Americans to avoid large gatherings to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Trump has not worn a mask in public and made only limited reference to the pandemic in his remarks. Speaking underneath the famed landmark depicting four US presidents, Trump warned that the demonstrations over racial inequality threatened the foundations of the US political system.



"Make no mistake, this left wing cultural revolution is designed to overthrow the American revolution," Trump said. "Our children are taught in school to hate their own country.

In the nationwide unrest following the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died in police custody in Minneapolis, protesters in several cities have vandalized the statues of leaders, including Confederate generals who led a rebellion against the US government during the 1861-65 US civil war.

"Angry mobs are trying to tear down statues of our founders, deface our most sacred memorials, and unleash a wave of violent crime in our cities," Trump

Trump trails presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden in opinion polls in key states and is eager to boost his campaign through a tough response to social unrest.

There is a new far-left fascism that demands absolute allegiance. If you do not speak its language, perform its rituals, recite its mantras, and follow its commandments then you will be censored, banished, blacklisted, persecuted, and punished. Not gonna happen to us," Trump said.

Trump's speech at Mount Rushmore, which depicts US presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, comes amid Native American protests. Some were arrested after blocking a road to the South Dakota landmark, according to video on social media. They have criticized Trump's visit for increasing the risk of spreading COVID-19 and for celebrating US independence in an area that is sacred to them.

The president will hold another celebration for the July 4 holiday on Saturday in Washington.

## 'Eat out to help out'

British FM tells Britons to save economy

AFP, London

Britain's finance minister urged people Saturday to "eat out to help out" the economy claw its way from a historic decline sparked by the coronavirus crisis.

The comments Chancellor Rishi Sunak were published on the day England finally reopened its beloved pubs and the rest of the hospitality sector after more than three months of lockdown.

Britain's shutdown has been one of Europe's longest because of an official toll - 44,131 -- that only trails those of the United States and Brazil.

Sunak said the closures been especially painful for Britain because consumption makes up about two-third of its gross domestic product.

"That's more than most of our peers," he told The Times newspaper.

"So we've got a situation like this, with social distancing we're obviously going to be particularly impacted by that."

Sunak said he "worried about a generation that is scarred by coronavirus" -especially younger people who see the hospitality sector as their way into the job market.

"For me this is really about social justice," he said.

"People act responsibly, but ultimately if we eat out to help out we can protect those jobs. It's not abstract."

The true scale of Britain's unemployment problem will only be revealed once the government starts winding down its jobs furlough scheme in August.

state currently The supports 80 percent of most people's wages. But jobless claims still surged 126 percent to 2.8 million in the three months to May.

Sunak will make an economic statement to parliament next week that will be watched closely for signs of how much support the government intends to give businesses in the future.



### Canada PM faces third ethics probe

AFP, Ottawa

Canada's ethics watchdog said Friday he has launched an investigation into Justin Trudeau, after a controversial contract to manage a major government program was awarded to a charity with links to the prime minister's family.

Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner Mario Dion tweeted that he had "informed" Trudeau of the decision. His investigation is confidential and will be the subject of a report once it is completed.

Trudeau's government had announced in late June that it was awarding WE Charity the management of the CAN\$900 million (US\$662 million) federal program, which provides grants of up to \$5,000 to eligible students for volunteer work with nonprofit organizations during the coronavirus pandemic.

Trudeau, his wife and his mother were all at one time or another invited as speakers by WE Charity. Their links to the group led opposition parties to suggest preferential treatment.

The Ethics Commissioner has already released two reports concluding that Trudeau violated the Conflict of Interest Act: in 2017, for taking a vacation on the Aga Khan's private island, and last year for trying to influence legal proceedings in the SNC-Lavalin case, in which a subsidiary of the engineering company was accused of paying bribes to secure contracts in Libya.

#### 'CYBER ATTACK' ON NUCLEAR SITE

## Iran vows response

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran will retaliate against any country that carries out cyber attacks on its nuclear sites, the head of civilian defence said, after a fire at its Natanz plant which some Iranian officials said may have been caused by cyber sabotage.

The Natanz uranium-enrichment site, much of which is underground, is one of several Iranian facilities monitored by inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (ÍAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog.

Iran's top security body said on Friday the cause of the "incident" at the nuclear site had been determined, but "due to security considerations" it would be announced at a convenient time. Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation initially reported

an "incident" had occurred early on Thursday at Natanz, located in the desert in the central province of Isfahan. It later published a photo of a one-storey brick building with its roof and walls partly burned. A door hanging off

its hinges suggested there had been an explosion inside the "Responding to cyber attacks is part of the country's defence might. If it is proven that our country has been targeted by a cyber attack, we will respond," civil defence

chief Gholamreza Jalali told state TV late on Thursday. An article issued on Thursday by state news agency IRNA addressed what it called the possibility of sabotage by enemies such as Israel and the United States, although it stopped short of accusing either directly.



An aerial view shows flooded Kuma River caused by heavy rain at a residential area in Hitoyoshi, Kumamoto prefecture, southern Japan, in this photo taken by Kyodo, yesterday. Japan asked thousands of people to evacuate their homes on its southern island of Kyushu, media said yesterday, following unprecedented torrential rains in which 15 people are feared dead and nine missing.

## New virus strain more infectious

The genetic variation of the novel coronavirus that dominates the world today infects human cells more readily than the original that emerged in China, according to a new study published in the journal Cell.

The lab-based research suggests this current mutation is more transmissible between people in the real world compared to the previous iteration, but this hasn't yet been proven.

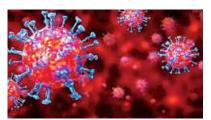
"I think the data is showing that there is a single mutation that actually makes the virus be able to replicate better, and maybe have high viral loads," Anthony Fauci, the United States's top infectious disease specialist, who wasn't involved in the research, commented to Journal of the American Medical Association.

"We don't have a connection to whether an individual does worse with this or not. It just seems that the virus replicates better and may be more transmissible, but this is still at the stage of trying to confirm that," he added.

Researchers from the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and Duke University in North Carolina partnered with the University of Sheffield's COVID-19 Genomics UK research group to analyze genome

samples published on GISAID, an international resource for sharing genome sequences.

They found that the current variant, called "D614G," makes a small but potent change in the "spike" protein that protrudes from the surface of the virus, which it uses to invade and infect human cells.



The scientists first posted their paper to the medical preprint site bioRxiv in April, where it received 200,000 hits, a record.

But it was initially criticized because the scientists had not proved that the

The team therefore carried out additional experiments, many at the behest of the editors of Cell.

mutation itself was responsible for its domination; it could have benefitted from other factors or from chance.

They analyzed the data of 999 British patients hospitalized with COVID-19 and observed that those with the variant had more viral particles in them, but without this changing the severity of their disease.

Laboratory experiments meanwhile showed that the variant is three to six times more capable of infecting human cells. "It seems likely that it's a fitter

virus," said Erica Ollmann Saphire,

who carried out one of the experiments at La Jolla Institute for Immunology. As far as we know, although the variant circulating right now is more "infectious," it may or may not be

more "transmissible" between people. At any rate, said Nathan Grubaugh, a virologist at the Yale School of Public Health who was not part of the research: The expansion of the variant "whether through natural selection or

the pandemic." Writing in a commentary piece, Grubaugh added that, for the general public, these results don't change much.

chance, means that this variant now is

"While there are still important studies needed to determine if this will influence drug or vaccine development in any meaningful way, we don't expect that D614G will alter our control measures or make individual infections worse," he said.

## Democracy books disappear from Hong Kong libraries

Books written by prominent Hong Kong democracy activists have started to disappear from the city's libraries, online records show, days after Beijing imposed a draconian national security law on the finance hub.

Among the authors whose titles are no longer available are Joshua Wong, one of the city's most prominent young activists, and Tanya Chan, a well known prodemocracy lawmaker.

Beijing's national security law

was imposed on Tuesday and is the most radical shift in how the semi-autonomous city is run since it was handed back to China by Britain in 1997.

China's authoritarian leaders say the powers will restore stability after a year of prodemocracy protests, will not stifle freedoms and will only target a "very small minority".

But it has already sent fear coursing through a city used to speaking openly, with police arresting people for possessing slogans pushing independence or greater autonomy and businesses scrambling to remove protest displays.

showed at least three titles by Wong, Chan and local scholar Chin Wan are no longer available for lending at any of dozens of

outlets across the city. The national security law targets

acts of subversion, secession, terrorism and colluding with foreign forces. Any promotion of independence or greater autonomy appears to be banned the legislation. Another vaguely worded provision bans inciting hatred towards

Chinese or Hong Kong government. On the mainland, similar security laws are routinely used to crush dissent.

freedom still exists. Hong Kong has some culture where topics that would be taboo written about. But Beijing has made clear it wants education in the city to become

The new security law and the removal of books raises questions of whether academic of Asia's best universities and a campus on the mainland are still discussed and more "patriotic" especially after a year of huge, often violent and largely youth-led pro-democracy protests.

# The experience of fighting COVID-19 by QR codes

STAR HEALTH DESK

Our everyday schedule has been altogether subject to the advanced mobile phone applications. Furthermore, this has been the truth for a huge number of individuals in China since halfway through the Coronavirus emergency — and it could yet remain as such for years to come, as the nation fights to recoup from it.

Depending on versatile innovation and large information, the Chinese government has utilised a colour based "health code" system to control individuals' movements and check the spread of the Coronavirus.

The automatically generated quick response codes, regularly known as QR codes, were doled out to residents as a marker of their health or wellbeing status. Despite the fact that specialists presently can't seem to make the wellbeing codes obligatory, in numerous urban areas, residents without the application would not have the option to leave their residential compounds or enter most public places.

The colours were allocated by the provincial epidemic control database: individuals who have been analysed as affirmed, suspected or asymptomatic cases, or individuals with a fever will get the red colour code; their nearby contacts will get the yellow code; and individuals with no record in the database will get the green code — which means they are safe to travel.



The colours of the QR codes choose individuals' opportunity of movement: green code holders are permitted to go inside the area, yellow code holders are not permitted to travel, and red code holders will be treated and isolated.

To get into open places, for example, cafés, markets, business places individuals need to show their own QR code – and just individuals with a green colour code will be permitted to section. Individuals with yellow or red code, it implies you have been hailed for reasons unknown. In the event that, for example, somebody had been on a plane with an individual

infected with Coronavirus, that individual would be flagged and code may change the colour. Those with a yellow or red code may be asked to self-isolation – or even need to go into institutional isolation.

The entire thing depends on huge information implies local governments have a database of individuals' movement history, wellbeing history, and whether they have been in close contact with any individual who has contaminated by the coronavirus.

A quarter of a year on, with the infection to a great extent contained and lockdown gauges step by step lifted across

the greater part of China, the little square standardised identifications have stayed set up are despite everything administering individuals' lives.

Chinese office labourers show their cell phones with their wellbeing code to a watchman, which shows they have consent to travel and are without infection, as they show up.

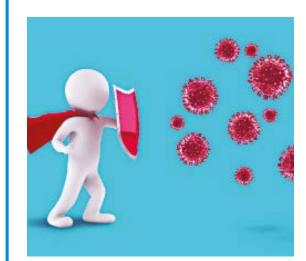
Following China's lead, different governments have likewise gone to comparative innovation to fight the infection. Singapore a month ago propelled a contact-tracing cell phone application, which would permit specialists to recognise individuals who have been presented to COVID-19 patients.

The Japanese government is thinking about the reception of a comparable application. Moscow has additionally acquainted a QR code system with track developments and authorise its Coronavirus lockdown.

This kind of simple technology could be introduced in Bangladesh as it does not require any sophisticated technological know-how. The main issues would be for countries like Bangladesh the availability of nation-wide trustworthy database. But there are opportunities on the other hand. Introducing this kind of technology would create a pressure for generating the database.

We need to start somewhere and if we sit idle for things to be prepared completely, it will not happen eventually.

#### FAO



## Why is it so hard to stop the spread of the coronavirus?

Stopping the pandemic depends on the actions of each and every one of us, especially as cities and states work to open back up. Many of us are the silent spreaders; but others, who are not infected, also play a pivotal role in ending or continuing this pandemic.

Without changing our behaviours and following the basics of distancing ourselves 6 feet, avoiding large group gatherings, no face touching, wearing face masks, and frequent handwashing, we will continue to be responsible for the continued spread of this unseen attacker.

The virus's spread has continued and a vaccine to stop the spread is not available yet and will not be for several months.

Source: WebMD

## HEALT H bulletin



## Loneliness and mental health in young people: possible effects of COVID-19 lockdowns

In a survey performed during the pandemic, fully onethird of adolescents reported high levels of loneliness. To determine whether measures for disease containment might portend future mental health problems, researchers performed a rapid review of studies focused on the relationship between loneliness and mental health in young people.

Correlations between loneliness and depressive symptoms ranged from moderate to large in 45 studies examining this issue, mostly involving adolescents and young adults. Generalised and social anxiety were also associated with isolation. Associations were found between isolation/loneliness and suicidal ideation, self-harm, and disordered-eating behaviours. One study examined mental health problems after enforced isolation in earlier pandemics; children subjected to quarantine were 5 times more likely than controls to require mental health services.

We can expect physical-distancing measures and disruptions to social supports and activities to lead to an increase in mental health problems. Clinicians and parents can anticipate manifestations of stress like clinginess, inattention, and irritability, particularly in younger children.

## Routine vaccination of children in COVID-19

Prof M Karim Khan

Recently many parents are seeking advice from doctors regarding routine vaccination of children in the COVID-19 pandemic. Frequently asked questions are: whether routine vaccination of their children to be continued or not? Some are worried to go to a vaccine centre for vaccination because of COVID-19. Do they need any special precautions?

The World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations
International Children's Fund
(UNICEF) and the Global Alliance
for Vaccines and Immunisations
(GAVI) have asked everyone to
continue regular vaccination as
per schedule to prevent vaccinepreventable disease outbreaks in the
future.

the last three months parents are not coming with their child for regular vaccination because of apprehension, that they or their children might get infected with COVID-19, as most of the centres are crowded. Well, a conscious parent may think as such and rightly so, as safety comes first. Now, what to do in this case? A simple answer to it is - please continue the routine vaccination of your child. But government programmes like the national immunisation day or other mass vaccination campaigns are suspended for the time being.

Immunisation is an essential health service that protects susceptible individuals from vaccine-

preventable diseases. By providing timely immunisations, individuals and communities remain protected and the likelihood of a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak decreases. Preventing a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak does not only saves lives but also requires fewer resources than responding to the outbreak and helps to reduce the burden on a health system already strained by the COVID-19 pandemic.

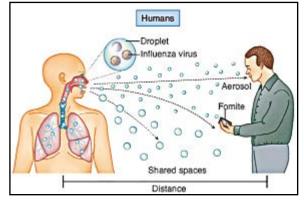
Some precautions may be taken before going out to the vaccination centre for vaccination such as confirming your date and time of visit earlier over the phone so that you do not need to stay there

for a longer period in the queue with your child. Everyone should maintain health hygiene properly. Put on masks as appropriate and maintain social distancing. Leave the place as soon as the job is done. After coming back home from the vaccination centre, remove all the clothing and take a shower.

We all are eagerly waiting for an effective vaccine for COVID-19 and hope that it is invented soon. Until then please stay home, stay safe and continue routine vaccination of your child as per schedule.

The author is a Professor of Paediatrics at Community Based Medical College (CBMC), Mymensingh.





#### How long am I contagious?

Flu: You can actually infect someone before you start feeling symptoms of the flu. You are most contagious in the 3 to 4 days after you start to feel sick, but you remain contagious as long as you have symptoms. Usually this is about a week, but it could be a few days more for children or people with weak immune systems. Some people can transfer the virus without ever getting symptoms.

COVID-19: This infection can cause fever, chills, trouble breathing, body aches, fatigue, cough, and nausea. But you can spread the virus 2 to 3 days before you notice any of these signs. You can also pass it on to others if you are not showing symptoms. If you are sick, you can be contagious for a while, so stay away from others until your symptoms improve and you have been without a fever for 3 days in a row. If you test positive for the virus but do not have symptoms, it is best to keep away from others for 10 days to see if you get sick

Chest cold: Sometimes called bronchitis, it happens when regular cold symptoms move down to inflame your lungs, which makes you cough. But whether it is a cold, the flu, or some other virus, the rule of thumb is the same: You are contagious for as long as you have symptoms, and maybe a little bit longer. To stop the spread, keep your hands clean at all times and cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough.

f /StarHealthBD

## **HOW TO HOME QUARANTINE**

The home quarantined person should:



Stay in a well-ventilated single-room preferably with an attached toilet



Wash hand frequently with soap and water or with alcohol-based sanitizer



Needs to stay away from elderly people, pregnant women, children



Restrict his/her movement within the house



Under no circumstances attend any social/religious gathering



Avoid sharing household items like dishes, glasses, cups, utensils, towels, bedding



Wear a surgical mask at all time. The mask should be changed every 6-8 hours



Dispose off used mask in a closed bin and bin should also be handled responsibly



If symptoms appear, he/she should immediately inform the nearest health centre



8 | The Paily Star



LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA SUNDAY JULY 5, 2020, ASHAR 21, 1427 BS

## Exorbitant oxygen bills putting extra burden on patients

Government should fix the charges for oxygen and other essential support

**T** E are shocked to learn that some private hospitals are charging patients higher than usual for oxygen support during a national health crisis. According to our report, as the number of patients needing oxygen has gone up with the rising number of Covid-19 cases, some private hospitals have taken this as an opportunity to make extra profit by charging the patients unreasonably high amounts for the oxygen support. While before the pandemic, the charges for per hour of oxygen ranged between Tk 100 and Tk 200, many private hospitals are now charging Tk 200 to Tk 400 for the same service. Reportedly, a private hospital in Chattogram has charged a patient Tk 3.05 lakh for giving her oxygen support for 10 days.

As we understand, this has been happening due to a lack of proper government policy and mechanisms to oversee the charges of essential medical services in private hospitals. In the absence of a regulatory mechanism, some hospitals have become very ruthless towards the patients when it comes to charging them for Covid-19 treatment. The hospitals, however, are blaming the increased cost of oxygen and other equipment for the higher bills.

We believe the government has a lot to do here. As a first step, to lessen the economic burden on patients, the government should immediately fix the charges of oxygen and other essential medical support and form a body to oversee that the hospitals comply with the government directives. If the hospitals' claim about the increase in oxygen and other necessary medical equipment's prices in the market is found to be true, the government should take action against those responsible for the price hikes through continuous monitoring of the market. Besides, it should consider giving subsidies to the private hospitals to ensure that the oxygen prices and treatment costs remain stable.

The DGHS director's (hospitals and clinics) comment in this regard is very unfortunate, as he claimed that he had not heard about any allegations of high oxygen bills. We expect that the government agencies concerned will stop being in denial mode when patients are finding it hard to bear the treatment cost of Covid-19 in private hospitals and do the needful to provide them some relief.

## Day labourers and others are facing hunger

The govt must act now to save them

report in this paper yesterday highlighted the grim reality faced by day labourers as they wait L indefinitely for jobs to come their way. Their lives have become acutely harder with the spread of Covid-19, leading to shutdowns and employment opportunities dwindling close to zero. Scenes of worried daily labourers gathering at various spots in the city, waiting to be hired and failing to get a job, have become common. Without these jobs, these labourers face going hungry with their families and possible eviction from their homes as they continue to pay the rent. Along with day labourers are rickshaw pullers, electricians, sanitary workers, hawkers and many others, who are now without any means to earn.

These are worrying signs and the government must take cognisance of a crisis that is already unfolding—the crisis of hunger among an increasing number of poor who have

According to the report, many workers said they did not receive any government support since the outbreak of the pandemic. One worker said two individuals came to her home and collected the NID and phone numbers of her and her family members at least seven times over the last three months, claiming that this was for relief, but no such relief ever came. The secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment has said that there is no separate fund to help day labourers and that as shutdowns are relaxed, they will soon find jobs. But what happens till then? How are these day labourers and others in the informal sector supposed to feed themselves and their families? How will they pay the rent?

We are faced with a dire situation. Day labourers and many in the informal sector are the hardest hit by the economic fallout of the pandemic. Economists have pointed out that the pandemic has resulted in an increase in the number of urban poor who must now be included in social safety net programmes. Apart from targeting these new poor as well as those who were already poor, the government must make sure that the budget allocations are distributed properly.

The authorities must make accurate lists of these people and provide food and cash relief for them until jobs are available again. This means enforcing the zero tolerance policy for irregularities that so often end up sabotaging all

## TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

#### Ease internet access

While the debate over whether to conduct all academic classes over the internet amidst the pandemic remains prevalent, a major problem that stands as a barrier is the issue of affordability and access to uninterrupted internet connection. As many of our students come from rural areas, they don't have the opportunity to use the internet with ease. Where there is no connection of the basic wireless internet services, the students must opt for the data networks, which tend to be costly. As a student myself, I would like to humbly request the authorities to ensure internet access. Another feasible option could be to sign contracts with telecommunication companies to provide internet to students at a subsidised rate, which will benefit the pupils immensely.

Yeasin Arafat Razon, Dhaka

## Formalise the invisible workforce

The pandemic can be an opportunity to review the rights of domestic workers across Bangladesh



Daily Star shared horrific pictures of the violence inflicted upon 14 year old Asma Khatun, a domestic worker employed in the capital's Uttara. A

year ago, she had been employed for Tk 5,000 per month by Abu Taher and his wife, who promised to care for her "like their own daughter". No such thing happened of course, and she was made to work throughout the day, with barely any time for sleep. When the physical and emotional stress led to her making mistakes, she was verbally abused. After that, the beatings started, and it soon turned into torture—she was burned with cigarettes and hot oil, sometimes with dry chilli sprinkled onto her wounds. She was never given any access to healthcare, and they routinely stopped her from contacting her family.

Whenever we hear of a story like this, our first thought is-what sort of people torture and abuse a child, for whom, as employers, they have a duty of care? However, this is not the first time that we have been shocked by the cases of inhumane torture being inflicted on vulnerable young domestic workers. The question we must ask ourselves is not why, but how. How do we still have a sector of employment that is set up so that workers are at the mercy of their employers, dependant on their "kindness", with no way to claim their rights? And in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, are domestic workers becoming even more vulnerable?

The informal nature of domestic work makes it extremely difficult to quantify the number of people actually employed in this sector in Bangladesh, leading to many rights organisations calling them the "invisible workforce". According to a 2006 study report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka office, over two million domestic workers were estimated to be operating in Bangladesh in 2005, although this figure did not include workers operating in the Dhaka City Corporation areas, where a majority of them are located. Another research paper by Caribou Digital put the number of domestic workers at 10.5 million in 2019. An ILO survey (2019) conducted with 500 domestic workers showed that an overwhelming majority of domestic workers were women, and over one-fourth of them were children. This survey also confirmed what we already know about domestic work—low wages, long working hours, and the very real possibility of physical and mental abuse means that employment in this sector cannot be considered to be "decent work".

At an online seminar organised by domestic workers' rights organisation Suniti, speakers warned that during the pandemic, domestic workers are being pushed deeper into their already precarious situations. The pitfalls are

different for workers who live with their employers and workers who rent rooms, usually in slums, and travel to work. For live-in workers, there is a greater possibility of being forced to work harder and for longer hours, with less time for rest. There is also a higher chance of being emotionally and physically abused, for the same reasons that incidents of domestic violence have surged across the world (so much so that the UN Secretary General

these "part-time" domestic workers (although most of them work full-time hours) losing their jobs without notice. The fact that people have found it easier to let go of their domestic workers but not their chauffeurs or security guards, who are also "coming in from outside", is an example of the many gendered inequalities that are manifesting during the pandemic. According to data collected by Suniti from domestic workers from



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Antonio Guterres in April asked "all governments to put women's safety first as they respond to the pandemic"). Live-in workers could also have their freedoms restricted and be forbidden from going outside or being near their families "for their own good". In all of these scenarios, the psychological trauma for child domestic workers (who almost always live with their employers) is likely to be far greater.

For workers who don't live with their employers, the greatest risk is the possibility of losing their livelihoods. While there is no clear data yet, there have already been multiple reports of

four areas in Dhaka, only 35 percent of respondents received any assistance, from public or private sectors, after losing their jobs, and whatever they received only lasted for a few days. Amidst this financial (and for many, food) crisis, 85 percent of respondents said they had been victims of domestic violence at home as a result of their loss of income.

The "general holiday" did not apply to part-time domestic workers who retained their jobs, and a majority of them were compelled to travel to work, putting themselves, their families and their employers at risk. The loss of autonomy in this top-down relationship is clear,

even without concrete data—it is highly unlikely for a domestic worker to have enough savings to be able to survive the pandemic without monthly wages (more than one-third of domestic workers reported having debt burdens in the 2019 ILO survey), but it is even more unlikely for them to have the authority to ask their employers for wages and *not* come in to work. However, if the employers do get infected, domestic workers are usually the first to be suspected of spreading the

In this scenario, what can we do to ensure that our domestic workers have greater agency and power to negotiate their rights? They say "charity begins at home" but it is this sense of "charity" that has been used by many to perpetuate a system of employment that is inherently oppressive. We have all heard the reasoning—"at least these children are protected from child marriage if they work in a house, at least these young girls are safer here instead of in a factory" and so on. However, cases like that of Asma Khatun make it clear that what these workers need is not charity, but proper legal and social protections and formal recognition of their labour as a crucial part

With that in mind, the Bangladesh government adopted the Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy in 2015. While the policy does recognise domestic work as a profession and gives guidelines regarding work conditions and benefits, it does not outline any minimum wage or working hours. The policy also allows for children as young as 12 to be employed, provided they are not engaged in heavy and dangerous work. Child labour is a complicated issue that cannot be rooted out in a day; nevertheless, as a country that is on its way to achieving middle income status, we need to do better-Bangladesh should no longer allow its children to be employed in a sector that is so notoriously difficult to monitor and where its workers are so prone to abuse.

While the policy is a step in the right direction, it is nowhere near enough to give domestic workers the protections they require. Since domestic workers are excluded from the Labour Act 2013, they do not have any legal rights and cannot be members of trade unions. Without this right to organise, these workers cannot demand their rights, and the vicious cycle continues. In the wake of the pandemic, there have been many debates regarding a new world order. Can we not break the cycle in this post-pandemic world? In the US, the National Domestic Workers Alliance has set up a coronavirus care fund that is providing emergency assistance to those who need it. We must do everything we can, not to help domestic workers with our "good intentions", but to facilitate the building of a similar alliance, so that the workers themselves can demand decent work and a life of dignity.

Shuprova Tasneem is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*. Her Twitter handle is @ShuprovaTasneem

## Can we undo the harm we have done?



Kazi Amdadul Hoque

ACK in the day, when a child was born, the elders used to plant a tree in the baby's name, implying that the tree will grow with the baby and help the baby with fruit and shade when they grow up. The

plant was nurtured and cared for, just like the newborn was nurtured and cared for. They said, a child and a plant can be no one's enemy. The two go hand in hand, in innocence and life.

The ecosystem is the source of food for almost all beings—human, plant and animal. The sea provides fish to humans, food for its sea creatures and a home for all life within it. The same goes for mountains, forests and beaches. The ecosystem also provides livelihoods for the people in it.

Times, however, have changed. The care that was once reciprocal has become more and more one-sided. What was once seen as an inherent part of life is now only viewed as a money-making machine. The tree that once bore pure fruit is being injected with fertiliser and chemicals for artificial produce that stays outwardly fresh for longer. The quality of such food is questionable at best and has been associated with multiple diseases. The tree which once gave cool relief is being chopped off for industrial space to create factories, and homes and tourism spots for those who can afford it. Rivers which once gave fish are now filled with waste, causing damage to aquatic flora and fauna.

While these are seemingly direct interactions with nature, there is another, more indirect impact that human technology has had on nature. We have left carbon footprints through convenience appliances like

air conditioners, refrigerators, cars and washing machines. Plastic and chemicals are hiding in everyday products, like face wash and toothpaste, which ultimately make their way to the stomachs of innocent sea creatures. In our quest for a fast-paced life, we have unknowingly and knowingly caused great anguish to the environment in which we live.

We humans are a species considered to be much above others in terms of

had to take a step back for nature to bloom again—for dolphins to come back to our beaches, for birds to start chirping again, for pollution levels to drop and for the ozone layer to heal. The damage to nature is so immense that for years, nature tried to warn us with cyclones, floods, drought, earthquakes and other natural disasters. When humankind still did not pay heed, it had to push us away from itself to recoup. Covid-19 is nothing



PHOTO: COLLECTED

intellect. However, we may have proved ourselves unworthy of such a stature. Individually, institutionally, nationally and internationally, we have all played our collective parts in the ruin of nature

and consequently, ourselves. Scientists and environmentalists are trying to tell us how badly we are damaging the environment. The world had to lock down and all of humankind but nature's unbridled fury, unleashed on us for the years and years of damage we inflicted upon it.

An example of the survival spirit of nature when humans are not there to disrupt its progress is the Sagorlota, or the Beach Morning Glory, a key component of the beach ecology which had disappeared from parts of Cox's Bazar due to the unbridled movement of tourists and the

construction of structures along the beach. It is sad however, that it took something like Covid-19, for this innocent green plant to make a comeback.

On an individual basis, everything from a tissue to a brick should remind us of the heavy environmental cost that must have gone into the production of the good in question—the trees that had to be cut for the tissue and the smoke that was released into the air from the brick kiln. We-not our community and not our government, but we on an individual level—can make environmentally friendly choices, like using leftover soil from river dredging, golpata and other biodegradable material for building, and jute over polythene bags for shopping.

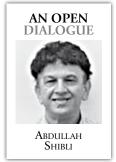
Only a few dollars can bring an environment friendly atmosphere to a family by providing a smoke free oven, alternate fuel, a solar powered light, surface water for irrigation, rainwater harvesting, a bicycle, a paddle boat and simple techniques to preserve foods, fruits and vegetables and organic fertilisers for a healthy life, both in city and rural areas. The effort may require some sort of a subsidy in the initial phases, but is definitely less costly than the price we would pay for harmful environmental practices.

In the end, it is all about perspective. A shift in perspective got us here, and another shift can take us back. It is up to us to bring back the time we used to nurture nature and love it for itself. If we can express gratitude for the bounties of nature, the ecological balance and biodiversity, we can make this world a better place. If we educate our children about the environment, not just with books but with practice, they can light a beacon of hope for the generations to come and save the environment.

Kazi Amdadul Hoque is an environmental and social activist, and Director-Strategic Planning and Head of Climate Action in Friendship. Email: hoqueka@gmail.

## How "facts" influenced Covid policy

## A critical review of forecasting models to propagate lockdown



T the beginning of this year, policymakers in many countries, including the US and the EU, decided to lock down the entire country

in order to save lives and to push back Covid-19. Their calculations were strongly influenced by work done by a few researchers at the Imperial College, London and the University of Chicago. Increasingly, the models and the numbers used to validate the conclusions regarding the wholesale lockdown recommended by these studies are being questioned. The pushback is quite universal

The title of an oped in the Wall Street Journal on June 16 was very clear, "The Data Are In: It's Time for Major Reopening". Even in our neighbouring country, Dr Giridhar R Babu, Professor and Head Lifecourse Epidemiology, Public Health Foundation of India, wrote, "Revised CDC guidelines should prompt India to re-evaluate lockdown, which was more political than epidemiological". He strongly advocates that the new norm for mitigation ought to be a focus on "cluster spread". It is abundantly clear that clusters are a critical point of transmission. Many epidemiologists and economists are now suggesting that instead of promulgating a blanket lockdown, countries must switch to selective measures to identify and mitigate pockets of Covid-19 outbreak as they emerge.

The argument leading to the nowdiscredited heavy handed lockdown policy was simple and pretty straightforward. It went as follows. If we can save human lives by closing all economic activities, curtailing the movement of humans, and isolating individuals through "social distancing", the benefit measured by

the value of each life (know as the value of statistical life or VSL) is in the millions of dollars. Most studies blindly used VSL estimates circulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the US government, which adjusting for inflation, gives a value of USD 9.5 million today. If the cost to the economy of saving this life is less than USD 9.5 million, then benefits outweigh the cost. How do we know what the cost is? In two research papers that were not peer-reviewed, or more commonly known as "working papers", both published in March 2020 in the midst of the pandemic, it was shown that the cost of saving a life, in terms of lost jobs, income, as well as avoiding hospital and medical costs that accompany morbidity and mortality is a fraction of USD 9.5 million. In other words, the cost-benefit ratio of a lockdown policy is overwhelmingly positive.

The working paper from Michael Greenstone and Vishan Nigam of the University of Chicago's Becker Friedman Institute for Economics purported to show that even moderate social distancing has the potential to save well over a million lives. Their estimates relied heavily on epidemiological models and values of key parameters used by Neil M Ferguson and his team at Imperial College, London.

Greenstone and Nigam estimated that in the USA, an estimated USD 8 trillion in mortality benefits accrue from lockdown and strict social distancing protocols. Their model relies directly on parameter values borrowed from the Imperial College model. "We project that 3-4 months of moderate social distancing beginning in late March 2020 would save 1.7 million lives by October 1. "

It is obvious that many of the strict "worst case" scenario policy prescriptions have failed to generate the benefits but has resulted in damages to economies. Lockdown was imposed without preparations, leading to unbelievable misery for

large numbers of people who found themselves without jobs, income, food, or shelter—a situation that many governments seem unwilling to acknowledge. "Further, lockdown should have been used to identify, test and isolate, and treat the most vulnerable the elderly, those with co-morbid conditions, etc. and this happened only a few countries." Dr Scott Gottlieb, a former US Commissioner of Food and Drugs, was critical of the US lockdown

A paper published in the journal *Nature* based on a study done by Global Policy Lab at the University of California, Berkeley shows that the shelter-in-place orders came at an extreme economic cost. In the same issue of Nature, researchers from the Imperial College also caution that even as lockdowns start to ease around the world, public health officials still have very limited tools to combat the coronavirus. It is now acknowledged,

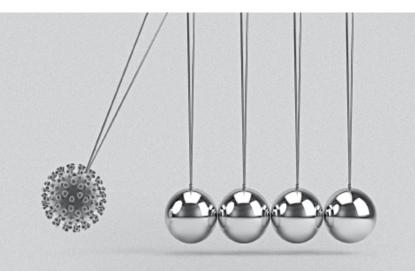


PHOTO: COLLECTED

policy, which he said was based on public fears.

US Federal Reserve Chairman Powell has been candid, so far as mistaken policies adopted in the USA are concerned. "We are not experts on epidemiology, the spread of pandemics or anything like that," Powell said in an online event in late May. "We talk to experts, and the main answer they give you is things are highly uncertain." He said that the Fed did not try to establish its own central system for monitoring or recreating health data, but pulled extensively from the publicly available information, consultations with outside experts, and a massive amount of background reading.

that the death toll would have been lower if residents of nursing homes had been shielded from infection, something that didn't happen effectively enough.

Other flaws in the Chicago and London models have now been detailed. Ironically, some models in recent weeks are still predicting that by October, there will be more than 200,000 deaths in the USA alone.

A study by Yale economists Barnett-Howell and Mobarak note that "in poor countries, the benefits of lockdowns may be lower (flattening the curve may not help in countries where health systems cannot cope with status quo demand, and the younger demographics in developing countries implies lower

mortality rates), while the costs of lockdowns may be higher (interrupting all economic activities while livelihoods depend on day-to-day wages presents a large public health threat of its own)."

In a report on March 31, 2020, in Science, a publication of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the modellers' lack of data has come under severe criticism by James Stock of Harvard University. Stock, who served on the federal Council of Economic Advisers under former President Barack Obama, has recommended that researchers focus on the accuracy of parameters, the most critical of which is a better estimate of how deadly the disease is.

"If it turns out a lot of people get infected and have few symptoms, the economically sensible approach might be to let the infection spread and accept that there will be some death toll, Stock says. "The policies are extremely different depending upon these parameters that we don't know.'

Finally, some economists have questioned the benefits of strict lockdown and are advocating "smart containment" (SC). The SC policy is based on the infection status of tested individuals. Those tested positive would be subject to stricter isolation than those who have recovered. According to Prof. Alexis Akira Toda, an economist at the University of California, San Diego, the benefits of social distancing could be achieved with less damage to the economy by publicising the level of infection in a given area. All of the economists agree that some policies are more effective if they are calibrated at the local level, with each city or region setting a policy based on the level of infection in that area. Toda, nonetheless, concedes that to avoid needless damage to the economy, the more stringent lockdown could be used when the epidemic is nearing a peak.

Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and works in information technology. He is Senior Research Fellow, International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI), a think-tank in Boston, USA.

# Professor, who do you profess to now?



Mohammad Shamsuzzaman

always wanted professor in English. When the pandemic hit and lockdown began, I ended up being a professor in pandemic. That's not a designation. That's a disaster. I live a few blocks

away from the university where I teach, here in Dhaka. I used to walk to and from the university. Since the lockdown, I realised how prophetic James J Novak was when he claimed in Bangladesh: Reflections on the Water—"Bangladesh is a small country of long distance." The university seems so far away, now that I never walk in its direction. I hardly relate to such terms as department, discipline and disciples. I still teach, though. I teach outside the box, from and in a box. I teach online. I often wonder whether this is teaching on the line.

The myth that teachers teach the way they were taught has a grain of truth in it. All good teachers are influenced by the great teachers they have had, and when good teachers become great teachers themselves, they're the transformed versions of their influences. The Covid-19 pandemic, however, has changed this truism about teaching. Teaching shifted in a jiffy from on-site to online. Some skeptics speculate that teaching online is a turn of the screw, for no teacher was ever taught to teach online. Deep down, some teachers regret that the pandemic has turned them into charlatans, despite solid expertise and experience in teaching. They feel utterly under-prepared to cope with the greatest experiment of teaching in human history—disinterested because of philosophical, ethical and intellectual resistance to teaching online.

I believe that a teacher belongs to a classroom exactly the way a pilot belongs to a cockpit. Because of the pandemic, teachers are misplaced and have lost classrooms. An ideal classroom bristles with ideas and interaction, mentored by a teacher, popularly known as a professor. Given the origin of the word from Greek, propheteia, it has something to do with prophesying or clairvoyance. To a professor, the students are pupils, which mean eyeballs in English. A professor is visually impaired without students. Physically he is not, but philosophically he is. The metaphor of students as eyes implies that a professor's vision revolves around students and that students are within the scope of his vision. So, the connection between professors and pupils is not virtual. It's visceral. With online teaching, none of these assumptions about teachers and students hold up. Teaching online is philosophically

Teaching online might be ethically iffy,

too. Despite the ubiquity of technology, a technological approach to teaching is elitist, not egalitarian. No technology comes to us gratis. Technology is a service, and it serves only those who can afford it. When it comes to the purchasing of the gadgets and grids, nations across the worid are in a race detween Ferraris and bicycles. Why do about 97.10 percent of people in Denmark have access to the internet, whereas only about 1.31 percent of people have access to the internet in Eritrea as of 2020, as the International Telecommunications Union claims? In Bangladesh, about 62.70 percent of people have access to the internet in 2020. Now match this with the information that as of 2018, about 16 percent of people in Bangladesh had smart phone penetration. Teaching online presupposes both access to the internet and smartphones, which in Bangladesh most people don't have. Teaching online renews and reinforces the

shade of trees to the warrens of bricks and mortar. Online instruction flips that dynamic of teaching. Consequently, some teachers find online teaching dry, boring and unappealing. According to an Educause survey in 2017, a whopping 91 percent of teachers in the US preferred not to teach online. Inis finding echoes teachers' sentiments across contexts about online teaching. None of us spent years in grad school to teach online, did we? We have some technical training in technology. We hardly have any pedagogical training involving technology.

We're making do, nonetheless. So, teaching and technology-and in my case, Google—are inseparably embedded. Had I not taught on Google Classroom, I perhaps wouldn't have had a residual gut resistance to teaching online. Back in 2008, I perused the essay, "Is Google Making Us Stupid," by Nicholas Carr in

Despite the ubiquity of technology, a technological approach to teaching is elitist, not egalitarian. No technology comes to us gratis. Technology is a service, and it serves only those who can afford it. When it comes to the purchasing of the gadgets and grids, nations across the world are in a race between Ferraris and bicycles. Why do about 97.10 percent of people in Denmark have access to the internet, whereas only about 1.31 percent of people have access to the internet in Eritrea as of 2020, as the **International Telecommunications Union claims?** 

divide between the haves and the havenots. Some students who are dislodged by the pandemic to the remotest areas of the country are victims. That gnaws at some teachers, who have to (but don't want to!) teach online.

Besides this philosophical and ethical resistance to teaching online, many teachers find online teaching intellectually insipid. Education is not training, not a skill-specific crash course. Education is ecological. It's a life-long process that strives to prepare humans for an ethical, informed and compassionate engagement with the physical and human environment, where various forces—both natural and artificial—intersect and interact. Education inculcates vision and wisdom to foster peace and prosperity. Education is more about interaction and inspiration than instruction. Formal education transpires in a tight-knit community of teachers and students in a physical space, which evolves from the

The Atlantic. In that essay, Carr amassed an astonishing amount of information to imply that technology is apparently detrimental to knowledge and learning. He acknowledges that the internet is "an incredibly rich store of information" to facilitate research and learning. He confesses as well that the more he stays on the Web, the more he struggles to stay focused, for the internet chips away his "capacity for concentration and contemplation." I was not immediately too sure whether Carr was confessing to the wrong crime or he was blaming the wrong culprit. Around the same time, when I read Silicon Snake Oil by Clifford Stoll, I discovered some of Carr's concerns about technology-mediated education confirmed with further evidence and explanations. Technology for education is not altogether a godsend.

Technology has made the whole business of education visual, as if education is all about showing and

seeing. But how do we make such attributes as intuition, experience, observation, imagination and sense of judgment—the core pillars of an ideal education—visible? Besides, online pedagogy is a one-size-fits-all approach. Different disciplines approach teaching differently, hands-on training versus lecturing, for example. Different students have different learning styles and aptitudes, too. An ideal pedagogical approach is never preconceived; it's flexible and adaptive. Online teaching is hardly responsive to these nuances of teaching. Perhaps the biggest concern about online education is that it feeds the perception that education is easy and instant and that teachers can teach whether students are engaged or not. Education has always been difficult and time-consuming. As Oscar Wilde in his essay The Critic as an Artist claims, "Nothing worth knowing can be taught." As teachers, we can't teach, per se; what we do and what we can do is to create an environment where learning can take place. By mere teaching, we can't create that environment. Gesture, proximity, distance, eye contact, facial expression and vocal intonation critically participate in creating that environment. These properties of teaching are missing altogether in online teaching.

Despite these shortcomings of online teaching, I would like to continue teaching online for some time. It's a fortunate accident to re-imagine teaching for a more powerful and enduring education. Online education turns us again into what we have been for centuries, guru. The word guru combines two Arabic words: guah (power) and ruah (soul). A guru empowers the souls of his students by shifting the focus of education from physical to metaphysical as well as from body to soul. Now that we're distanced from our students and are only virtually connected, we need to reinvent ourselves to engage and empower our students. We can't see them to provide them with a vision; we can't touch them to transform them; and we can't reach them to teach them. Teachers are transcendent. If they are not, they are imposters. And the system that sustains them is flawed. It needs overhauling, so online teaching gains ground as a potential option.

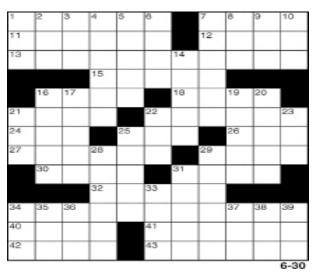
However promising that option is, it dislodges classroom and teachers-students interaction. As such, some skeptics might ask, "Professor, who do you profess to now?" When asked this, we should stay silent like a saint. We don't know whether we still need to define teaching and learning beyond such terms as teachers and students. They no longer are who they were!

Mohammad Shamsuzzaman is an Assistant Professor, Department of English and Modern Languages, North South University, Bangladesh.

#### **CROSSWORD** BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS	33 Chimney	9 Maui souvenir
1 Halts	output	10 Fellow
7 Movie	34 Get	14 Lubricated
11 Bearlike	satisfaction from	16 Wall art
12 Open space	40 Sweeping	17 Sung drama
13 Give credence	story	19 College study
to	41 Rodeo horse	20 Ship fronts
15 "Wake up,	42 Easter lead-in	21 Golf goal
Little –"	43 Smoothed, in	22 Week part
16 Speck	a way	23 Toe count
18 Oatmeal		25 Mailing need
problem	DOWN	28 Fly or flea
21 Cocoon stage	1 Edit out	29 Attached, in
22 Head out	2 Pitching stat	a way
24"Roses – red"	3 Inquire	31 Director
25 Melancholy	4 Afternoon	Kurosawa
26 Coffee, in	break	33 Spheres
slang	5 Follow as a	34 — Aviv
27 Uncommon	result	35 Clumsy galoo
thing	6 Collections	36 Relatives
29 Hamlet	7 One way to	37 Wrap up
30 Turner of film	deal	38 Bar rocks
31 Melodies	8 Tick off	39 Silent assent

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



### Trudeau won't commit to US visit for talks on new trade deal

AFP, Montreal

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Friday he was reluctant to go to Washington next week for a summit marking the entry into force of the new North American trade agreement, in part due to concerns over possible US tariffs on Canadian aluminum.

"We're still in discussion with the Americans about whether a trilateral summit next week makes sense," Trudeau said at a press briefing.

"We're obviously concerned about the proposed issue of tariffs on aluminum and steel that the Americans have floated recently," he

The United States-Mexico-Canada free trade agreement (USMCA) took effect on Wednesday, as borders between the countries are partially shut due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The deal replaced the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

#### Allow them Eid

likely to be celebrated on August 1. Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) are the platforms of the owners of RMG and knitting factories.

The minister urged the authorities concerned to take steps to stop the movement of goods-laden trucks and covered vans for three days ahead of

Vehicles carrying agricultural, industrial, and export items, medical equipment, relief, fuel, medicine, food, perishable products and other emergency products, will be out of the purview of this restriction, he

He informed that CNG filling stations would remain open for 24 hours eight days before and after the

Quader also urged the vehicle owners not to operate unfit vehicles for carrying sacrificial animals.

He requested all to maintain social distancing and follow health guidelines to be safe from Covid-19 infection.

About the landlords' alleged inhumane behaviour to tenants, including students and jobless people, Quader said people need to be sympathetic towards each other during the pandemic period.

#### EC to hold

FROM PAGE 12 occurrence of the vacancy.

"Provided that in a case where, in the opinion of the Chief Election Commissioner, it is not possible, for reasons of an act of God, to hold such election within the period specified in this clause, such election shall be held within ninety days following next after the last day of such period," said the constitution.

The maximum 180-day time limit for Bogura-1 will end on July 15 and for Jashore-6 on July 18, Alamgir added.

He said they would hold the election using ballot paper by strictly following the health directives to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

"We will let all know the details about health safety measures soon," Alamgir said.

He made the comments as many raised concern about the further spread of the virus mentioning that Sadullapur area of Gaibandha was put under lockdown as two voters allegedly attended a wedding ceremony after casting vote in a bypolls on March 21.

The EC in February announced that by-elections to these two constituencies will be held on March 29. But it was later postponed considering the coronavirus situation in the country.

The Bogura-1 and Jashore-6 constituencies fell vacant following the deaths of ruling party lawmakers MPs Abdul Mannan and Ismat Ara Sadique respectively.

Alamgir said that candidates who have collected and submitted nomination paper for by-polls to Bogura-1 and Jashore-6 constituencies earlier would be eligible to contest in the July 14 election

The decision regarding holding the by-polls to Sirajganj-1, Dhaka-5 and Pabna-4, which fell vacant in recent times after the demises of lawmakers Mohammad Nasim, Habibur Rahman Mollah and Shamsur Rahman Sherif, would be taken later,

he also said. Election Commission also postponed the Chattogram City Corporation election scheduled for March 29 for an indefinite period due to coronavirus.

Alamgir said that commission would decide about the city corporation election later as there was no constitutional binding in this regard.



People moving an entire house, furniture and household goods to a safe place on a boat as water of the Teesta river flooded their house in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

## Flood affects new areas in the north

were kept open yesterday morning as there was a heavy flow of water from Islam, sub-divisional engineer of WDB in Lalmonirhat.

In Kurigram, over 62,700 families are affected by flood as the Brahmaputra above the danger level.

Crops on 7,330 hectares of land, 16,000 houses, 30-km dykes and 37-km roads have been damaged, according to the district administration.

Many people are passing days with insufficient amount of food and drinking water, while government rivers, said WDB officials.

officials said they kept distributing relief among the victims.

In Gaibandha, the flood situation the upstream river, said Muhibul is improving slightly, though water of the Brahmaputra and the Ghaghat rivers were still flowing above danger level yesterday.

Water of the two rivers are in and the Dharla rivers were still flowing falling trends and it will continues till next week, said Mukhlesur Rahman, executive engineer of WDB in the

In Bogura, water level of the Jamuna River is also in falling trends. But the Jamuna's water level could rise again within next couple of days due to onrush of water from upstream

Over 1.60 lakhs people are directly affected by flood in the district, according to the district administration.

In Jamalpur, though water receded 21 cm in the last two days, around 4 lakh people are still waterlogged as the Jamuna was still flowing 57 cm over the danger level at Bahadurabad Ghat point in Dewanganj upazila yesterday noon.

Nine people have drowned in flood water and another died from snake bite so far in the region.

In Sirajganj, the Jamuna is flowing 33 cm above the danger level yesterday and the water level is on the rise, according to WDB officials.

Two more unions were flooded vesterday in the district, raising the total numbers of affected unions at 33. Around 1.60 lakh people have marooned due to flood.

In Munshiganj, some low-lying areas have been inundated as the Padma river was flowing 11 cm above the danger level at Mawa point yesterday, said TM Rashidul Karim, executive engineer of WDB in the

Government officials said they already started distributing relief materials among the flood-hit people there.

Our Lalmonirhat, Pabna, Bogura and Jamalpur correspondents contributed to this report.

way, but we can do nothing about it."

have been infected in Faridpur region,

samples, which were tested at FMCH's

RT-PCR lab, came out positive,

53 died and 1,880 have recovered.

As of July 3, a total of 5,016 persons

Till Friday, 3,350 out of 15,603

## 'Sometimes, patients die on the way'

Another 39 doctors and 39 nurses are working at the coronavirus isolation ward of the hospital, he added.

Though the hospital has 16 ICU beds, only 10 are functional. The other six have become damaged for not being used since their installation in 2015 due to manpower shortage, he

He also informed The Daily Star the ICU," said Kushal. yesterday that 57 Covid-19 patients are taking treatment in FMCH including seven in the ICU. So far, 25 coronavirus patients including 13 in the ICU unit have died in the hospital. "We are trying our level best to give the best service for the people," he

However, patients and their family members do not feel the same way.

"This ICU is nothing but an eyewash. The service is very poor there," complained Kushal Chakroborty Dip,

whose father Kamalesh Chakraborty and nurse responded to our calls. died at FMCH on May 31.

Covid-19 patient Kamalesh was admitted at FMCH on May 23 with breathing difficulty. During his hospital stay, he was shifted at least once to the ICU, where he reportedly did not get proper care.

"My father told me he had to wait for two hours for a glass of water in

After testing Covid-19 positive, Khalilur Rahman and his wife took treatment at FMCH's coronavirus isolation unit between April 18 and April 30. They too were not happy with the medical care.

"We reached the hospital around 8:30am and the hospital authority took us to the isolation ward around noon. The quality of food was very bad for the first three days. Only one doctor visited us just once during our stay at the hospital. No doctor

The hospital water stank and had too much iron. I had to buy water from outside," he said. Siddiqur Rahman, civil surgeon of

Faridpur, said, "I have also received this kind of complaints from different patients. We are working on it and I hope the problems will be solved soon. We asked all the doctors and nurses to be kind to our patients."

Meanwhile, all critical patients, including those with Covid-19, from Shariatpur, Madaripur and Rajbari have to go Dhaka if they need ICU supports. It takes longer to go to Faridpur or Gopalganj from these three districts than what it takes to travel to Dhaka.

SM Abdulah-Al-Mamun, civil surgeon of Shariatpur, said, "If any patient in our district needs ICU support, we refer the patient to Dhaka. "Sometimes, patients die on the

said Ashraful Alam, professor of microbiology department of Faridpur Medical College and also the head of RT-PCR lab.

"The number of tests is increasing aily. We are working day and night. I we have another PCR machine, it will be easier for us to work," he added.

The lab can test 376 samples per day running four shifts. Only samples of Faridpur and Gopalganj

are tested in this lab, said Faridpur's civil surgeon. The samples of the other three

districts are sent to Dhaka and results often take seven to 10 days to

## Nine out of 10 visitors lobbied for postings

been replaced by innovative methods, he said, adding that the transfer and posting will be done in regulatory manner, not through lobbying.

The IGP said that superintendents of police (SPs) and deputy Inspector general (DIGs) often visit him in the office and say "they want to do something for the force".

"The SPs want their postings in districts and the DIGs want postings in ranges," a high official present at the closed-door conference quoted the IGP as saying.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the quoted the police chief as saying that "if all SPs want their postings

in districts and DIGs in ranges, then Headquarters told The Daily Star. what will happen to other police units?"

A number of officers and members do not want to go outside Dhaka, considering educational benefits for their children, IGP Benazir said, adding that initiatives have already been taken to set up quality educational institutions and medical facilities in divisional cities to solve

Earlier, the police chief directed officials concerned to formulate a policy to eventually distribute SPs working places. The policy will officer, under anonymity, further ensure how long they will work in Dhaka and how long they will work in districts, a high official of Police

Commissioner DMP

Shafiqul Islam presided over the conference, which was attended by senior police officials, including officers and in-charges of all DMP police stations.

The IGP further said that the attitude of police have changed over the last three months during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and they were able to ensure a place in people's hearts.

The respect that we have earned over the last three months cannot be bought with money and to get that respect and love from people, you have to be with the people, you have to go to them, you have to love

them," he said.

He further said that police must be free from all kinds of corruption.

"Our position against corruption is 'zero tolerance'. There is no place for corruption in the police," said the

policeman should be involved with narcotics. Police must be narcotics free. We [also] have to stop police brutality and use our legal capacity," he added.

At the beginning of his speech, Benazir paid tribute to the 46 martyred policemen who sacrificed their lives to protect people from the spread of the coronavirus.

He also conveyed heartfelt condolences to their family members.

## 7 US states post record cases

Epidemiologists warn India's peak could still be weeks or months away, suggesting the country's already severely overburdened healthcare system will come under further stress. Scientists say lockdowns have kely prevented hundreds of millions of infections around the world. A modeling study published in the scientific journal Nature last month estimated that by early April, shutdown policies saved 285 million people in China from getting infected, 49 million in Italy and 60 million in

But the restrictions launched to counteract the disease have also been hugely damaging for the economy and have exacerbated existing inequalities in education and the workplace, as well as between genders, races and socio-economic backgrounds.

As shops and schools shut and

millions of people around the world have suddenly found themselves unemployed. The impact on the economy is one of the reasons why some leaders, including the US President Donald Trump, have been pushing for swift reopening, even as infectious diseases experts warned about lifting restrictions too early.

Despite the jump in infections, the average daily death toll in the United States has gradually declined in recent weeks, a reflection of the growing proportion of positive tests among younger, healthier people who are less prone to severe outcomes.

However, US Surgeon General Jerome Adams warned that the impact on fatalities from the recent surge, which started in mid-June, had yet to be seen. "Deaths lag at least two weeks and can lag even more," he told "Fox & Friends" on Friday.

US experts are also predicting nearly all travel ceased, hundreds of another surge after July 4 holidays.

pandemic has come under harsh criticism from Democrats and some Republicans, has repeatedly sought to dismiss the jump in cases as a function of more tests and again this week predicted the virus would "disappear."

Coronavirus cases are rising in 37 of the 50 US states including Florida, which had 9,488 new cases on Friday, according to the state health department. Florida's 10,109 cases on Thursday set a record for the state and was more than any European country's daily peak at the height of the outbreak there.

Evidence the surge is not simply due to expanded testing, the percentage of tests coming back positive in Florida has hit 16%, up from 4% a month ago, according to a Reuters analysis. The World Health Organization says a rate over 5% is concerning.

Against that backdrop, Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez

Trump, whose handling of the imposed an indefinite nightly curfew starting Friday and halted the reopenings of entertainment venues such as casinos and strip clubs. Earlier this week, Miami-Dade and

neighboring Broward County, the state's two most populous counties, required residents to wear coverings in public.

Governor Arkansas Hutchinson on Friday authorized the state's cities and towns to enact a "model ordinance" requiring the wearing of face coverings if they choose to do so, becoming the latest Republican to relent to pressure on

The move came a day after Texas Governor Greg Abbott ordered that face masks be worn in most public places, reversing his stance following an alarming rise in infections in the state, which on Friday marked a new high for hospitalizations at 7,652.

## Bangabandhu's

Cumilla Cantonment today, the prime minster pays a glowing tribute to the members of the valiant armed forces for their gallant performances in liberating the motherland from the clutches of the Pakistani occupation force. He reminds them that preserving the independence is much more difficult than achieving it.

Bangabandhu calls for strict discipline in the armed forces. He asks the officers and jawans of the army to set an ideal before the world by their deeds and behaviour as true soldiers of a unique nation that was born at the cost of blood.

He urges the army men to identify themselves with the miseries of common people and perform their responsibilities with utmost sincerity.

The prime minister is presented with a rare gift when he drives to the artillery headquarters to convey his blessings to the members of the 'Mujib Battery'. It is a metal container of the first shell fired on the Pakistani occupation force by the 'Mujib Battery'.

#### 1,680 HOUSES CLEARED OF ILLEGAL OCCUPANTS

Police with the help of Jatiya Rakkhi Bahini have cleared 1,680 abandoned houses of the illegal occupants and recovered 43 motor cars and 6 jeeps in their last week's drive across the country. They have also recovered huge cache of arms and ammunitions and arrested more than 500 persons on different charges.

#### MOHINI MILLS CLOSED

Mohini Mills is declared closed today for an indefinite period due to shortage of coal. The nationalised industry will lose Tk10,000 daily on account of salaries of the employees

#### 21 KILLED, 24 KIDNAPPED IN 8

21 people are killed and 24 kidnapped in different parts of the country by unknown miscreants during the period from June 27 to July 4, according to the police sources. As many as 20 were kidnapped in the district of Jessore alone.

SOURCES: July 6, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dianik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

#### 4 DPDC

FROM PAGE 12

We have taken action against them on the basis of the recommendation of an inquiry committee," Bikash Dewan, managing director of DPDC, told UNB.

Final action will be taken after completion of final investigation, he added.

DPDC officials said it sent letters o all their 36 divisional engineers seeking explanation about their roles in preparing the electricity bills which a large number of consumers said

were exaggerated. A huge unrest created among the consumers for receiving their inflated electricity bills in the last three months during the time of coronavirus.

## Two planets

FROM PAGE 12

slow down as it overtakes WASP-148c on the inside.

To observing astronomers, this phenomenon makes it look like the planets are dancing. Andrew

Professor Cameron, of the University of St Andrews and WASP team member, said: "This is the first time we've found a pair of giant planets interacting so closely, and it's exciting to be able to follow their dance from the ground."

An international team of scientists, which also included scientists from The Open University (OU) and University of Warwick, made the discovery using instruments on Earth rather than with space telescopes.

WASP-148b was identified by a range of instruments installed at the Roque de los Muchachos Observatory in La Palma, Canary Islands.

The star system was then observed with an instrument known as SOPHIE at the Observatoire de Haute-Provence in France. They found WASP-148b, which is

about the size and mass of Saturn, takes about 8.8 days to circle its host star while the orbital period for WASP-148c, thought to have a mass half that of Jupiter, is around 34.5 According to the researchers, this

ratio between the orbital periods suggests the WASP-148 system is close to resonance, meaning there is enhanced gravitational interaction between the two planets. The scientists also observed the

olanetary transit, which is when a planet crosses in front of its host star, of both WASP-148b and WASP-The found both WASP-148b and

WASP-148c undergo acceleration and deceleration as they pass each other, which according to the researchers, is evidence of gravitational interaction between them. The researchers liken this gravitational dance between the

planets to pushing a child on a swing where adding force just at the right time produces large variations in timing and movement. Analysis revealed both WASP-148b and WASP-148c orbit in the

same plane, just like the planets in the Solar System.

The findings are published in the Astronomy & Astrophysics journal.



সন্তানের যত্নে আপনি যেমন তেমনি নিবিড় যত্ত্বে বারবার নানা পরীক্ষায় প্রক্রিয়াজাত হয় আডং ভেইরি পণ্য



## Young world champions bide their time

NABID YEASIN

"It is just boring spending time at home. How much longer can one sit idle at home?," Under-19 World Cup-winning captain Akbar Ali chuckled as he wondered when he could return to the field and hone

his batting and wicketkeeping skills. "Now I am counting days till resumption. There is nothing you can do," Akbar's U-19 teammate Rakibul Hasan said.

Since the enforced break brought on by the coronavirus, the U-19 squad, like other cricketers, have had to stay put at home -- knocking tennis balls on a terrace or doing some catching practice by bouncing balls off walls being the closest thing to cricket for them.

But it seems their days of frustration will soon be over as the BCB plans to bring cricket back gathered steam.

Although still dependant on the improvement of the situation, the BCB's announcement of putting all major international and first-class venues -- eight in total, including different training facilities -- under maintenance for an imminent return of cricket provided a ray of hope for the young Tigers. The board is eyeing a return to shorterversion cricket with resumption of training being the first step.

The Bangladesh team conquered age-level cricket in February this year by winning the U-19 World Cup so it was more frustrating to sit at home during a time when they could have stepped up their preparation for senior level cricket.

Akbar, whose services were secured by Gazi Group in the Dhaka Premier League -- which was halted after the completion of the first round -- said he was looking to make a successful transition to the





The likes of Akbar Ali and Shoriful Islam have been forced to knock tennis balls inside their rooms or do fitness work at home during the pandemic, counting days before they can get back on the field.

Personally I was really excited to play senior-level cricket. I was excited about the DPL. It would have been a massive boost if we could have played the DPL. Till now we only played age-level cricket and the ones we played with all have similar level of skill. But when you play in the DPL, you play with more experienced players and that would have been a huge plus for us," Akbar told The Daily Star.

Akbar believed the coronavirus had slightly set him back in his development process.

"I think it has been set back slightly but I hope that when this pandemic is over, the BCB will restart everything step-by-step. Obviously it is frustrating. Had I been in the field now, I would have been working on the flaws that I noted down. It would have helped my career," said the 18-year-old.

While Akbar is ruing the missed opportunity, U-19 pacer Shoriful Islam is just hoping to get his rhythm back as soon as the pandemic is over.

"It is difficult for a fast bowler to be away for such a long time. But I hope that I will be able to return to my previous form after practicing for a few weeks and get my rhythm back," said Shoriful.

The BCB had plans to send the U-19 team to foreign camps this year, but the pandemic has forced those plans to be put on hold.

"It would have benefitted us immensely. If we could go to a foreign country and stay there, we could have gotten used to conditions there. It would have developed our game. Maybe it has been delayed but I hope that we can go to such camps in the future and give our best," leftarm spinner Rakibul hoped.

Even though the young Tigers are staying positive and hoping for cricket to resume soon, their urge to return to the green field that has a 22-yard pitch in the middle is very clear, especially from how Akbar mentioned the first thing he would do after the resumption is "a lot of batting", the thing he misses most.

## Smalley's extension raises éyebrows

Anisur Rahman

Most of the Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF's) activities, apart from some official work, have remained halted since the government directed all national sports

federations, associations and concerned authorities to suspend all events in light of the Covid-19 pandemic in mid-March. During this pandemic, the only excitement came along with allegations that the BFF secretariat was trying to buy delegates for its upcoming elections.

Recently, another issue has emerged and has raised questions over the reappointment of 53-year-old Paul Smalley as the BFF technical director on a two-year

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin heaped praise on Smalley, adding: "Paul is an experienced and modern technical director and enjoyed a successful time previously with us. Paul will again support Jamie Day with the senior national team."

But the question is: Was Smalley's first tenure a success? Did the Englishman have any impact on the national team?

We can re-examine what Smalley ] did during his first tenure from 2016 to 2019 and then we can compare his work with that done by the All Indian Football Federation's (AIFF) former technical director Robert Baan.

Smalley had prepared a four-year plan for the BFF within three months of rose from 126 to 400.

But he could not make the BFF understand that it was necessary to keep all the lower-division leagues and district football leagues rolling to give those educated coaches room to practically apply their knowledge.

There may have been some strong arguments from the BFF members over the justification to reappoint Smalley, but the argument is how wise it was to ensure a service from someone who received more than Tk 4 crore in salary in three years for simply guiding the women's football teams and conducting coaching courses.

If we look into what happened at the All Indian Football Federation (AIFF)' in this regards we will get a different picture. Dutchman Baan presented India with a 127-page masterplan titled "Lakshya: One Vision. One Goal," in August 2012, one year after his appointment.

The masterplan featured 10 chapters with elaborate explanations of the things India needed to increase their footballing standards. Although India has been unable to implement all of his suggestions, they have already reaped the rewards by building the National Centre of Excellence as well as regional football academies.

The Indian Super League was also believed to be Baan's brainchild. He emphasised on the need to restructure domestic competition by providing the concept for the Super I-League. He also



his joining, which has proven to be an planned to develop national clubs and unrealistic mission and vision.

FIFA senior development manager Mike Pfister, at a press conference on November ambitious one.

Our advice is to be realistic and concrete. Our plan is not for four years, it is for two years. We will see the first two years and, based on the success of these projects, we will start afresh for the next two years pending approval," he said.

There was logic behind Pfister's opinion. Smalley prepared the plan without consulting with stakeholders or gaining any practical knowledge of the grassroots situation. But the BFF stuck to the plan and revealed it on December 10, 2016, with each year featuring more than two dozen competitions and programmes

In the first year, the BFF could implement only 50 to 60 per cent of the yearly calendar and in the following years, the BFF did not follow that four-year plan at all, with Paul Smalley spending more time with the women's age-group teams and later in coaching courses.

Nevertheless, the women's age-group teams scaled new heights in term of stamina under Smalley's guidance and the everything thoroughly before picking the number of educated coaches [AFC A, B, C] person for such an important position?

introduce elite domestic competitions to increase standards.

India is still not progressing fast with 3, 2016, termed Smalley's draft plans under that masterplan, but their FIFA ranking the new FIFA Forward programme an -- always hovering around 100th -- shows they are on the right path. They were 168th when Baan had placed his plan.

Some decision-makers in the BFF opine that it was an obligation to FIFA/AFC to have a technical director at the helm, but some BFF members were unclear about why the higher-ups hurried to reappoint Smalley without taking the time to analyse other candidates.

"It's a very difficult time now. Look Bangladesh's performance on the international scene. Of course, performances at the international level are a reflection of what is done here. That is an alarming wakeup call. We believe that Bangladesh needs a turning point. It's always time to close a chapter and begin a new one," FIFA senior development manager Make Pfister thusly evaluated the BFF's activities.

Bangladesh football is now sorely seeing its worst days and only wise decisions from higher-ups can turn the tide, but was the BFF wise enough and did they evaluate

#### WHAT TO WATCH

### LA LIGA (FACEBOOK)

Athletic Club v Real Madrid Live from 6:00pm Espanyol v Leganes Live from 9:00pm Osasuna v Getafe Live from 11:30pm Villarreal v Barcelona Live from 2:00am (Monday) **ENGLISH PREMIER** 

#### **LEAGUE** STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

Burnley v Sheffield Utd Live from 5:00pm Newcastle v West Ham Live from 7:15pm Liverpool v Aston Villa Live from 9:30pm Southampton v Man City Live from 12:00am (Monday)

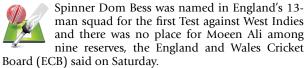
SERIE A (TEN 2) Inter Milan v Bologna Live from 9:00pm Cagliari v Atalanta Live from 11:30pm Napoli v AS Roma Live from 1:45am (Monday)



## IN WOMEN'S **CAMP**

Kate Cross was seen in jovial mood during practice at the Chester **Boughton Hall Cricket** Club on Friday. The **England women's cricket** team returned to training last month after a long break due to Covid-19. They are currently preparing for a proposed international tri-series later this summer, also featuring India and South Africa, in September.

## Bess named in England squad



All-rounder Ben Stokes will lead England in the match, which will begin at the Ageas Bowl Southampton on Wednesday in a bio-secure environment amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moeen announced in September he was taking a break from Test cricket but he was included in a 30-man training group. But the ECB opted to go with off-spinner Bess, who grabbed his first five-wicket Test haul against South Africa in January. Regular skipper Joe Root will miss the first Test to be at the birth of his second child.



## Messi must be wondering what he did wrong



Lionel Messi trudged off alone down the tunnel as the game against Atletico Madrid ended 2-2, the result extinguishing any realistic chance for Barcelona to

win the title. His shoulders never looked heavier and, in a match where he amassed his 700th career goal, Messi might have had other things in mind which went behind results, staring into the eerie darkness focusing on what direction the Catalan Club was heading to.

It had been a long time coming, but perhaps is dawning upon him now more than ever.

Barcelona had been the league leaders before coronavirus halted proceedings; even before that they had sacked coach Ernesto Valverde, who Messi had seemingly backed to continue. Quique Setien, known for his adoration of club symbol Johan Cryuff, was brought in to replace Valverde in January. The appointment was part of a long process, the Barcelona management had said. "I got the call yesterday," Setien had said on the day of his presentation as Barcelona coach.

The faultlines had appeared much earlier though, and Messi has perhaps never felt more alone. At 33, he is at the twilight end of his career with perhaps one or two more seasons of absolute brilliance left in him. The management at Barcelona



this point; things have never been this bad even if it was bad for the last couple

Lies and deceptions appeared in many forms over the years, always from the same source. There have been bits and pieces of information circulating in the media, 'leaks' that made the Argentine uncomfortable at the very least. This season he hit out more than ever. He called out sporting director Eric Abidal and demanded him to 'take responsibility for his own decision' in the sacking of Valverde.

Then came the players' wage cuts in order to help the club pay nonfootballing staff. Messi said the players were convinced that was the only way to go. Information 'divulged' in the media suggested the players were unhappy and had to be convinced to take the wage cut. Information regarding his contract was out there too, that he was free to leave in June

"I've said throughout my career that this is my home. But I also don't want

to have a long-term contract and only be here because of it," Messi had said. The knives have been sharpened for a long time and the club was paying social media accounts to campaign against players like Messi, Gerard Pique and former player Xavi Hernandez along with political oppositions.

Messi, now more than ever, is more alone on the pitch. That is where his problems have begun however. It is not what is happening to him, but what is happening around him.

Andres Iniesta was gone, so was Xavi Hernandez -- the two cornerstones of Barca's style. Paris, Turin, Rome and Liverpool had come too; embarrassing team defeats that Messi had to shoulder, often alone. Neymar had gone too and his best strike partner Luis Suarez, by all counts was in steep decline. The squad aging and a sporting plan non-existent as was evidenced by the club's pursuit and eventual signing of Antoine Griezmann, a player who is good but not what was needed. What does Messi do in this situation?

On Friday, news arrived that the Barcelona captain has discarded all contract negotiations with the club. Only time will tell if this is his final battle to change the course of the club, forcing early elections or whether the grass is now really looking greener elsewhere.



4-LANE DHAKA-BHANGA EXPRESS HIGHWAY BUILT WITH BSRM XTREME

CONTRESION OF BSRM





## **FARIDPUR REGION ICU**

## 'Sometimes, patients die on the way'

Suzit Kumar Das, Faridpur

Only two hospitals in the entire Faridpur region have intensive care units, both of which are dedicated for Covid-19 patients, leaving other invalids needing ICU support dependent on Dhaka.

Gopalganj General Hospital has eight ICU beds, while Faridpur Medical College Hospital (FMCH) has 10 functional ICU beds. Shariatpur, Rajbari and Madaripur districts have no hospital with ICU facilities.

Nigg Mohammad, civil suggeon of Copalgani, said since

Niaz Mohammad, civil surgeon of Gopalganj, said since all the eight ICU beds are for coronavirus patients, doctors refer other patients needing ICU support to the capital.

Beside, Gopalganj General Hospital is not running with a dedicated ICU team, as it does not have posts for doctors, nurses and other medical staff for its ICU.

"It is very difficult to run an ICU without dedicated manpower," he said, adding that, currently 10 doctors including an anaesthesiologist, and 15 nurses from other departments have been assigned to the ICU.

INADEQUATE CARE

All the ICU posts for seven doctors, 14 nurses and three technicians at FMCH are vacant. The ICU is currently run by nine doctors and 21 nurses from other units, Saiful Rahman, superintendent of the hospital, told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 10 COL



Local influential people illegally fill a portion of the Bangshi river in Noyar Haat area of Savar bringing in sand on vessels. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

### Nine out of 10 visitors lobbied for postings

Says IGP; urges transfer, posting policy for cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Aiming to put an end to the culture of lobbying, Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed directed officials concerned to formulate and implement a realistic transfer and posting policy for officers and members of the police

Over the last three months after he became police chief, 90 percent of the total visitors lobbied for transfers and postings of officers during meetings with him, the IGP said while addressing the special law and order conference organised by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) at the Bangladesh Police Auditorium in Rajarbagh vesterday.

Benazir was the chief guest at the conference.

Such traditional trends of transfer have already SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

## Flood affects new areas in the north

Officials fear the situation can worsen this week

The onrush of water from upstream rivers and heavy rainfall have again inundated vast areas in the northern region of Bangladesh yesterday.

STAR REPORT

Although water receded in some northern districts, officials of Water Development Board (WDB) feared that the water level of adjoining rivers could rise again within the next few days.

Meanwhile, fresh areas have been submerged as rivers were swelling up to danger level.

Our correspondents from different districts reported on the flood situation across the country.

In Lalmonirhat, around 40,000 people have been marooned again as 65 villages of five upazilas went under water due to a rise in water level of the Teeta and the Dharla rivers

water level of the Teesta and the Dharla rivers. Mansur Ali, of Balapara village in Aditmari upazila of the district, said their house was inundated around a week ago

but water receded on Thursday.

After they returned, the water started entering into their house again yesterday, he added.

All the 44 gates of the Teesta Barrage SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

#### FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

## Bangabandhu's call for discipline in armed forces



Bangabandhu inspecting a guard of honour by the Bangladesh Army at the Cumilla Cantonment on July 5, 1972.

July 5, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

### BANGABANDHU VISITS CUMILLA CANTONMENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman cautions the members of the armed forces against certain forces who are conspiring to frustrate the hard-earned independence of Bangladesh.

earned independence of Bangladesh. He urges them to remain prepared for a greater sacrifice, if

necessary.

Addressing the officers and jawans of Bangladesh Army at the

## EC to hold 2 by-polls on July 14

Cites constitutional obligation; ignores fears of virus spread Mohiuddin Alamgir

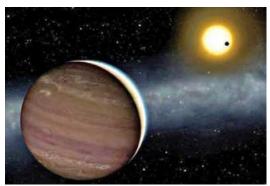
The Election Commission has decided to hold byelections to Bogura-1 and Jashore-6 constituencies on July 14 amid the coronavirus pandemic.

It said the decision was made to fulfil the constitutional obligation of filling the vacant seat of a member of parliament within 180 days.

The decision came during a commission meeting, EC senior secretary Md Alamgir told The Daily Star after the meeting yesterday.

According to the constitution, an election to fill the seat of a Member of Parliament which falls vacant otherwise than by reason of the dissolution of Parliament shall be held within 19 days of the SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Two planets do the 'gravitational dance'



Independent.co.uk

Two planets have been seen doing a "gravitational dance" deep in space.

The two worlds are moving around each in strange, graceful movements as they interact with each other's gravity, according to the researchers who found them.

They were first observed by astronomers who are part of an international consortium known as Wide Area Search for Planets (WASP).

The planets, named WASP-148b and WASP-148c, orbit a Sun-like star about 800 light-years away, in the constellation of Hercules.

According to the scientists, these giant objects are able to "feel each other's gravity", which causes the faster-orbiting WASP-148b to speed up and SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Inflated Power Bills

## 4 DPDC officials suspended

13 meter readers fired UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka Power Distribution Company Ltd (DPDC) has suspended four of its officials after they were found to be involved in bill inflating activities in a primary investigation.

Besides, 13 metre readers and one metre supervisor were also terminated from their contract for their alleged involvement, said top officials of the company entrusted with responsibility of distributing electricity in central and south-east part of Dhaka city and Narayanganj.

The four officials are executive engineer Helal Uddin, sub-divisional engineer Md Raihanul Alam, assistant engineer Mujibul Rahman Bhuiyan, and computer data-entry coordinator Jasmin Ahmed.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

RMG Workers

### Allow them Eid holidays in phases

Quader urges BGMEA, BKMEA to slow Covid-19 spread Unb, Dhaka

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader has urged the BGMEA and BKMEA to grant leave to garment workers in phases before the Eid-ul-Azha.

He made the call during an online briefing from his official residence in the capital yesterday.

Quader also hoped owners of garment factories would set an example this time by paying workers' salaries ahead of the Eid,





 PRAYER TIMING JULY 5

 Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 4-10 12-45 5-00 6-55 8-17

 JAMAAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45



Street children play football after the rain in front of Begum Rokeya Hall inside Dhaka University yesterday. These children often do not get a decent ball to play with and an empty street to play on together.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN Coronavirus Pandemic

## 7 US states post record cases

Curfew ordered in Miami; India sees highest single-day spike in cases

GENCIES

Alabama and six other US states reported have record increases in coronavirus cases as Florida's most populous county imposed a curfew ahead of the Independence Day weekend and Arkansas joined a push toward mandating mask-wearing in public.

North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Alaska, Missouri, Idaho and Alabama all registered new daily highs in cases of COVID-19, the illness caused by the novel coronavirus. Texas hit a new peak for hospitalizations, with one doctor calling for a "complete lockdown" in the state to get the virus under control.

The daily US tally of cases stood at 53,483 late on Friday,

below the previous day's record 55,405. US isn't the only country seeing a surge in cases after lifting or relaxing lockdown.

India yesterday recorded its highest singe-day spike of coronavirus cases, with over 22,000 new cases and 442 deaths, as infections rose in the western and southern parts of the country amid heavy monsoon rains.

The western state of Maharashtra, home to the densely packed financial capital Mumbai, has the country's highest total, recording 6,364 fresh cases of the virus yesterday and 198 deaths from COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus.

India has the fourth-most confirmed cases in the world, exceeding 640,000 yesterday, according to health ministry data. It follows the United States, Brazil and Russia.

In the southern state of Tamil Nadu, the second worst-

hit state in India, the number of cases crossed 100,000.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2