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'Where will we go?'

Workers left in despair after state-run jute mills closed

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Thousands of workers of nine state-owned jute mills in the Khulna-Jashore industrial belt, passing days in mounting tension before the announcement of closure, are now sunk in gloom with the mills shut down.

There are 8,100 permanent and about 30,000 temporary workers at the nine mills -- seven in Khulna and two in Jashore -- according to the BJMC office.

"The workers do not want shutdown of the jute mills, rather they want to work more vigorously to overcome the losses of the mills," said Sahana Sarmin, president of Platinum Jute Mill Workers' Union.

"Where will we go after the mills are closed?" is a common question among the workers, she said.

Narrating her woes, Eratun Khatun, a worker of Platinum Jute Mill, said she was a temporary worker for 16 years at the same mill where her late husband Omor Ali Gazi worked.

"My husband died 11 years ago and I became a permanent worker in November 2011. I am the lone bread earner for my family. If I lose my job, how will my daughter Shiuli Akhter, a college student, continue her studies?"

Eratun has at least the consolation that she, in the near future, will receive the much-talked about golden handshake, as a permanent worker.

Temporary workers, however, some of whom have worked for decades at the mills, will receive no such payout.

Md Abdul Berek Molla, 63, has been a temporary worker

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A concrete building being slowly devoured by the Jamuna at Beltia village of Tangail's Kalihati upazila. At least 40 such structures, mostly homes, have been washed away over the last couple of days after erosion damaged a portion of the flood protection embankment in the area. The villagers have blamed the Water Development Board's negligence in this regard. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Veteran journo DP Barua passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Veteran journalist and former chief editor and managing director of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Deba Priya Barua died at his residence in the capital early yesterday.

Barua, also a senior member of the Jatiya Press Club, breathed his last at 5:30 am at his house in Moghbazar, said a press release.

The 91-year-old journalist left behind his wife, three sons, a host of relatives, well-wishers and colleagues to mourn at his death.

He started his career in journalism in The Morning News newspaper in 1958.

Barua was honoured with the International Buddhist Peace Award, Atish Dipankar Gold Medal Award, World Peace Envoy, Biddarabadi by Supreme Sangha Council (monastic order) and Dr BM Barua

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Flood-hit people in dire need of immediate help

Many return to their ravaged homes from shelters as water recedes in six districts

STAR REPORT

Many flood victims, who took shelter elsewhere, are returning home in several districts as floodwater has started receding from their houses.

But floodwater damaged their dwellings and farmland badly.

The victims said they do not have money to buy food, let alone repair their houses.

In Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, around 5 lakh people in the two districts were affected by flood. About 10 percent of them living in low-lying areas took shelter on dykes, roads, and at flood centres, said local offices of Water Development Board.

"The fences around my house have been washed away. My vegetable garden has also been damaged," said Abu Hossain of Mashalerchar in Kurigram Sadar upazila.

He along with his six-member family stayed on a WDB dyke at Jatrapur for several days and returned home yesterday morning.

Mobarak Hossain, a flood victim of Sindurna in Lalmonirhat's Hatibandha

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Foreign companies will not own natural resources

July 9, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU FEELS MUCH BETTER

Bangabandhu who was taken ill on July 5 now feels much better, according to the prime minister's personal physician Prof Nurul Islam. Even though the physician would like Bangabandhu to rest a few days more as he was very weak the prime minister is anxious to return to work immediately. Bangabandhu is reported to have engaged himself in important state business often enquiring about the progress of work of important sectors.

MINERAL CORPORATION SOON

Dr Mofiz Chowdhury, minister for power, natural resources, and scientific and technological research, declares today that the government would soon establish a mineral development corporation with a view to exploring the mineral resources of the country. He says that outside help may be sought but no foreign government or companies would be allowed to enjoy ownership of our natural resources.

INDIA AND POLAND CALL FOR BANGLADESH'S UN ENTRY India and Poland today call for admission of Bangladesh in the United Nations and other world organizations and declare that any attempt to ignore the realities will only add to tension and instability in the Subcontinent.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



CORONAVIRUS TEST Govt decision to slap fees inhuman

Says TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government decision to impose fees on Covid-19 testing is "discriminatory", "inhuman", and "suicidal" during a rise in the positive cases, Transparency International Bangladesh said yesterday.

In a statement, the graft watchdog said after the decision came into effect, Covid-19 testing went beyond the capacity of the poor, while the number of confirmed cases also "dropped" with decreasing number of tests.

As a result, the risk of coronavirus infections increased, and the fear of not having the real picture of coronavirus infections in the government action plans to control the pandemic has been intensified, it said.

TIB demanded that the government withdraw

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Japan's new bullet train can run during quake



MAIL ONLINE

A new bullet train has entered service in Japan that's the country's fastest, smoothest, most comfortable and safest yet -- it's able to "escape" to safety in the event of an earthquake.

The N700S -- the 's' stands for 'Supreme' -- has a top speed of 360kmph (223mph), though the line it serves, the Tokaido Shinkansen line, has a maximum operating speed of 285kmph (177mph).

This line, which links Tokyo with Osaka and Kobe, is one of the world's most famous. It became the world's first high-speed line when the

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BORDER STAND-OFF India, China complete pullback in some areas

NDTV ONLINE

The two-km mutual withdrawal of Indian and Chinese troops at Ladakh -- on since Sunday after the Special Representative level talks -- is complete in some areas, sources said yesterday.

The withdrawal at Patrol Point 15 in Hot Springs is now complete. The 2-km mutual withdrawal at Patrol Point 17A (Gogra) will happen today or tomorrow, they said.

Some movement by the Chinese near the Pangong lake -- the Finger 4 Area -- is happening. Vehicles and tents have been removed but the ridge line remains occupied by the Chinese troops, sources said.

The withdrawal at the Galwan river valley, where Indian and Chinese troops clashed with fatal results -- the first in decades --

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COVID-19 PATIENTS Favipiravir effective in Dhaka trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Society of Medicine (BSM) has found effectiveness of Favipiravir as a clinically proven drug for the treatment of Covid-19 patient.

After ending trial in Wuhan province of China and Russia, the Dhaka trial revealed similar effectiveness of Favipiravir in treating Covid-19 infected patients.

The BSM found around 96 percent patients to be Covid-19 negative in their RT-PCR testing after application of this drug.

"To evaluate the usefulness and safety of Favipiravir in treating

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 9

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-10 12-45 5-00 6-55 8-17
JAMAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A man feeding caged rabbits at a pet shop in Kataban area. The place has recently seen a rise in customers, as the scope of recreation has shrunk around the city due to Covid-19, and as a result, many people, especially children, are opting to buy pets.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

US starts WHO withdrawal

More evidence backs airborne spread of virus; ILO says world of work in 'unprecedented crisis'

AGENCIES

Amid escalating coronavirus pandemic, the United States has started its withdrawal from the World Health Organization, the world body which is at the forefront of the war against the deadly pathogen.

The American pull-out from the WHO comes as the UN agency conceded there was "emerging evidence" coronavirus is transmitted through particles in the air, heightening fears over an illness that has already infected over 11.8 million people worldwide and caused more than 544,000 deaths.

Meanwhile, International Labour Organization yesterday warned that the pandemic has plunged the world of work into "unprecedented crisis".

Countries are struggling to keep a lid on new cases as they attempt to restart economies, with Australia's second-biggest city becoming the latest victim of a second surge after recently lifting virus restrictions.

Millions in Melbourne returned to lockdown yesterday that was forecast to run six weeks, as soaring community transmission brings more than 100 new cases daily in the city.

Meanwhile, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has tested positive for the coronavirus after months of downplaying the dangers of the disease.

Bolsonaro, who said he had experienced only mild symptoms so far, said he was feeling "perfectly well" as he removed his mask in a TV interview Tuesday to announce his diagnosis.

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