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# Child marriage marks sharp rise in June

Finds MJF monthly survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child marriage increased sharply in the country with 462 girls falling victim to such malpractices in June during the coronavirus pandemic, Manusher Jonno Foundation yesterday said in its monthly telesurvey report.

The organisation said the number of child marriage was 170 in May while disclosing findings of the report titled "Violence against Women and Children: Covid-19" at a virtual press conference.

Overall, violence against children went up last month from the month of May, the report showed.

It said 233 and 207 attempted child marriages were averted in May and June respectively due to prompt action.

About the reasons behind the child marriage rise, the organisation pointed to lack of monitoring by the local government authorities amid the pandemic.

Besides, closure of schools, social insecurity, poverty, and neighbours influence prompted guardians to marry off their girl children secretly, MJF said.

The MJF, with support from its partner organisations, conducted a survey in 53 districts for the monthly report of June. Earlier, it published similar reports for the months of April and May.

Presenting the report's findings, MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said gender inequality in family along with lack of recognition of woman's contributions and tendency for not respecting her were mainly responsible for increasing domestic violence or violence against women.

She stressed the need for prompt actions against the malpractices.

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A man, taking his child on his shoulders, wades through chest-deep water to move to a safe place in Binbina village of Rangpur's Gangachara yesterday. At least 5,000 villagers of two union parishads are waterlogged due to swelling of the Teesta.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

# Rivers swell, sufferings intensify

STAR REPORT

Sufferings of flood-hit people in the northern and north-eastern regions have intensified as rivers continued to swell.

Many of them have their houses and properties inundated for the second time in less than a month.

In Lalmonirhat and Kurigram, the flood situation deteriorated yesterday as the Brahmaputra, Teesta and Dharla rivers were flowing above the danger level.

Water levels in the rivers are on the rise due to incessant rains in the last few days and onrush of water from upstream hills, said Ariful Islam, executive engineer at Kurigram Water Development Board (WDB).

Shaheda Bewa, 63, a flood victim of Shiberpachhi area under Kurigram Sadar upazila, said, "We are going through untold sufferings. Last month we endured the same sufferings for two weeks."

Sirajul Islam, 55, a flood-SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

# 'NO MASK, NO ENTRY'

How a upazila trying to keep Covid-19 figures under control

KONGKON KARMAKER

Mandatory use of face masks and social distancing have kept the number of Covid-19 cases low in Dinajpur's Hakimpur upazila, compared to the district's 12 other upazilas, local officials say.

From March 10 till yesterday, only 11 people tested positive in Hakimpur, which has a population of about 1.20 lakh.

Till date, eight recovered and none died from Covid-19 in the upazila, according to the northern district's civil surgeon office.

On the other hand, Covid-19 cases in the rest of the district totalled 959 till yesterday.

In Dinajpur Sadar upazila cases were 350, Birampur 107, Chirirbandar upazila 74, Parbatipur 79, Birol 61, Ghoraghat 59, Kaharol 49, Nawabganj 48, Khansama 45, Phulbari 33, Birganj 30 and Bochaganj 24.

Dr Touhid Al Hasan, health and family planning officer of Hakimpur, said several initiatives such as "No Mask, No Entry" and "No Mask, No Sale" as well as social

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

# National pay commission announced

July 13, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MUJIB IS THE ONLY HOPE OF THE NATION

NAP Chief Maulana Bhashani says in an emotion-choked voice, "Mujib is the only hope of the nation. I love him. I pray nothing untoward may ever happen to him." The Maulana expresses his affectionate feeling towards the prime minister when Health Minister Abdul Malek pays a visit to him at his Santosh's residence. Talking to the minister the Maulana says, "I served Awami League with Mujib and others for eight years. I wish them all best wishes."

RATIONAL PAY STRUCTURE TO BE EVOLVED

The government today announces 10-member National Pay Commission with Abdur Rab, retired planning secretary of the erstwhile Government of Pakistan, as the chairman. The Commission will comprehensively review the existing pay structure of all the employees working in the public sector except the workers who fall within the purview of the national wage board for workers, and recommend a rational pay structure embracing the entire public sector. The report has to be submitted within six months.

UNIVERSITY ORDINANCE WILL GO

Professor Yusuf Ali, Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs, declares today that the present University Ordinance wouldn't exist

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COVID-19 CERTIFICATES

# Must be taken from govt approved facilities

Govt asks people willing to travel overseas

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladeshis, willing to go abroad, must obtain coronavirus negative certificates from the government approved testing centres following due process, the government said yesterday.

The decision was made at a virtual inter-ministerial meeting held with Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen in the chair.

It was also suggested posting the Covid-19 test reports to "the websites of institutions concerned" so that the Immigration Department can easily verify those certificates.

Meanwhile, a dedicated Covid-19 testing facility will be developed for Bangladeshis who will go abroad for work.

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# Egypt grounds kites for 'safety', 'nat'l security'



AFP, Cairo

Egyptian police have seized kites from people flying them after a ban by a northern governorate for "safety" reasons and a lawmaker's warning they posed a "national security threat".

Police seized 369 kites in Cairo on Friday, Al-Ahram reported, while Akhbar Al-Youm, another state newspaper, said police confiscated 99 kites and fined five people in the northern region of Alexandria.

The ban was brought in "to ensure the safety of citizens after a number of accidents" involving

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# INDIAN HC TO DHAKA Vikram likely to succeed Riva Das

STAR REPORT

Senior career diplomat Vikram Doraiswami is likely to be India's new High Commissioner to Bangladesh, succeeding Riva Ganguly Das.

Doraiswami, a 1992 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who is at present Additional Secretary in-charge of International Organisations and Summits at the Ministry of External Affairs, heads to Dhaka, one of the closest allies of New Delhi.

As Joint Secretary, Doraiswami has handled Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar affairs at the MEA headquarters in the South Block in New Delhi.

A soft-spoken and articulate diplomat, Doraiswami is known for his thorough knowledge of

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# Bachchan family hit by virus

REUTERS, Mumbai

Three generations of Bollywood's Bachchan family were hit by the coronavirus as former Miss World Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and her daughter yesterday joined her father-in-law Amitabh and husband Abhishek in testing positive for the virus that causes Covid-19.

Maharashtra state health minister Rajesh Tope said in a tweet that Aishwarya and her eight-year-old daughter had tested positive for the virus.

It was not clear whether they had been admitted to hospital, as Amitabh, a legendary Indian actor, and Abhishek were on

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Dragon fruits are being stored for sale at Narayanhat of Chattogram's Fatikchhari. This juicy fruit is being cultivated commercially at Halda Tea Valley. Inset, a boy plucks fruits. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# Some ACs help spread virus

Say UK health experts; advise offices to ventilate rooms with fresh air

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Air conditioning units that re-circulate air in rooms and offices should be turned off or used only with open windows because of the risk of spreading coronavirus, experts advise.

They fear that any Covid-19 droplets in the air could be transmitted more easily to people in the room, even those who are socially distanced.

And they are advising office bosses to ventilate rooms with fresh air whenever possible.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said this week that coronavirus can spread through tiny droplets floating in the air in enclosed spaces, after scientists highlighted the risk.

The UK Health and Safety Executive says the risk of air conditioning spreading coronavirus in the workplace is extremely low "as long as there is an adequate supply of fresh air and ventilation" but adds: "if you use a centralised ventilation system that removes and circulates air to different rooms, it is recommended that you turn off recirculation and use a fresh air supply".

Some air conditioners take in air from outdoors and expel it again, while others, called split units, re-circulate the same air.

Dr Shaun Fitzgerald, a fellow at the Royal Academy of Engineering, told the Telegraph: "The recommended strategy now, if you have one of these split units, is to throw the window open and sacrifice your desire for a cold or cooler environment. If there is a modicum of wind it will move the air around. If you can't open a window, turn the unit off."

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## PRAYER TIMING JULY 13

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

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION