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Study says world population could be 2 billion below UN projections  
**SEE PAGE 6**

# The Daily Star



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## Shahed captured

Rab claims he was trying to flee to India from Satkhira; the prime accused in Covid-19 certificate scam flown in to Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While being on the run, Regent Group Chairman Md Shahed trimmed his moustache and dyed his grey hair black to dodge the eyes of law enforcers. Wearing a burka, he was attempting to flee to India by crossing a waterbody on a boat.

But before he could do so, a Rab team captured him in an area near the border in Satkhira yesterday morning, according to the force.

Shahed, who hogged the headlines after the fake Covid-19 report scam came to light, was being hunted by law enforcement agencies for more than a week.

On July 7, a mobile court sealed off Regent Hospital, owned by him, in the capital's Uttara on charges of issuing several thousand fake Covid-19 test certificates and swindling a huge amount of money.

He had been absconding since then.

Shahed is also at the centre of rift between the health ministry and the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) over a government deal with the private hospital allowing it to treat coronavirus patient.

He is the prime accused in a case over the fake report scam. The arrest



Surrounded by officers, Shahed, in blue vest, being taken to the Rab Headquarters right after he was flown into the capital yesterday. The chairman of Regent Hospital was arrested in Satkhira. The photo was taken at the old airport.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Came two days after a Dhaka court issued an arrest warrant for him in two cases filed over misappropriation of Tk 3.68 crore.

Shahed was arrested near the Labangabati river in Debhata upazila around 5:30am, according to Rab. He was flown to Dhaka around 9:00am by a helicopter.

Soon after the news of his arrest broke, social media was flooded with photographs of the man, who according to the home ministry is a person of dangerous fraudulent nature. The photos show Shahed in handcuffs and apparently a locally-made firearm strapped to his waist

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WHEN SHAHED HOODWINKED 4 CMP OFFICIALS PAGE 3

## REGENT HOSPITAL MoU signed upon then health secy's directive

DGHS tells health ministry

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The director general of the health directorate has replied to the health ministry's letter saying that its MoU with Regent Hospital on treating Covid-19 patients was signed following directives of the immediate past health secretary.

Abul Kalam Azad, DG of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), submitted his reply to the ministry yesterday.

The DG in the explanation said former health secretary Ashadul Islam on March 19 gave a "file note" to the DGHS upon request of the chairman of Regent Hospital, a highly placed source said.

After getting the directives from the then health secretary, DGHS Director (hospitals and

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## Global trials raise vaccine hope

Researchers from US, UK, Russia claim their products safe, can create antibodies

AGENCIES

New results from human trials for Covid-19 vaccines brought hope after researchers from US, Russia and UK claimed that their experimental shots are safe and induced antibodies in all trial participants.

Moderna Inc's experimental vaccine showed it was safe and provoked immune responses in all 45 healthy volunteers in an ongoing early-stage study, US researchers reported on Tuesday.

Volunteers who got two doses of the vaccine had high levels of virus-killing antibodies that exceeded the average levels seen in people who had recovered from Covid-19, the team reported in the New England Journal of Medicine.

No study volunteers experienced any serious side effects, but more than half reported mild or moderate reactions such as fatigue, headache, chills, muscle aches or pain at the injection site. These were more likely to occur after the second dose and in people who got the highest dose.

Experts say a vaccine is needed to put an end to the coronavirus pandemic that has sickened millions and caused more than 578,000 deaths worldwide.

Meanwhile, the Russian defence ministry said yesterday it had developed a "safe" coronavirus vaccine following clinical trials on a group of volunteers.

The ministry said 18 people had participated in the research and were

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BANGLADESH UPDATE

**3,533** New cases in 24hrs | **1,93,590** Total cases | **2,457** Deaths | **1,05,023** Recoveries

## Pathao co-founder Fahim brutally murdered in NY

The Bangladesh origin 33-yr-old successful tech entrepreneur found dead at his condo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Co-founder of ride-sharing venture Pathao Fahim Saleh was found dead in a New York flat.



Fahim Saleh

NYPD recovered the body from a building in the Lower East Side around 3:30pm (local time) Tuesday, according to New York Daily News.

Beside the limbless, headless torso of the millionaire tech entrepreneur, there was an electric saw, police said.

The 33-year-old was the son of Bangladeshi immigrants.

The flat was owned by the deceased and was recently purchased for \$2.25 million.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## Innovation key to overcoming crisis

Say speakers at youth skills summit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Innovation, collaboration and adaptability should be the guiding principles for social or commercial entities to tackle the socio-economic challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, speakers said yesterday.

They made the comment at a webinar session styled "Socially Responsible Leadership in Fighting a Pandemic" during a Youth Skills Summit yesterday.

The summit was organised in association with SBK Tech Ventures, Shah Cement and Mountain Dew. Robi 10 Minutes School, Youth Opportunities, Star Youth and Preneur Lab were the youth engagement partners of the programme.

They said the pandemic brought about unanticipated impacts on every aspect of life but it also created an opportunity for increased interconnectedness among organisations in a post-pandemic world.

The speakers made a call to the youth, saying that they have to have faith and a positive attitude and learn soft skills and new technologies for competing in the post-pandemic job market.

The summit was organised marking World Youth Skills Day. A total of 62 speakers from diversified backgrounds joined the day-long virtual

RELATED STORY ON B1

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## Fraudsters like Shahed won't be spared

Warn two ministers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fraudsters like Shahed would be caught, regardless of how powerful they are, ministers Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and Obaidul Quader warned yesterday.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman said Regent Hospital Chairman Shahed ruined the image of Bangladesh all over the world.

"Fraudulence of Shahed along with Regent Hospital and Regent Group destroyed Bangladesh's image," he told reporters at his home in the capital's Dhanmondi after Shahed was arrested by Rab in Satkhira.

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আমরা গভীরভাবে শোকাহত

বসুন্ধরা গ্রুপের উর্ধ্বতন উপব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক

বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা **জনাব মোঃ বেলায়েত হোসেন**  
(জানুয়ারি ৯, ১৯৫০ - জুলাই ১৫, ২০২০)

এর মৃত্যুতে আমরা গভীরভাবে শোকাহত। আমরা তাঁর রুহের মাগফিরাত কামনা করছি এবং তাঁর শোকসন্তপ্ত পরিবারের প্রতি পতীর সমবেদনা জানাচ্ছি। বসুন্ধরা পরিবারের প্রিয় মুখ জনাব মোঃ বেলায়েত হোসেনের বসুন্ধরা গ্রুপের সাথে সুদীর্ঘ ৩৫ বছরের সফল কর্মময় জীবন সকনের জন্য অনুশ্রবণা হয়ে থাকবে।

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## Deadly under-the-radar heatwaves ravaging Africa

AFP, Paris

The impacts of extreme heatwaves amplified by climate change are going unrecorded in sub-Saharan Africa, making it nearly impossible to detect patterns and set up early warning systems, researchers said Monday.

While detailed records of hot spells and their aftermath exist for the world's wealthier regions, in Africa scientists and governments are mostly flying blind in assessing the damage to human health and economies, the

researchers reported in the journal Nature Climate Change.

"Both real-world observations and climate modelling show Sub-Saharan Africa as a hotspot for heatwave activity," said lead author Luke Harrington, a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute.

"But the consequences of these heatwaves are not being recorded," he told AFP. "It is as if they haven't happened, but we know they have."

## Fraudsters like Shahed

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Asaduzzaman said he would ask his party leaders to ensure a thorough verification before anyone got a place in any committee.

The home minister said Shahed was always looking for ways to cheat and as part of his deception, he used to take pictures with important persons at social events.

"He used those photographs for his scheme of cheating."

He continued, "Shahed came forward regarding the coronavirus treatment. But it was not understood [by others] at the time that his intention was to cheat. I have admitted four or five patients to his hospital. But it is now understood that cheating was his intention."

If the health ministry wants, the home ministry would launch a campaign against all hospitals violating rules and regulations, he

said.

Shahed became an important figure in television talk shows, which was also part of his deception, he said, adding, "Our law enforcement agencies are efficient now. We didn't let him deceive for long. We caught him."

Meanwhile, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader said the government would continue the ongoing anti-graft drive against corruption and irregularities.

"No matter how long you hide your face behind a mask, you will not be spared," he told a press briefing after meeting a Japanese delegation at the secretariat.

Wrongdoers have no political identity and party, they will be brought to justice, he added.

The arrests of Regent and JKG officials prove the government's tough stance on irregularities, he added.

## Innovation key to overcoming crisis

FROM PAGE 1

summit in 14 panels. Speakers from top corporates to development sector leaders and media personalities from the entertainment industry participated in the webinar.

"I think adaptability is the most precious thing I achieved during this pandemic. There is no alternative of soft skills," Asif Saleh, executive director of Brac, said.

From the beginning of the pandemic, Brac decided to stay on the field to serve the people.

"We ensured safety and security of the employees and then we started making people aware. We now hold a number of virtual meetings to keep employees motivated. Collaboration played a big role to reach the people. Nothing is possible alone," he added.

Echoing the same view, Yasir Azman, CEO of Grameenphone Ltd,

"We were physically distant but socially connected. The way we were collaborating with each other was never seen earlier. This pandemic brought together all that is a good for society," said Yasir Azman, CEO of Grameenphone Ltd.

He said when the pandemic started, they thought of bringing more people in the digital world, connect more people to each other.

"As a responsible entity, we thought and worked from the beginning of the pandemic to reach more people through various collaborations."

Public, private and social organisations worked together to meet the social needs and address the problems, he added.

Tanvir A Mishuk, managing director of Nagad, said soon after the Covid-19 outbreak, various initiatives, including special medical packages, was announced for the employees to keep them motivated.

"Nagad, in collaboration with the government and garments factories, sent money directly to the people. We started with farmers and other such professions," he added.

Arif R Hossain, co-founder of Aamrai Bangladesh, said there was no protocol set to work in a pandemic.

## Pathao co-founder

FROM PAGE 1

The alarm was raised after one of Saleh's siblings became concerned after not hearing from him for a day.

She went to the seventh-floor unit to check on her brother only to find him brutally murdered, reports Daily Mail Online.

The electric saw used to cut up the body was still plugged in. The body parts reportedly had been sorted into different plastic bags.

An elevator surveillance camera may have caught the victim's last moments, sources said. It shows the victim getting into the elevator on Monday, followed quickly by a second man, dressed in a suit, wearing gloves, a hat and a mask over his face.

As soon as he walked out into his home, he fell to the floor after either likely being shot or strangled.

The police suspect that the murder was carried out by a professional. Saleh's LinkedIn profile reveals how he, a former website developer, became a venture capitalist.

He has also described his story as an entrepreneur in a series of posts on Medium.com. He got his start creating a prank calling website, then moved on to create Pathao, one of the most successful ride-sharing ventures in Bangladesh, around 2016.

Most recently, he started Gokada, a motorcycle ride-sharing company in

Lagos, Nigeria, but the company faced setbacks and mass layoffs after Lagos banned companies like his in January.

"We are shocked and saddened to hear the reports of the death of Fahim Saleh, one of the founding members of the Pathao team," said Hussain M Elius, co-founder and CEO of Pathao.

"Fahim believed in the potential for technology to transform lives in Bangladesh and beyond. He saw the promise in us when all we had was a common purpose and a shared vision. He was, and will forever remain, an incredible inspiration for Pathao and our entire ecosystem," he added.

Fahim was born in 1986. His father Saleh Uddin is from Chattogram and his mother is from Noakhali. Fahim studied information systems at Bentley University in the US.

He came to Dhaka in 2014 and launched Pathao and became famous as a new generation entrepreneur. Fahim owns another ride sharing app company in Colombia. He also expanded his business to several other countries, including Indonesia.

Fahim also founded a startup incubator in Dhaka called Hackhouse, from which Pathao arose. The venture capital he co-founded, called Adventure Capital, gave seed funding to a Dhaka-based startup aiming to revolutionise the public bus transit system, called Jatri in early 2019.



Samiya, aged 7, knows how to steer the cart to wherever she and her mother Mariam, pushing from behind, have to deliver the barrels of water. The single mother and her daughter supply the barrels to roadside shops at Mawa terminal in Munshiganj. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Shahed captured

FROM PAGE 1

belt. Parts of a burka he was in had mud stains.

A video captured possibly soon after the arrest shows some locals trying to assault him. One of them is heard saying, "What if we all beat him."

Then, some varied versions of the arrest started to surface.

One versions was that Shahed was hiding in a drain wearing a burka before being held. Another was he was on a boat when Rab members apprehended him.

Rab disclosed details of the arrest at a press briefing at its headquarters in the capital in the afternoon.

Though Shahed always tried to maintain a clean image, he is basically a fraud and a cunning person. He is greedy, Rab Director General Chowdhury Abullah-Al Mamun told reporters at the briefing.

After his arrest, he was taken to an Uttara flat, which was being used as one of his offices. He was wearing a helmet and a flak jacket.

Rab members raided the flat and claimed to have recovered Tk 1.46 lakh in fake notes. They claimed that they learnt about it after the arrest.

At the briefing, Rab claimed that Shahed was arrested along with a firearm.

After the arrested, Rab members sent some journalists a photograph in which Shahed is seen carrying a firearm.

Asked whether Rab acted responsibly by capturing the photo while Shahed still had the weapon, Mamun said he did not see the photo and that he would look into it.

He said while they were looking for Shahed, he changed his location multiple times. He stayed in Cox's Bazar and Cumilla before going to Satkhira. He also came back to Dhaka.

For travelling, he sometimes used his personal vehicles while sometimes buses and trucks, he said.

Shahed has got a rich collection of photos. He has been photographed with the president, different past and incumbent ministers, top AL



This photo of Shahed being caught was doing the rounds on social media yesterday. Many expressed incredulity towards the circumstances of his arrest.

and BNP leaders, top journalists, and high officials of the government and law enforcement agencies.

The Rab DG said he took the photos to use them to trick others.

Asked how a person like him even got a chance to meet high-profile politicians and government high-ups and whether there was any breach in security, Mamun avoided a direct reply, but said, "That's why he has faced the consequences."

Once a close aide to BNP leaders, Shahed made his way into Awami League politics. He managed an accreditation card as the editor and publisher of a daily.

He frequently claimed to be a political analyst, a regular talk-show panelist, a retired army officer and a high official of the Prime Minister's Office.

Asked whether any influential person patronised him, the Rab DG said it would be looked into by the investigation officer of the case.

According to Rab, Regent hospital authorities, including Shahed, so far issued more than 10,000 Covid-19 test reports.

Around 4,200 samples were tested at different government labs, but they threw away the rest of the samples,

## Global trials raise vaccine hope

FROM PAGE 1

discharged without "serious adverse events, health complaints, complications or side effects".

The results of the trials "allow us to speak with confidence about the safety and good tolerability of the vaccine", it said in a statement.

The defence ministry did not say whether the vaccine was in fact effective but a doctor working on the trials said the volunteers were now protected against the coronavirus, reports AFP.

"Their immunity is working well, antibodies are being created, they are protected against the coronavirus," researcher Svetlana Volchikhina said in a video released by the defence ministry.

**OXFORD VACCINE**  
Positive news on initial trials of the University of Oxford's potential Covid-19 vaccine that has been licensed to AstraZeneca could be announced as soon today, ITV's political editor Robert Peston said, citing a source.

The potential vaccine is already in large-scale Phase III human trials to assess whether it can protect against Covid-19, but its developers have yet to report Phase I results which would show whether it is safe and whether or not it induces an immune response.

The developers of the vaccine said this month they are encouraged by the immune response they have seen in trials so far and were expecting to be able to publish Phase 1 data by the end of July.

The data are expected to be published by The Lancet medical journal.

A spokeswoman for Oxford University told Reuters the team was awaiting confirmation from a scientific journal of a publication date and time for the data, but gave no further details. "(We) are not able to confirm when it will be released," she said.

**'GOOD NEWS'**  
Moderna was the first to start human testing of a vaccine for the novel coronavirus on March 16, 66 days after the genetic sequence of the virus was released.

Dr Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, whose researchers developed Moderna's vaccine candidate, called the results "good news," noting that the study found no serious adverse events and the vaccine produced "reasonably high" levels of virus-killing or neutralising antibodies.

"If your vaccine can induce a response comparable with natural infection, that's a winner," Fauci said in a telephone interview. "That's why we're very pleased by the results."

Moderna shares jumped more than 15% in after-hours trading on Tuesday.

The US government is supporting Moderna's vaccine with nearly half a billion dollars and has chosen it as one of the first to enter large-scale human trials. A successful vaccine could be a turning point for Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Moderna, which has never had a licensed product.

Moderna's shot, mRNA-1273, uses ribonucleic acid (RNA) - a chemical messenger that contains instructions

prepared fake reports and gave those to patients without even testing.

The hospital authorities took Tk 3,500 for each test, meaning they embezzled more than Tk 3.5 crore, despite having agreement with the government to conduct tests and provide treatment free of cost, Rab said.

The DGHS signed the MoU with Regent in March, turning it into a dedicated Covid-19 hospital, in a ceremony attended by the health minister. The DGHS was aware that the hospital's licence had expired six years ago.

Ever since the matter came to light, the ministry and the DGHS have been passing the buck to each other.

Meanwhile, Shahed and Regent Group Managing Director Masud Parvez, who was arrested in Gazipur on Tuesday night, were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 5:30pm yesterday for medical check-ups.

"They had an X-ray and ECG. They are in good condition," said a doctor at the emergency unit of the hospital.

Later, the two were taken to the office of Detective Branch (DB) of police on the city's Mintoo Road. They were then handed over to the investigation officer of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

**'TIP OF THE ICEBERG'**

In a press statement yesterday, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) said the mindless forgery by Regent and JKG Health Care on Covid-19 testing, which has surfaced lately, was just the tip of the iceberg of unabated corruption in the country's health sector.

The graft watchdog said feeling complacent about the arrest or legal action against the visible culprits would not result in any long-term solution to the actual problem.

Apart from ensuring punishment of the arrestees, TIB demanded identifying through credible probe the influential quarter whose concerted efforts led to such corruption over people's life and death, and ensure their exemplary punishment.

## 5 more die with Covid symptoms

STAR REPORT

At least five people died after showing coronavirus symptoms in Cumilla and Chandpur in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

Four of them breathed their last at Cumilla Medical College Hospital.

The victims were admitted there with fever, cold, and breathing problems. They were aged between 60 and 96, said Dr Mojibur Rahman, director of the hospital.

With the five, 222 patients have so far died at the hospital. Of them, 186 breathed their last with Covid-19 symptoms and 36 from coronavirus since April.

There are 113 patients at the Covid-19 unit. Forty-nine of them are coronavirus positive and 64 have symptoms.

In another incident, a 40-year-old man died after showing Covid-19 symptoms at the isolation unit of Chandpur General Hospital around 8:00am yesterday.

The victim from Haziganj upazila was admitted to the hospital with fever and breathing difficulties on Tuesday night, said Sujaudaula, a physician of the hospital.

His samples were collected for tests and he was cremated following the IEDCR rules, he added.

[Our Cumilla and Chandpur correspondents contributed to this report]

## 'GUNFIGHT' BETWEEN GANGS 'Drug peddler' killed in Joypurhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

An alleged drug peddler was killed in a "gunfight" among two drug trading groups in Joypurhat Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The dead is Rubel Hossain Dalim, 35, son of Nabibar Uddin, of Khaspohonanda village in Joypurhat Sadar upazila.

He was accused in eight different cases including of drug peddling, abduction and murder, said police.

Shahriar Khan, officer-in-charge of Joypurhat Sadar Police Station, claimed that they rushed to Bhutipara-Kadamtoli bridge on information that a "gunfight" was taking place between two groups of drug peddlers.

The "gunfight" was initiated following a brawl of money distribution among the groups, he further said.

As soon as police reached the area, the drug peddlers fled the scene. While searching the spot, policemen found the bullet ridden body of Dalim.

It was then sent to Joypurhat Modern Hospital morgue for autopsy and handed over to the family members after finishing the procedure, he added.

Police also claimed to have recovered a pistol and different types of drugs from the spot.

Meanwhile, relatives of the dead alleged that a group of plainclothes men picked up Dalim in a microbus from a nearby bazar to his home on Tuesday night and placed him on "crossfire".

Contacted, Salam Kabir, superintendent of Joypurhat police, denied the allegation and said Dalim was a notorious criminal and got killed in a "gunfight" between two groups of drug peddlers.

## MoU signed

FROM PAGE 1

clinics) Aminul Hasan visited the hospital before signing of the memorandum of understanding, the source added.

The DG has submitted all documents related to his claims over signing of the MoU. He made it clear in the explanation that Health Minister Zahid Maleque was not involved in the process, said sources.

Despite repeated attempts, The Daily Star could not reach Ashadul Islam over the phone for comment as he did not answer calls.

The DGHS had inked the MoU with Regent in March 21, turning it into a dedicated Covid-19 hospital, in a ceremony attended by the health minister and many high officials.

The DGHS was aware that the hospital's licence had expired six years ago.

On July 7, a Rab mobile court raided Regent's Uttara branch and sealed it off on charges of issuing fake Covid-19 testing certificates and illegally charging patients fees for treatment.

Amid widespread criticism, the DGHS on July 11 said it was the health ministry's higher authorities who asked the directorate to sign the deal.

Irked at this, the ministry issued a letter to the DGHS DG asking him to explain in three working days what his office meant by saying "directed by higher authorities".

Ashadul Islam is now the senior secretary at the planning ministry.

# From footpath to Facebook

A 32-year-old streetside book business moves online

MATHEWS CHIRAN and ANILA KISHWAR  
TARANUM

Sixty-four-year-old Habibur Rahman came to Dhaka from Narsingdi in 1988. For the past 32 years, he has been selling books around the city, and now, to the elderly man's amazement, he is selling books online with the help of his son.

Habibur started selling books on the street in front of High Court and at Sadarghat. He settled at Dhaka University campus in 2004, and for the past 16 years, he has found many loyal customers among the students.

"I tried selling books in many areas of the city, but people would often be disrespectful; to them, I was just any other hawker. But at the campus, students showed respect for me and my profession. They were very welcoming," Habibur told The Daily Star.

"They would ask me to bring certain books sometimes. They also helped me financially during trying times. This means so much to me. I would not receive such love anywhere else," Habibur added.

But when the pandemic hit Bangladesh and the university was declared closed, Habibur's business could not continue. He has set up the venture on the footpath at DU, but there are little to no customers visiting amid the outbreak.

"I used to sell books worth Tk 3,000 per day. Now even a Tk 500



For the last 16 years, Habibur has set up shop on this footpath at Shahbagh.

sale is rare. It is a tough time," said Habibur.

But Habibur found new hope through his son Md Emon and the wonderful world of social media. "I started operating a Facebook page called Book Destiny last Saturday (July 11), and in just two days, we received a huge response. The page currently has nearly 9,000 likes," said Emon.

Habibur said he asked his son for help during this crisis. "I'm not well-versed in online platforms. But some of my well-wishers came forward and my son has been looking after the page."

Emon had already been helping Habibur out with the business at Shahbagh; he would collect books

from Banglabazar for retailing.

Emon said, "It was actually a regular customer of ours who suggested we take the business online. I deliver the books in person sometimes and other times we use a delivery service."

Book Destiny has already delivered books to Mirpur, Moghbazar, Mohammadpur, Lalmatia, Farmgate and Khilgaon areas, he said.

Regarding the challenges, Emon said, "My phone is a bit of an outdated model, so I can't always manage communication with so many customers. Besides, we are yet to provide service outside Dhaka." Emon is trying work through the glitches, and hopes to establish a more efficient

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# When Shahed hoodwinked four officials of CMP

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Cg

"I've come from the PMO. I am an adviser to the prime minister."

This is how Regent Hospital Chairman Md Shahed, now arrested, introduced himself to the senior officials of Chattogram Metropolitan Police at CMP Headquarters in 2017 while inquiring about a raid at a warehouse in port city's Khoajnar in November 2016.

A team of Detective Branch raided the depot belonging to one "Mega Motors" and seized 17 auto-rickshaws, which had multiple chassis numbers, on November 5, 2016. DB also detained owner Zia Uddin Mohammed Jahangir and his staff Shahidullah.

During his visit, Shahed not only deceived senior officials of CMP, but also "threatened" some junior officers over the recovery of the auto-rickshaws.

Meanwhile, once best of friends, Jahangir on July 13 this year filed a case with the city's Double Mooring Police Station, accusing Shahed of misappropriating Tk 91.25 lakh in the name of managing route permits from BRTA for 200 imported auto-rickshaws.

After the case was filed, the CMP officials started to speak up on how Shahed deceived and threatened them.

According to CMP sources, Shahed, using

his power, helped lodge a complaint with the Discipline and Professional Standard unit of Police Headquarters against four CMP police personnel, involved with the warehouse drive.

Two policemen -- Assistant Sub-inspector Md Azmir Sharif (now in PBI) and ASI Md Sadek Md Nazmul Haque -- have already faced punishment following the complaint while involvement of two senior officials -- Inspector Rajesh Barua and Inspector Aftab Hossain -- is being investigated for the last three and half years, said police sources.

The two inspectors are now attached to CMP's Counter Terrorism (CT) unit.

Police sources said after the arrest, Jahangir allegedly pressurised the senior CMP officers to free them.

"After the drive, we had been pressurised in different ways and following the order of high command, we released them under the custody of a lawyer that very night," Inspector Aftab Hossain told The Daily Star.

He said they also released 16 auto-rickshaws and kept one as evidence to verify. "On Nov 6, I sent a letter to the BRTA authorities to verify the authenticity of the seized chassis numbers," he added.

On January 1, 2017, BRTA Assistant Director Towhidul Hasan in a letter said they had no record of such chassis numbers.

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# No pvt rights org can use 'commission' in its name: SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court has upheld a High Court order that issued an injunction on use of the word "commission" in the name of any private rights organisation. Chamber Justice Md Nuruzzaman on Tuesday passed "no order" on a petition challenging the injunction, after virtually hearing on the petition. It was filed by Saiful Alam Dildar, secretary general of private group "Bangladesh Human Rights Commission".

Following a petition filed by Advocate Abu Hanif, the HC on June 29 imposed the injunction.

Petitioner's lawyer Advocate Md Bakir Uddin Bhuiyan told The Daily Star yesterday that the National Human Rights Commission was established under the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009.

Bangladesh Human Rights Commission was using the word "commission" in violation of the law, Bakir said.

# 416 women raped in last six months: BMP report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On average, more than two women were raped every day in the last six months in the country, said rights body Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP).

Citing data collected from reports published in 14 national newspapers, BMP yesterday said 416 women were raped and 24 of them killed after rape in last six months, while two died by suicide following rape. There were also rape attempts on 79 others during this time.

BMP disclosed this data at an online press conference titled "Violence against women and justice to them during Covid-19 crisis".

Reading a keynote paper, Maksud Akhter, director (advocacy and lobby) of central legal aid sub-committee of BMP, said there were 1,451 reports of torture and sexual violence against women from January 1 to June 31, including the rape incidents.

She said 244 women were killed in different circumstances and 80 died by suicide within the timeframe; 33 women suffered torture by husbands and in-laws

for dowry and 62 were kidnapped. Besides, there were three incidents of trafficking and 13 cybercrimes and other incidents.

Maksud said BMP had submitted a set of recommendations to the prime minister, concerned ministries, administrations and local administrations to prevent sexual violence to women during the pandemic.

She read out the recommendations, including appointment of adequate on-duty women police officers at every police station, expansion of One-Stop Crisis Center and Victim Support Center, ensuring Covid-19 tests free of cost and adequate supply of food to poor women until the situation improves, and strengthening hotline service so that victims can complain quickly.

In her speech, BMP General Secretary Maleka Banu said adequate shelter should be provided for women and girls and the role of the administration should be strengthened in preventing child marriage.

BMP acting president Fauzia Moslem stressed on political empowerment of women to establish women's right properly.

# FAKE COVID-19 CERTIFICATES

## JKG CEO Ariful on four-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed JKG Health Care Chief Executive Officer Ariful Chowdhury and one of his associates Sayed Chowdhury on four-day remand each in a case filed over issuing fake Covid-19 certificates.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abu Sufiyan Md Noman passed the order after Md Liakot Ali, an inspector of Detective Branch (DB) of police and also the case's investigation officer, produced them before the court with a seven-day remand prayer.

In the remand prayer, the IO said the two arrestees were directly involved in issuing fake Covid-19 certificates.

So, they need to be remanded to find out the cause behind committing such an offence and know the whereabouts of others responsible, the IO added.

On the other hand, defence lawyers submitted a petition seeking bail along with cancellation of the remand prayer. After hearing both sides, the magistrate turned down their bail petitions and issued the remand order.

The case filed with Tejgaon Police Station on June 24 has been handed over to the DB for investigation.

On June 24, police arrested Ariful and four others for alleged involvement in issuing fake Covid-19 certificates.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Ujjal waits for customers by a road, unable to sell them elsewhere. PHOTO: STAR

# M'singh potters struggle to make ends meet

MD AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Potter families in Mymensingh are struggling to survive as they cannot sell their products amid coronavirus outbreak.

The artisans usually make their clay items from Bangla month of Kartik to Chaitra (November to March) to sell those at fairs held on various occasions like Chaitra Sangkranti, Austami Snan, Pahela Baishakh, Eid, Rathjatra, and Nazrul Jayanti round the year.

In fact, their items have remained unsold as such gatherings are not being held to avoid the virus transmission.

While talking to The Daily Star, a number of potters shared stories of their plight.

Ujjal Chandra Paul from Muktagachha was one of them. With his clay utensils and toys, the 40-year-old walks all through Mymensingh city to hawk or vend those. "I have been doing so since the countryside shutdown was withdrawn," he said.

Ujjal said his family members include his three schoolgoing daughters and a bed-ridden ailing mother.

The potter, who was seen in the city's Kanchijily recently, said he invested Tk 1.5 lakh he took from a local NGO as loan and made clay items to sell those at different fairs in Trishal and many other places.

Due to embargo on such celebrations, most of his items have remained

stockpiled at home, he said.

"During the lockdown period, I also worked as a day labourer," said Ujjal.

"Now the NGO started realising installments and I have to pay Tk 1,300 per week. That's why I came out with the products for more money," said Ujjal who studied up to third grade.

"The daily sale is some Tk 500 and I have to spend Tk 150 per day for transport fare and food while moving from my Raghunathpur Rowarchar village to the city. The rest of the money is spent for the installments and family," said Ujjal.

Swarna Rani Pal, a potter from the village, said, "Every year, we earn a profit of around Tk 50,000 from our sale, which supports my family in the off season but this year we are in serious financial crisis."

"Everyone wants to provide proper education to their children, but it is elusive for us due to little income," said Swarna.

In Muktagachha, around 200 potter families are now in crisis; of them, around 38 ones in Raghunathpur Rowarchar alone, said some potters.

Bishnupriya Rani Paul, a century-old woman in Raghunathpur, said she never experienced such a critical time in her whole life. "The sale of clay articles has sharply come down in recent decades due

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

# Andrew Kishore laid to eternal rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Hundreds of music lovers bade farewell to playback singer Andrew Kishore, as he was laid to eternal rest at Rajshahi City Church's cemetery yesterday.

His funeral took place at the church, and later, Kishore's coffin was kept at a floral stage at the premises, where people placed wreaths to pay homage to their favourite singer. From his funeral to burial, Kishore's songs were played on loudspeakers. Many present there joined in to sing, while some broke into tears.

A last wish of Kishore was to keep his body at Rajshahi University's Central Shaheed Minar and Rajshahi Government College premises for his fans.

But due to the pandemic, this was not possible, as authorities of the institutions expressed their inability to ensure proper health rules during the possible gathering.

Kishore's body was taken to the church in a coffin at 9am, where his funeral

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

# POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

## ADB to support govt plans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government and Asian Development Bank (ADB) at a virtual meeting yesterday agreed on the specifics and time-bound actions to further accelerate implementation of ADB-assisted projects.

The tripartite portfolio review meeting (TPRM) was co-chaired by Fatima Yasmin, secretary of Economic Relations Division (ERD), and Manmohan Parkash, country director of ADB, says an ADB press release.

The coronavirus pandemic has slowed down the implementation of at least 40 of the 49 projects funded by ADB in Bangladesh.

Around 250 senior government officials, project directors, and ADB staff participated in the review meeting. The participants discussed the overall portfolio status and prioritised actions to achieve timely results.

"We intend to support the government's plans for post-pandemic socio-economic recovery by expediting project implementation and quick delivery of development results to the people," said ADB director Manmohan Parkash.

The plan for improving project performance include accelerating approval process of large contracts, strengthening health safety guidelines implementation, and virtual training to the project staff and beneficiaries.

ADB's current portfolio has 49 projects with around \$11 billion under sovereign portfolio. ADB focuses its cooperation in Bangladesh in six sectors—energy; transport; water and urban, municipal infrastructure and services; education; finance; and agriculture, natural resources, and rural development, the press release said.

# Country's first heliport in the offing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Work to build the country's first-ever heliport in the city's Ashkona has already started with an aim to oversee the operations of helicopters, Mohibul Haque, senior secretary to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, said yesterday.

"Discussions are now ongoing about the operations of helicopters," he told The Daily Star after a virtual discussion on tourism and the economy. The event was organised by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, the ministry and travel magazine -- Bhraman.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



A rather steady stretch of grass growing on a side the Moghbazar flyover makes for an oddly fascinating sight. A combination of factors -- the road remaining somewhat traffic-free during the last few months, possible lack of maintenance and cleanup, and the recent rain -- has created small mud beds on the sides on which the vegetation has sprouted, reminding us that nature can prevail on the most lifeless of manmade creations, given enough time. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# Remove obscene content from OTT platforms: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities concerned of the government to remove the obscene contents and films from the OTT (over-the-top) platforms across the country in seven days.

The court also asked Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to submit a report before it in a month on how the government collects revenue from the OTT platforms.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim came up with the order after virtually hearing a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Tanvir Ahmed seeking necessary directives to this effect.

He submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC recently saying that several OTT platforms contain Bangladeshi and Indian obscene and questionable content and films, causing moral degradation, particularly among adolescents and youths.

The lawyer in the petition prayed to the HC to deliver order on the authorities concerned to remove the obscene contents and films from the OTT platforms.

# GOVT BARISHAL COLLEGE

## Two groups come face to face over renaming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal demonstrated in front of Barishal city's Ashwini Kumar Hall yesterday, demanding implementation of a proposal that Government Barishal College be named after Ashwini Kumar Dutta.

On the contrary, the institution's present and former students held a mass signature collection programme at the same venue, seeking that its name remain unchanged.

The city and district units of the left-leaning party formed a human chain and brought out a procession from the spot. BSD member secretary Dr Manisha Chakrabarty and convener Imran Habib Khan Rumon, among others, addressed their programme.

They said they raised the demand as Ashwini Kumar Dutta's residence once existed on the college premises. Besides, he was a social worker and patron of education. They handed over a memorandum to Deputy Commissioner SM Ajjar Rahman in this regard.

On the other hand, students at the signature collection programme staged a rally there. Awami League city unit secretary Zahangir Kobir, panel mayor and AL leader Rafiqul Islam, and Bangladesh Chhatra League's city unit president Sumon Semnabat joined it in solidarity with students.

They said the name -- Govt Barishal College -- has been familiar for the last 50 years. So, it cannot be changed, they said.

Due to their separate programmes, Sadar Road was blocked for more an hour from 11am. Both sides chanted slogans in favour of their respective demands, until police calmed them down.

On February 29 this year, the DC sent a letter to Ministry of Education with a recommendation that the college should be named after Ashwini Kumar Dutta.

## Belayet Hossain passes away

CITY DESK

Md Belayet Hossain, freedom fighter and senior deputy managing director of Bashundhara Group, passed away yesterday morning while undergoing treatment at Evercare Hospital Dhaka.

He was suffering from old-age complications for a long time, said a press release.

Born in 1950, Belayet was part of Bashundhara Group since its inception, and served in various vital positions. He contributed immensely toward the organisation's development in the last 30 years.

He left behind his wife, three daughters, friends and a host of well-wishers to mourn his death.

Bashundhara Group Chairperson Ahmed Akbar Sobhan expressed deep sorrow for Belayet's demise.

"His passing has left a void in our hearts. I am deeply saddened after losing a great friend and co-worker. I pray for his departed soul and give condolences to his bereaved family," he said.



## From footpath

FROM PAGE 3

delivery system for customers in and outside of the capital. Many of Habibur's loyal customers have returned since the business went on Facebook, and he also has a newfound zeal for the venture. "I bought books from Habib chacha regularly for over five years, and this pandemic has not been kind to him. The business is now online and we can all help out by buying books," Labiba Faiz Bari, a student of Dhaka University, said in a Facebook post.

Well wishers left many positive messages and reviews on the page, with many thanking the admins for the prompt delivery. Dhaka University students made sure to spread the word on the initiative, and their peers flocked to the page to help out their favourite Habib chacha.

Asked why he was drawn to selling books, Habibur said, "I myself couldn't get a good education or higher degree, and neither could my three sons due to financial instability. But doing this business gives me immense satisfaction and pride because my primary customers are students, who are being enlightened by reading books. They are just like my children and my business is helping them."

But Habibur is still not sold on moving the business entirely online, despite the heavy sales. He is still setting up shop on the footpath at Shahbagh. "The campus is where I love to be, with the students who visit me regularly. It is not only about my business but I also love the community there," Habibur said.

## JKG CEO

FROM PAGE 3

The four are -- Humayun Kabir and his wife Tanzina Patwary, Sayeed Chowdhury and Al Mamun.

On July 12, police arrested Ariful's wife Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury, the chairman of JKG Health Care and also a government official, around three weeks after the scam came to light.

Following her arrest, the health ministry suspended her from the post of registrar at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases for violating rules.

The following day, Sabrina was placed on a three-day remand in connection with the same case. Police have so far arrested nine people.

## M'singh potters

FROM PAGE 3

to arrival of plastic and other products at markets," she said.

"We basically survive through the sale during various celebrations, but coronavirus has left us in utter sufferings this year," said Bishnu Priya.

Suken Chandra Pal from Mondolsen village said he has to maintain an eight-member family including three daughters, a son and elderly parents.

"I made clay essentials with a Tk 25,000 investment, but almost all of those have been left unsold because I could not bring them to customers due to this pandemic," said the 45-year-old.

He started hawking the products recently to arrange food for his family, lamented Suken. So far 4,000 potter families are continuing their ancestral profession in the district, he informed this correspondent.

Mohammad Abdur Rob, principal of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Fine Arts Institute in Mymensingh, said around 20 clay artisans, who studied at the institute and make items on commercial basis in the district, also incurred a huge loss this year due to coronavirus surge.

Talking to this correspondent, Mohammad Rajon, one of the artisans, said organisers sometimes called the potters with their products to the celebrations. Now, none is paying attention to them, he said.

Contacted, Md Mizanur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Mymensingh, said he already asked the upazila nirbahi officers to prepare lists of those engaged in different ancestral professions, including pottery, to provide financial support to them.

## When Shahed

FROM PAGE 3

With the investigation ongoing, Shahed visited the CMP Headquarters on February 8, 2017. He told the officials that he was sent to the port city to resolve the issue.

Witnesses said he also threatened Rajesh and Aftab, following which Aftab filed an internal General Diary (GD), mentioning Shahed's name.

"Shahed said you are junior officers... Where did you get the courage [to conduct the raid]? I had to come to Chattogram from Dhaka just for this," said Rajesh Barua. Shahed then went on saying how well-connected he is.

"After a few days, a complaint was lodged against us in Dhaka. It's still ongoing. We continue to face harassment without doing anything," added Rajesh.

CMP sources said during the visit, Shahed took away the remaining auto-rickshaw from police custody. Later, investigation regarding the auto-rickshaws stopped abruptly. Sources said the complaint submitted against the four law enforcers mentioned that they harassed "Mega Motors" through seizing the auto-rickshaws and demanding Tk 50 lakh as bribe from the owner.

The bribery allegation was found to be false during an investigation. The complaint is now under investigation with Industrial Police.

Asked, CT unit ADC Palash Kanti Nath said the officers became victim of Shahed's fraudulence.

### VERSION OF MEGA MOTORS

Mega Motors' staff member Saifuddin -- who filed a case against Shahed on behalf of Jahangir -- said, "Shahed pressured CMP officials so we believe him. That way he built a relationship with our company so he can extort us."

"He came to us through our former staffer Shahidullah who was fired later," said Saifuddin, also a cousin of Jahangir.

Along with Shahed, Mega Motors also accused Shahidullah in the money embezzlement case.

"Shahed's target was to embezzle our money and he did so by taking Tk 91.25 lakh in 2017, promising to give us permits for operating 200 auto-rickshaws in the capital," he claimed.

He also admitted that several politicians phoned police in favour of Mega Motors after the arrest of Jahangir and Shahidullah.

## Country's first

FROM PAGE 3

Talking to this correspondent later, the senior secretary said once the terminal is operational, they will be able to coordinate better regarding who is using the choppers, and where they are traveling to and from.

Besides, the heliport will ease the process of transporting ailing passengers since there will be a dedicated terminal, he also said.

Speaking at the discussion as chief guest, Mohibul said the country's private helicopter service activities are dominated by few business groups. Some 14 to 15 companies are now operating helicopter business, Mohibul informed.

He also said work is underway to formulate a policy for development of tourism in the country. It will specify responsibilities of each ministry involved in tourism so that they can play a role in the development process.

Mohibul said work is underway to include the issue of assisting tourists in the day-to-day work of the deputy commissioners. He said a proposal has already been sent to the Cabinet Division.

## Andrew

FROM PAGE 3

continued for one hour. His coffin, covered in transparent glass, was placed at the floral stage, which Kishore's wife, son and daughters had decorated. Apart from family members, musicians who went to Rajshahi from across the country paid their homage.

Among others, Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, Rajshahi lawmaker Fazle Hossain Badsha, lyricist Ethun Babu and Bangladesh Film Artists' Association General Secretary Zayed Khan were present in the ceremonies.

At 11:30am, the body was taken to the graveyard and buried in a solemn manner.

## Pandemic

FROM PAGE 12

Noman said prior to the global shutdown, Baira had more than one lakh demand letters for overseas jobs.

Of the new pending visas, about 85 percent were for jobs in Saudi Arabia and the rest were for other Middle East and some East European countries, he added.

He urged the government to declare separate stimulus package for recruitment agencies as those too were suffering the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Baira President Benji Ahmed said the country now has to prepare and ready its workforce, via training, to meet the demands of the post-Covid-19 international labour market. Bangladesh has to prioritise sectors that will have increased labour demands.

"Only then we will be able to compete in the international labour market," he said.

"We have 1.25 crore migrant workers abroad while they [the Philippines] probably has 10 to 15 lakh. Yet, they earn some \$33 billion annually because they are fully equipped and skilled in all sectors," he added.

Bangladesh earned \$18.3 billion in remittance last year, according to Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training.

The Baira president said in the coming days, they expect new demands for Bangladeshi workers from Europe, China, and Russia.

## Freedom of press

FROM PAGE 12

the press to shun the tendency of blackmailing and says that this unhealthy practice was prevalent in the presses of Karachi and Rawalpindi during Pakistani regime.

At the meeting, Gias Uddin Ahmed, outgoing president of Dhaka Union of Journalists, urges the government to set up a press council to address the problems faced by the press.

### INDIRA'S LETTER TO MUJIB

A letter from Indira Gandhi is delivered to Bangabandhu at the Gono Bhaban today by the Principal Secretary to the Indian Prime Minister PN Haksar who is now in Dhaka on a three-day visit. The content of the letter is not divulged. The Simla Summit and how it progressed must have figured prominently in the letter.

### PRESERVE FOREST WEALTH

Bangabandhu says today, "I want to see that every citizen of Bangladesh plants a tree and maintains it to mark his cooperation to the development of the forest resources of the country and their participation in the tree plantation campaign." The prime minister addresses the inaugural ceremony of the tree plantation week launched throughout the country today. He also ceremoniously plants a seedling at the Suhrawardy Udyan.

SOURCES: July 17, 1972 issues of *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Dainik Ittefaq*.

## US drops plan to revoke

FROM PAGE 12

at least some in-person instruction.

The government said it would drop the plan amid a legal challenge brought by universities. But a senior U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) official said the administration still intended to issue a regulation in the coming weeks addressing whether foreign students can remain in the United States if their classes move online.

There are more than a million foreign students at U.S. colleges and universities, and many schools depend on revenue from foreign students, who often pay full tuition.

The July 6 move by the administration blindsided many universities and colleges that were still making plans for the fall semester, trying to balance concerns about rising cases of the novel coronavirus in many US states and the desire to return to classes.

A flurry of lawsuits were filed challenging the rule including one brought by Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology and another by a coalition of state governments. Dozens of big companies and colleges and universities filed "friend-of-the-court" briefs opposing the rule.

Harvard planned to hold all of its classes online for the upcoming academic year.

President Donald Trump, who is pushing schools across the country to reopen in the autumn, said he thought Harvard's plan not to hold in-person classes was ridiculous.

The universities argued the measure was unlawful and would adversely affect their academic institutions.

## HC orders it to pay

FROM PAGE 12

were killed in the fire, had already been paid Tk 20 lakh as an initial payment by the hospital.

The hospital authorities will have to pay Tk 30 lakh to the remaining four victims' families each in line with the HC directive, he said.

The five victims were Vernon Anthony Paul, 75, Riyajul Alam, 45, Khodeja Begum, 70, Monir Hossain, 75, and Md Mahubb, 50.

Lawyer Niaz yesterday said the HC on June 29 directed the hospital authorities to provide compensation to the victims' families through an amicable settlement. But no such settlement happened between the hospital authorities and the four victims' families, he added.

Muntasir Uddin and several other lawyers appeared for the writ petitioners, while Rokanuddin Mahmud, Mahfuzur Rahman Khan, and Kazi Ershadul Alam argued for United Hospital.

The petitions were filed yesterday and last month, seeking HC directives on the authorities concerned to give appropriate compensation to each victim's family and to take necessary action against those responsible for the incident.

Following an HC order, Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), Fire Service and Civil Defence, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, and United Hospital authorities submitted their probe reports to the court through attorney general's office on June 11.

## Over 25pc tested found

FROM PAGE 12

the city areas. Because, we have noticed a stable trend in major hotspots [Dhaka, Chattogram and Narayanganj] recently," Dr Mushtuq Hussain, consultant of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), told The Daily Star.

Yesterday, 33 people were reported dead from Covid-19, taking the death toll at 2,457, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The total number of deaths is 1.27 percent of all the 1,93,590 confirmed cases in the country, Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general (admin) of the DGHS, said during yesterday's briefing.

Including yesterday's 1,796, a total of 1,05,023 Covid-19 patients, 54.25 percent of all confirmed cases, have recovered.

Of yesterday's deceased, 27 were male and six were female. A total of 27 died in hospitals and six died in their homes.

Forteen were over 60 years old while 10 between 51 and 60, five between 41 and 50, three between 31 and 40, and another one was under 10.

Of those who died yesterday, 16 were from Dhaka division, seven from Chattogram, two from Rajshahi, three from Rangpur, and five from Khulna.

Of the total deceased, 1,940 were males and 517 females. So far, Dhaka division witnessed the highest Covid-19 deaths -- 1,224 (around 50 percent) -- followed by Chattogram with 633 deaths (nearly 26 percent).

Mymensingh division has the lowest number of deaths, 56 so far.

## Cumilla not doing well

FROM PAGE 12

The number of Covid-19 deaths was 18 so far.

### DEATH COUNT RISING

Like infections, the number of deaths from coronavirus also jumped in the district in the last three months.

While the total number of Covid-19 deaths was zero on May 1, it rose to 28 on June 1.

By July 1, it was 100 with another 24 reported as of yesterday.

From May 18 to July 13, an organisation named Bibek helped bury 53 dead bodies with coronavirus symptoms and infections in the Cumilla city area.

Yusuf Molla Tipu, initiator of Bibek, said almost every day they bury at least one such dead and the numbers are not decreasing.

Monjur Kader Moni, councillor of ward 10 of the city, said the number of infected people will actually be more than the official figure because people are reluctant to do Covid-19 tests.

So far, two people died in his area from Covid-19 whereas more than 10 died with coronavirus symptoms, he added, claiming that senior citizens are dying but no one is keeping record of that.

As of yesterday, 1,124 patients were admitted at Cumilla Medical College Hospital (CuMCH) with Covid-19 symptoms and infection.

So far, 222 of the patients died there; 36 of them were with Covid-19 and the rest 186 had coronavirus symptoms.

Dr Mojibur Rahman, director of CuMCH, said, "Some patients come to the hospital with low oxygen saturation levels. It is difficult to save such patients because fall in oxygen saturation level causes multi organ failure."

### SHORTAGE OF FACILITY

Only two public hospitals in the city -- CuMCH and the District General Hospital -- provide treatment to Covid-19 patients and those with coronavirus symptoms.

In the entire district, only CuMCH has an ICU facility dedicated for Covid-19 treatment and the unit also has to serve critical coronavirus patients from five other adjacent districts as well.

None of the private medical colleges, hospitals, clinics in the district provide treatment to Covid-19 patients.

Last month, a patient with gynaecological problems even failed to get admission in several private clinics in the city.

Maizuddin Ahmed, the patient's husband, said he finally had to admit his wife at CuMCH's isolation ward from

where she was transferred to the gynae ward after testing Covid-19 negative.

A number of other people have similar complaints.

This correspondent tried to contact Dr Abdul Baki Anis, a leader of Private Clinic Hospitals Owners Association, several times on his cellphone to inquire about the complaints.

However, the doctor who is also the president of Bangladesh Medical Association, Cumilla unit, could not be reached.

Dr Mojibur Rahman of CuMCH said they have 154 beds in the coronavirus isolation ward and 10 functional ICU beds out of 18.

The eight ICU beds, which were recently gifted by Finance Minister AHM Lotus Kamal and local lawmaker AKM Bahauddin, could not be used yet due to lack of trained manpower.

"We need highly trained nurses and medical technologists to run the ICU smoothly. If we can run all 18 ICU beds, it will ease the sufferings of people."

"Besides, we need high-flow nasal cannulas and portable X-ray machines for the Covid-19 unit," the physician said, adding that CuMCH has a centralised oxygen supply system.

"We are trying our best with the resources provided by the government. Already more than 50 doctors, nurses and other medical staff of CuMCH have been infected by coronavirus."

Abul Fazal Mir, deputy commissioner of Cumilla, said they are operating mobile courts to maintain health protocols in shopping malls, business centres and kitchen markets and also enforcing the rules on wearing face masks to prevent coronavirus infection.

## Humanoid clerk

FROM PAGE 12

the project Promobot said. Its facial features were generated by artificial intelligence based on analysing the appearance of several thousand females.

The robot, which wears the registry office uniform of white shirt and brown waistcoat, can recreate more than 600 human facial expressions by moving its eyes, eyebrows and lips and other mechanical muscles covered with artificial skin, Promobot said.

The robot can ask and answer generic questions and is connected to a scanner and a printer. It also has access to a document database and fully replaces a registry office employee, the head of the registry office, Leonid Gromov said.

## HOUSE TO LET

Full furnished house at Road No. 3, North Khulshi Hill Residential Area, Chittagong with 4-bedroom (attached 4-bathroom), drawing, dining, kitchen, south face verandah, gym equipment with two car parking facilities and also it will be rented at attractive rate for Rest House/Guest House.

Contact: 01729001063 or Shah Alam: 01716370126 D-91

## CREDIT RATING REPORT



Corporate HQ  
2/F HRC Bhaban, 46 Kawran Bazar C.A., Dhaka-1215

ONE Bank Limited has been rated by the Emerging Credit Rating Limited (ECRL) on the basis of Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2019. The summary of the rating is presented below:

Date of Declaration	Valid Till	Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating
March 10, 2020	March 09, 2021	AA	ST-2
March 10, 2019	March 09, 2020	AA	ST-2

### Long Term AA means:

Commercial Banks rated AA have very strong capacity to meet their financial commitments and is generally in a position to withstand adverse developments in the economy, business and other external conditions. These institutions typically possess a good track record and have no readily apparent weaknesses.

### Short Term ST-2 means:

Commercial Banks rated in this category are considered to have strong capacity to meet its financial commitments in a timely manner. However, it is somewhat susceptible to adverse development in the economy, business and other external conditions.

By order of the Board,

*John Sarkar*  
John Sarkar

DMD & Company Secretary

## Relief hard to come by amid

FROM PAGE 12

Echoing Sadek's statement, Sekendar Ali, 50, of Lalmonirhat town's Thanapara, said he used to distribute relief among the victims in the previous years but he did not go out this year considering the Covid-19 situation.

In Pabna, Baser Pramanik, of Betil Char in Sirajganj's Chowhali upazila, has been marooned for over a month now but nobody reached him with relief.

Mentioning his expectations of relief from NGOs, he said none came forward this year to help them.

In Sunamganj, the situation was quite similar.

Mohammad Ful Miah, chairman of Gourarang union, said he saw no private initiative to help the victims this year.

"The help that is coming from the administration is not sufficient. Private initiatives could help the victims," he said.

In Nilphamari, Dimla and Jaldhaka upazilas were the worst affected. People there were suffering immensely as a second spell of flood hit them.

Moynul Islam, chairman of worst flood hit Tepakharibari union in Dimla upazila, said 18 voluntary organisations and individuals generously came forward to help the victims in the previous year.

"But this year, the picture is different.

Probably because they want to keep themselves away from aid programmes due to the fear of Covid-19 infection," he added.

In Jamalpur, solvent individuals, private or social organisations, political leaders and other were yet to come out to help the flood victims due to the virus outbreak.

In Bogura, around 1 lakh people are directly affected by flood in three upazilas -- Dhunat, Sonatala and Sariakandi.

Thousands of flood victims are yet to get relief for the first time either from the government or any private individual or organisation.

Asor Ali, 55, another flood victim, said, "Even the government did not distribute relief among us. They did not even visit us for once."

Touhid Parvej Biplob, a local businessman, said they used to distribute relief every year, but this time they were unable to provide relief goods.

Biplob said, "I tested positive for coronavirus. Plus, we have no fund to buy relief for the flood affected people."

Meanwhile in Munshiganj, the Padma was swelling up to the danger mark, posing a risk of inundating to nearby localities.

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

## BUILDING & LAND SALE

(Suitable for Factory/Hospital/University)

Two Building (each 6 Storied@ 90,000sqft) total 1,80,000sqft, Land 5.50 bigha with Electricity /Gas/Water Facility. Both Building Accord Approved with Full Compliance. Presently Garments Factory running at Dhaka Road, Vogra before Gazipur Chowrasta. Contact: 01711-525563, email-1960skt@gmail.com

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd.  
Liaison Office

A meeting of the Directors of Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd. in Hong Kong was duly convened and held at 17/F., Office 1 Grand Century Place (MOKO), 193 Prince Edward Road W, Mongkok, Kowloon, Hong Kong at 3 PM on the 7th day of July 2020. It has been resolved to permanently close the Liaison Office and dissolve the affairs of Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd. Liaison Office in Bangladesh with petition to Bangladesh Investment Development Authority. Claims, if any, against the Company's Liaison Office, of the members of the public may be sent within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this public notice to:

Shuk Fong Kwan



Jamil Ashraf Mintu, owner of Yousuf Dairy and Cattle Fattening Farm at Bansbari in Saidpur upazila of Nilphamari, tends local variety of cattle reared at the farm while Upazila Livestock Officer Dr Md Rashedul Haque looks on.

# Online cattle market in Nilphamari attracts buyers during coronavirus

### Govt livestock dept checks animals' health and issues certificates ahead of Eid-ul-Azha

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

As Eid-ul-Azha approaches, online cattle market becomes popular in remote Saidpur upazila of the northern district as this practice ensures maintenance of health rules and social distancing during the coronavirus pandemic.

Many buyers even from other areas including Rangpur city are giving order online for buying sacrificial animals as local officials of government livestock department verify health status of each animal before sale and issues health certificate, inscribing age, variety, weight and other information of the animal.

The pioneer of online cattle market in the area is Jamil Ashraf Mintu, 38, of Bansbari area in Saidpur upazila town.

Instead of looking for jobs, the educated youth set up a cattle farm named 'Yousuf Dairy and Cattle Fattening Farm' on own land with four oxen in 2012.

Now there are 302 oxen and bulls in Mintu's farm and he has gained trust of buyers as his animals raised for sacrificial purposes are purely of local variety and those are reared naturally, feeding grass, bran, straw etc.

Steroids and hormones are never used in his farm.

Mintu said, "Buyers choose cattle through video call with smartphone and

the livestock department's certificate makes them confident as we sent its photo to customer's Facebook messenger."

"After settling the animal's price, we receive the money in advance through online banking and make the delivery of animals with our own transport," he added.

By this time, 105 oxen have already been sold online from his farm although the Eid-ul-Azha is still three weeks away.

Dewan Kamal Ahmed, mayor of Nilphamari municipality, who purchased an ox from there online, said, "They also agreed to keep the animal in the farm for taking care till the Eid day for a small amount of service charge, which is an additional privilege."

Afsana Rahman, 45, owner of Rabeya cattle fattening farm of Kamarpukur area, said online cattle trading is useful for both buyers and sellers as it could be performed without coming in physical contact in unusual days of coronavirus pandemic.

Dr Md Rashedul Haque, Saidpur upazila livestock officer, said, "We provide all out support to promote online cattle market for ensuring health rules during the Covid-19 situation."

To create customers' confidence, we issue health certificates of sacrificial animals after being sure that they are disease-free and reared in natural procedure, he added.

# Man held for raping schoolgirl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Police arrested a man on Tuesday in connection with a case for raping a schoolgirl in Kasba upazila last month.

The 11-year-old victim is a Class V student at a local primary school.

Police arrested Yousuf Mia, 45, son of late Abdul Hamid Mia, from Syedbad village in the upazila on Tuesday and produced him before a court yesterday that sent him to jail.

Earlier on June 3, victim's father, also a freedom fighter, filed a case with Kasba Police Station against his neighbours Yousuf and Shafiqullah for allegedly raping the fifth-grader on June 1, Officer in Charge (OC) of the police station Mohammad Lokman Hossain said. The law enforcers were conducting drives to arrest the other accused of the case, the OC added.

# Youth drowns in floodwater

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A youth drowned in floodwater in Kurigram's Chilmari upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Raku Mia, 21, was son of Hamidul Haque of Nalarpar village in the upazila.

Locals and victim's family members said Raku was fishing in floodwater near his house yesterday morning.

At one stage, he suddenly fell into the floodwater and drowned.

Later, locals spotted his body floating in the floodwater and recovered it, Thanahat Union Parishad Chairman Abdur Razzak Milon said.

# Dummy houses mushrooming in vacant land beside airport

### Landowners building those to get better compensation in case their land is acquired for a proposed air force base there

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Within a span of only two months, over one hundred dummy houses sprung up on agricultural or otherwise unused land adjoining the proposed air force base beside the current airport in Barishal's Babuganj upazila.

Many of the new houses, brick or wood-tin structure, cannot be accessed from roads in the locality, under Khanpura village of Rahmatpur union. Some do not even have any bathroom or kitchen. And the ones that have those, they lack power connections or access to fresh water.

Locals said they built the houses after hearing that a large area of the village would be acquired by the government for an air force base and

the new houses would ensure better compensation for their land.

One such house owner is Sirajul Islam Pintu. He said so far, at least a hundred new houses have been built near the proposed base in the last few months.

"More than 150 of my relatives, who own nearly 20 acres of land here, have been building new houses. Although we haven't been notified of our land being acquired [for the air force base], we thought it would be helpful for us [if we did so]," he said.

Sabina Begum of the same village said she also built a new tin-roofed house in the area and, if necessary, she might stay in the new house too.

Contacted, Shahidul Islam, additional deputy commissioner

(revenue) in Barisal, said under the proposed plan for the air force base, around 158 acres of land, which is about one-third of the area in Khanpura village, would be needed to be acquired from the village.

The district administration has started preliminary work in this regard and they would soon send to the land ministry their proposal for the acquisition of 158 acres of land in the village. The actual acquisition work would start only after the ministry's approval to the proposal.

Ensuring that no one would gain any advantage by adopting unethical means, Shahidul said, "We already gathered video recording of the entire area. So, the recent construction there will bear no additional benefit."



Workers build a new house on the yard of an existing house, near the proposed site of an air force base next to the current airport in Barishal's Babuganj upazila. The photo was taken this Sunday.

PHOTO: STAR

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
**বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ**  
**খুলনা মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স**  
**খুলনা**  
**পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)**

চলতি ২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বৎসরে বিজ্ঞপ্তি পুলিশ হাসপাতাল, খুলনার নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের জন্য পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা/০৮ অনুসারে প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত পুনঃ দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয় (পুলিশ বিভাগ)।		
২.	সংস্থা	খুলনা মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, খুলনা।		
৩.	ক্রয়/সমগ্র্যের স্বত্বাধিকারীর পদবী ও ইউনিট	কমিশনার, খুলনা মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, খুলনা।		
৪.	ক্রয়/সমগ্র্যের স্বত্বাধিকারীর কোড	প্রয়োজ্য নয়।		
৫.	ক্রয়/সমগ্র্যের স্বত্বাধিকারীর জেলা	খুলনা।		
৬.	যে কাজের জন্য দরপত্র আহ্বান	বিজ্ঞপ্তি পুলিশ হাসপাতাল, খুলনার জন্য ঔষধ ও শল্য চিকিৎসা সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ।		
৭.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্মারক নং ও তারিখ	স্মারক নং-২৬৬৮/ই, তারিখঃ ১৪-০৭-২০২০খ্রিঃ।		
৮.	ক্রয় পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)।		
৯.	বাজেট ও তহবিলের উৎস	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্সের মাধ্যমে প্রাপ্ত বাজেট বরাদ্দ সাপেক্ষে।		
১০.	দরপত্র প্যাকেজ নম্বর	প্রয়োজ্য নয়।		
১১.	দরপত্র প্যাকেজের নাম	বিজ্ঞপ্তি পুলিশ হাসপাতাল, খুলনার জন্য ঔষধ ও শল্য চিকিৎসা সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ।		
১২.	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	১৪/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ।		
১৩.	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৩/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।		
১৪.	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	কেএমপি সদর দপ্তর। ০৪/০৮/২০২০খ্রিঃ তারিখ ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।		
১৫.	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	খুলনা মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, সদর দপ্তর, খুলনা। ০৪/০৮/২০২০ তারিখ, বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা।		
১৬.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি/সরবরাহকারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	কেএমপি সদর দপ্তরের প্রশাসন শাখা।		
১৭.	দরপত্র খোলার সময় উপস্থিতি	দরপত্রদাতা/সরবরাহকারী ও প্রতিষ্ঠানের সম্মুখে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র খোলা হবে।		
১৮.	দরপত্রদাতা/সরবরাহকারীর যোগ্যতার সম্বন্ধে প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র	ক) সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত হালনাগাদ বৈধ ড্রাগ ও ট্রেড লাইসেন্স। খ) সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত জিআইআর/টিআইএন নং সহ হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধ সনদপত্র। গ) নাপারিকটের সনদপত্র (জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রসহ)। ঘ) জাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদপত্র। ঙ) হালনাগাদ আর্থিক সাজেশন (ব্যাংক সলভেন্সী) সার্টিফিকেট। চ) সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ কাজে অতিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র।		
১৯.	কাজের সূক্ষ্ম বিবরণ	বিজ্ঞপ্তি পুলিশ হাসপাতাল, খুলনার জন্য ঔষধ ও শল্য চিকিৎসা সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ।		
২০.	দরপত্র সিটিউলের মূল্য	নিম্নে উল্লেখিত হকের বিবরণ মোতাবেক।		
২১.	দরপত্রের সূক্ষ্ম বিবরণ			
ক্রয় নং	কাজের বিবরণ	দরপত্র আদানত	কাজের মেয়াদ	সিটিউলের মূল্য (অফারকযোগ্য)
ক)	বিজ্ঞপ্তি পুলিশ হাসপাতাল, খুলনার জন্য ঔষধ ও শল্য চিকিৎসা সরঞ্জামাদি সরবরাহ।	১০,০০,০০০/- (দশ লক্ষ) টাকা	২০২০-২০২১ অর্থ বৎসর	৭৫০/- (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা
২২.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম, পদবী ও ঠিকানা	কমিশনার এর পক্ষে জনাব মোহাম্মদ এহসান শাহ, উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সদর), কেএমপি, খুলনা।		
২৩.	দরপত্রের তথ্যটির বিষয়ে যোগাযোগ	কেএমপি প্রশাসন শাখা হতে (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়) জানা যাবে।		
২৪.	দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিসের ক্ষমতা	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যেকোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার পূর্ণ ক্ষমতা সরবরাহ করেন।		
২৫.	দরপত্র ক্রয়ের শর্তাবলী			
ক)	একক মালিকানা/একক প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাচে আবেদনের মাধ্যমে দরপত্র ক্রয় করতে হবে।			
খ)	উপরের ২১নং ক্রমিকের হকের ক্রমিক নং-ক এর সিটিউল ক্রয়ের সময় আবেদনপত্রের সাথে হালনাগাদ ড্রাগ লাইসেন্স ও যে কোন সরকারি হাসপাতালে ঔষধ সরবরাহের ন্যূনতম ৬০,০০,০০০/- (ষাট লক্ষ) টাকার অতিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্রের ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবে।			
গ)	ব্যাংক সলভেন্সি ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে যেকোন সরকারি ১০,০০,০০০/- (দশ লক্ষ) টাকার স্থিতিসহ কমপক্ষে ২০,০০,০০০/- (বিশ) লক্ষ টাকার সলভেন্সি বিবরণী থাকতে হবে।			
ঘ)	দরপত্রের শর্ত ও বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্ত উভয়ই শর্ত হিসাবে গণ্য হবে।			

মোহাম্মদ এহসান শাহ  
উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সদর)  
কমিশনার এর পক্ষে  
খুলনা মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, খুলনা

জিডি-১১৪৪

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Director  
Kurmitola General Hospital  
Kurmitola, Dhaka

**Tender Invitation**

Memo No. KGH/Tender/2020-21/2150 Date: 14/07/2020

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from bonafide experienced importers/agent/suppliers/distributors with necessary qualification as per PPA-2006 & PPR-2006 for supply of diet in fiscal year 2020-21 under framework contract method. Terms and conditions are as follows:

<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>				
1 Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.			
2 Agency	Kurmitola General Hospital, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.			
3 Procuring entity name	Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.			
4 Procuring entity code	127020911126.			
5 Procuring entity district	Dhaka.			
6 Invitation for	Supply of diet for patient under framework contract method.			
7 Tender Ref. No.	KGH/Tender/2020-21/2150.			
8 Date	14/07/2020.			
9 Procurement method	Open Tender Method (OTM).			
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>				
10 Budget and source of funds	GOB/any other fund.			
11 Developments partners	N/A.			
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>				
12 Project/program code	N/A.			
13 Program name	N/A.			
14 Tender Package No.	GR-01			
15 Tender package name	Supply of Diet for Patient.			
16 Tender publication date	16/07/2020 or before.			
17 Tender last selling date	13/08/2020 during office hour up to 2.30pm.			
18 Tender closing date and time	17/08/2020 at 12.00pm.			
19 Tender opening date and time	17/08/2020 at 12.30pm.			
20 Name and address of the office				
a) Selling tender documents	Office of the Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka.			
b) Receiving tender documents	(1) Office of the Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka-1206. (2) Officer-in-charge, Cantonment Thana, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka-1206.			
c) Opening tender documents	Office of the Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka.			
21 Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting	Place: Office of the Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka, Date: 06/08/2020, Time: 11.00am.			
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>				
22 Eligibility of tenderer	(a) Earnest money in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order. (b) Trade licence updated for 2020-21 fiscal year. (c) Income tax certificate & tax paid certificate for 2019-20 years. (d) VAT registration certificate with 13 Digit BIN. (e) Bank solvency certificate. (f) Experience as a supplier of similar goods supply in last 3 years. (g) Manufacturer authorization is required for necessary item. (h) Successfully completion certificate of submitted work order. (i) Other detail instruction given in the tender schedule.			
23 Brief description of goods	Supply of Diet for hospital admitted patient.			
24 Brief description of related services	Supply of Diet related services.			
25 Price of tender documents BDT	Taka 2000/- (two thousand) only in cash (non-refundable) with application on letterhead pad.			
26 Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amounts in BDT (Bank Draft or Pay Order in favour of Director, Kurmitola General Hospital)	Completion time in weeks
01	Rice, Dal & Spice	Office of the Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Dhaka	Taka 2,00,000/- (two lac only)	As per call
02	Fish, Meat & Egg	Do	Taka 4,00,000/- (four lac only)	Do
03	Vegetable & Fruits	Do	Taka 1,00,000/- (one lac only)	Do
04	Bread & Confectionary	Do	Taka 1,00,000/- (one lac only)	Do
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>				
27 Name of official inviting tenders	Brigadier General Jamil Ahmad.			
28 Designation of official inviting tenders	Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.			
29 Address of official inviting tenders	Office of the Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.			
30 Contact details of official inviting tenders	Director, Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka. Phone: 55062201, Fax: 55062202. E-mail: kurmitola500bed@hospi.dghs.gov.bd			

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject in part or whole of any or all tenders.

Note:

(a) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject in part or whole or all tender without explanation.  
(b) In schedule the purchase quantity may vary to the requirement of the purchaser.  
(c) Bidder must enclose original schedule which is duly filled in unit rates or prices for all items of the works both in figures & words. Any overwriting, correction and scratch or illegibility will be rejected.  
(d) This tender advertisement cannot ensure the supply/purchase of goods.  
(e) If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is hindered under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.  
(f) Tender schedule or any item/specification cannot be modified/altered by the bidder.  
(g) Tenderer will have to supply the requisite goods on priority and need basis of the procurement authority.

**Brigadier General Jamil Ahmad**  
Director  
Kurmitola General Hospital, Kurmitola, Dhaka

GD-1143

## Belayet Hossain passes away

CITY DESK

Md Belayet Hossain, freedom fighter and senior deputy managing director of Bashundhara Group, passed away yesterday morning while undergoing treatment at Evercare Hospital Dhaka.

He was suffering from old-age complications for a long time, said a press release.

Born in 1950, Belayet was part of Bashundhara Group since its inception, and served in various vital positions. He contributed immensely toward the organisation's development in the last 30 years.

He left behind his wife, three daughters, friends and a host of well-wishers to mourn his death.

Bashundhara Group Chairperson Ahmed Akbar Sobhan expressed deep sorrow for Belayet's demise. "His passing has left a void in our hearts. I am deeply saddened after losing a great friend and co-worker. I pray for his departed soul and give condolences to his bereaved family," he said.



## From footpath

FROM PAGE 3

delivery system for customers in and outside of the capital. Many of Habibur's loyal customers have returned since the business went on Facebook, and he also has a newfound zeal for the venture. "I bought books from Habib chacha regularly for over five years, and this pandemic has not been kind to him. The business is now online and we can all help out by buying books," Labiba Faiaz Bari, a student of Dhaka University, said in a Facebook post.

Well wishers left many positive messages and reviews on the page, with many thanking the admins for the prompt delivery. Dhaka University students made sure to spread the word on the initiative, and their peers flocked to the page to help out their favourite Habib chacha.

Asked why he was drawn to selling books, Habibur said, "I myself couldn't get a good education or higher degree, and neither could my three sons due to financial instability. But doing this business gives me immense satisfaction and pride because my primary customers are students, who are being enlightened by reading books. They are just like my children and my business is helping them."

But Habibur is still not sold on moving the business entirely online, despite the heavy sales. He is still setting up shop on the footpath at Shahbagh. "The campus is where I love to be, with the students who visit me regularly. It is not only about my business but I also love the community there," Habibur said.

## JKG CEO

FROM PAGE 3

The four are -- Humayun Kabir and his wife Tanzina Patwary, Sayeed Chowdhury and Al Mamun.

On July 12, police arrested Ariful's wife Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury, the chairman of JKG Health Care and also a government official, around three weeks after the scam came to light.

Following her arrest, the health ministry suspended her from the post of registrar at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases for violating rules.

The following day, Sabrina was placed on a three-day remand in connection with the same case. Police have so far arrested nine people.

## M'singh potters

FROM PAGE 3

to arrival of plastic and other products at markets," she said.

"We basically survive through the sale during various celebrations, but coronavirus has left us in utter sufferings this year," said Bishnupriya.

Suken Chandra Pal from Mondolsen village said he has to maintain an eight-member family including three daughters, a son and elderly parents.

"I made clay essentials with a Tk 25,000 investment, but almost all of those have been left unsold because I could not bring them to customers due to this pandemic," said the 45-year-old.

He started hawking the products recently to arrange food for his family, lamented Suken. So far 4,000 potter families are continuing their ancestral profession in the district, he informed this correspondent.

Mohammad Abdur Rob, principal of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Fine Arts Institute in Mymensingh, said around 20 clay artisans, who studied at the institute and make items on commercial basis in the district, also incurred a huge loss this year due to coronavirus surge.

Talking to this correspondent, Mohammad Rajon, one of the artisans, said organisers sometimes called the potters with their products to the celebrations. Now, none is paying attention to them, he said.

Contacted, Md Mizanur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Mymensingh, said he already asked the upazila nirbahi officers to prepare lists of those engaged in different ancestral professions, including pottery, to provide financial support to them.

## When Shahed

FROM PAGE 3

With the investigation ongoing, Shahed visited the CMP Headquarters on February 8, 2017. He told the officials that he was sent to the port city to resolve the issue.

Witnesses said he also threatened Rajesh and Aftab, following which Aftab filed an internal General Diary (GD), mentioning Shahed's name.

"Shahed said you are junior officers... Where did you get the courage [to conduct the raid]? I had to come to Chattogram from Dhaka just for this," said Rajesh Barua. Shahed then went on saying how well-connected he is.

"After a few days, a complaint was lodged against us in Dhaka. It's still ongoing. We continue to face harassment without doing anything," added Rajesh.

CMP sources said during the visit, Shahed took away the remaining auto-rickshaw from police custody. Later, investigation regarding the auto-rickshaws stopped abruptly. Sources said the complaint submitted against the four law enforcers mentioned that they harassed "Mega Motors" through seizing the auto-rickshaws and demanding Tk 50 lakh as bribe from the owner.

The bribery allegation was found to be false during an investigation. The complaint is now under investigation with Industrial Police.

Asked, CT unit ADC Palash Kanti Nath said the officers became victim of Shahed's fraudulence.

### VERSION OF MEGA MOTORS

Mega Motors' staff member Saifuddin -- who filed a case against Shahed on behalf of Jahangir -- said, "Shahed pressured CMP officials so we believe him. That way he built a relationship with our company so he can extort us."

"He came to us through our former staffer Shahidullah who was fired later," said Saifuddin, also a cousin of Jahangir.

Along with Shahed, Mega Motors also accused Shahidullah in the money embezzlement case.

"Shahed's target was to embezzle our money and he did so by taking Tk 91.25 lakh in 2017, promising to give us permits for operating 200 auto-rickshaws in the capital," he claimed.

He also admitted that several politicians phoned police in favour of Mega Motors after the arrest of Jahangir and Shahidullah.

## Country's first

FROM PAGE 3

Talking to this correspondent later, the senior secretary said once the terminal is operational, they will be able to coordinate better regarding who is using the choppers, and where they are traveling to and from.

Besides, the heliport will ease the process of transporting ailing passengers since there will be a dedicated terminal, he also said.

Speaking at the discussion as chief guest, Mohibul said the country's private helicopter service activities are dominated by few business groups. Some 14 to 15 companies are now operating helicopter business, Mohibul informed.

He also said work is underway to formulate a policy for development of tourism in the country. It will specify responsibilities of each ministry involved in tourism so that they can play a role in the development process.

Mohibul said work is underway to include the issue of assisting tourists in the day-to-day work of the deputy commissioners. He said a proposal has already been sent to the Cabinet Division.

## Andrew

FROM PAGE 3

continued for one hour. His coffin, covered in transparent glass, was placed at the floral stage, which Kishore's wife, son and daughters had decorated. Apart from family members, musicians who went to Rajshahi from across the country paid their homage.

Among others, Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, Rajshahi lawmaker Fazle Hossain Badsha, lyricist Ethun Babu and Bangladesh Film Artists' Association General Secretary Zayed Khan were present in the ceremonies.

At 11:30am, the body was taken to the graveyard and buried in a solemn manner.

## Pandemic

FROM PAGE 12

Noman said prior to the global shutdown, Baira had more than one lakh demand letters for overseas jobs.

Of the new pending visas, about 85 percent were for jobs in Saudi Arabia and the rest were for other Middle East and some East European countries, he added.

He urged the government to declare separate stimulus package for recruitment agencies as those too were suffering the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Baira President Benji Ahmed said the country now has to prepare and ready its workforce, via training, to meet the demands of the post-Covid-19 international labour market. Bangladesh has to prioritise sectors that will have increased labour demands.

"Only then we will be able to compete in the international labour market," he said.

"We have 1.25 crore migrant workers abroad while they [the Philippines] probably has 10 to 15 lakh. Yet, they earn some \$33 billion annually because they are fully equipped and skilled in all sectors," he added.

Bangladesh earned \$18.3 billion in remittance last year, according to Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training.

The Baira president said in the coming days, they expect new demands for Bangladeshi workers from Europe, China, and Russia.

## Freedom of press

FROM PAGE 12

the press to shun the tendency of blackmailing and says that this unhealthy practice was prevalent in the presses of Karachi and Rawalpindi during Pakistani regime.

At the meeting, Gias Uddin Ahmed, outgoing president of Dhaka Union of Journalists, urges the government to set up a press council to address the problems faced by the press.

### INDIRA'S LETTER TO MUJIB

A letter from Indira Gandhi is delivered to Bangabandhu at the Gono Bhaban today by the Principal Secretary to the Indian Prime Minister PN Haksar who is now in Dhaka on a three-day visit. The content of the letter is not divulged. The Simla Summit and how it progressed must have figured prominently in the letter.

### PRESERVE FOREST WEALTH

Bangabandhu says today, "I want to see that every citizen of Bangladesh plants a tree and maintains it to mark his cooperation to the development of the forest resources of the country and their participation in the tree plantation campaign." The prime minister addresses the inaugural ceremony of the tree plantation week launched throughout the country today. He also ceremoniously plants a seedling at the Suhrawardy Udyan.

SOURCES: July 17, 1972 issues of *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Dainik Ittefaq*.

## US drops plan to revoke

FROM PAGE 12

at least some in-person instruction.

The government said it would drop the plan amid a legal challenge brought by universities. But a senior U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) official said the administration still intended to issue a regulation in the coming weeks addressing whether foreign students can remain in the United States if their classes move online.

There are more than a million foreign students at U.S. colleges and universities, and many schools depend on revenue from foreign students, who often pay full tuition.

The July 6 move by the administration blindsided many universities and colleges that were still making plans for the fall semester, trying to balance concerns about rising cases of the novel coronavirus in many US states and the desire to return to classes.

A flurry of lawsuits were filed challenging the rule including one brought by Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology and another by a coalition of state governments. Dozens of big companies and colleges and universities filed "friend-of-the-court" briefs opposing the rule.

Harvard planned to hold all of its classes online for the upcoming academic year.

President Donald Trump, who is pushing schools across the country to reopen in the autumn, said he thought Harvard's plan not to hold in-person classes was ridiculous.

The universities argued the measure was unlawful and would adversely affect their academic institutions.

## HC orders it to pay

FROM PAGE 12

were killed in the fire, had already been paid Tk 20 lakh as an initial payme by the hospital.

The hospital authorities will have to pay Tk 30 lakh to the remaining four victims' families each in line with the HC directive, he said.

The five victims were Vernon Anthony Paul, 75, Riyajul Alam, 45, Khodeja Begum, 70, Monir Hossain, 75, and Md Mahubb, 50.

Lawyer Niaz yesterday said the HC on June 29 directed the hospital authorities to provide compensation to the victims' families through an amicable settlement. But no such settlement happened between the hospital authorities and the four victims' families, he added.

Muntasir Uddin and several other lawyers appeared for the writ petitioners, while Rokanuddin Mahmud, Mahfuzur Rahman Khan, and Kazi Ershadul Alam argued for United Hospital.

The petitions were filed yesterday and last month, seeking HC directives on the authorities concerned to give appropriate compensation to each victim's family and to take necessary action against those responsible for the incident.

Following an HC order, Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), Fire Service and Civil Defence, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, and United Hospital authorities submitted their probe reports to the court through attorney general's office on June 11.

## Over 25pc tested found

FROM PAGE 12

the city areas. Because, we have noticed a stable trend in major hotspots [Dhaka, Chattogram and Narayanganj] recently," Dr Mushtuq Hussain, consultant of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), told The Daily Star.

Yesterday, 33 people were reported dead from Covid-19, taking the death toll at 2,457, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The total number of deaths is 1.27 percent of all the 1,93,590 confirmed cases in the country, Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general (admin) of the DGHS, said during yesterday's briefing.

Including yesterday's 1,796, a total of 1,05,023 Covid-19 patients, 54.25 percent of all confirmed cases, have recovered.

Of yesterday's deceased, 27 were male and six were female. A total of 27 died in hospitals and six died in their homes.

Forteen were over 60 years old while 10 between 51 and 60, five between 41 and 50, three between 31 and 40, and another one was under 10.

Of those who died yesterday, 16 were from Dhaka division, seven from Chattogram, two from Rajshahi, three from Rangpur, and five from Khulna.

Of the total deceased, 1,940 were males and 517 females. So far, Dhaka division witnessed the highest Covid-19 deaths -- 1,224 (around 50 percent) -- followed by Chattogram with 633 deaths (nearly 26 percent).

Mymensingh division has the lowest number of deaths, 56 so far.

## Cumilla not doing well

FROM PAGE 12

The number of Covid-19 deaths was 18 so far.

### DEATH COUNT RISING

Like infections, the number of deaths from coronavirus also jumped in the district in the last three months.

While the total number of Covid-19 deaths was zero on May 1, it rose to 28 on June 1.

By July 1, it was 100 with another 24 reported as of yesterday.

From May 18 to July 13, an organisation named Bibek helped bury 53 dead bodies with coronavirus symptoms and infections in the Cumilla city area.

Yusuf Molla Tipu, initiator of Bibek, said almost every day they bury at least one such dead and the numbers are not decreasing.

Monjur Kader Moni, councillor of ward 10 of the city, said the number of infected people will actually be more than the official figure because people are reluctant to do Covid-19 tests.

So far, two people died in his area from Covid-19 whereas more than 10 died with coronavirus symptoms, he added, claiming that senior citizens are dying but no one is keeping record of that.

As of yesterday, 1,124 patients were admitted at Cumilla Medical College Hospital (CuMCH) with Covid-19 symptoms and infection.

So far, 222 of the patients died there; 36 of them were with Covid-19 and the rest 186 had coronavirus symptoms.

Dr Mojibur Rahman, director of CuMCH, said, "Some patients come to the hospital with low oxygen saturation levels. It is difficult to save such patients because fall in oxygen saturation level causes multi organ failure."

### SHORTAGE OF FACILITY

Only two public hospitals in the city -- CuMCH and the District General Hospital -- provide treatment to Covid-19 patients and those with coronavirus symptoms.

In the entire district, only CuMCH has an ICU facility dedicated for Covid-19 treatment and the unit also has to serve critical coronavirus patients from five other adjacent districts as well.

None of the private medical colleges, hospitals, clinics in the district provide treatment to Covid-19 patients.

Last month, a patient with gynaecological problems even failed to get admission in several private clinics in the city.

Maizuddin Ahmed, the patient's husband, said he finally had to admit his wife at CuMCH's isolation ward from

where she was transferred to the gynae ward after testing Covid-19 negative.

A number of other people have similar complaints.

This correspondent tried to contact Dr Abdul Baki Anis, a leader of Private Clinic Hospitals Owners Association, several times on his cellphone to inquire about the complaints.

However, the doctor who is also the president of Bangladesh Medical Association, Cumilla unit, could not be reached.

Dr Mojibur Rahman of CuMCH said they have 154 beds in the coronavirus isolation ward and 10 functional ICU beds out of 18.

The eight ICU beds, which were recently gifted by Finance Minister AHM Lotus Kamal and local lawmaker AKM Bahauddin, could not be used yet due to lack of trained manpower.

"We need highly trained nurses and medical technologists to run the ICU smoothly. If we can run all 18 ICU beds, it will ease the sufferings of people."

"Besides, we need high-flow nasal cannulas and portable X-ray machines for the Covid-19 unit," the physician said, adding that CuMCH has a centralised oxygen supply system.

"We are trying our best with the resources provided by the government. Already more than 50 doctors, nurses and other medical staff of CuMCH have been infected by coronavirus."

Abul Fazal Mir, deputy commissioner of Cumilla, said they are operating mobile courts to maintain health protocols in shopping malls, business centres and kitchen markets and also enforcing the rules on wearing face masks to prevent coronavirus infection.

## Humanoid clerk

FROM PAGE 12

the project Promobot said. Its facial features were generated by artificial intelligence based on analysing the appearance of several thousand females.

The robot, which wears the registry office uniform of white shirt and brown waistcoat, can recreate more than 600 human facial expressions by moving its eyes, eyebrows and lips and other mechanical muscles covered with artificial skin, Promobot said.

The robot can ask and answer generic questions and is connected to a scanner and a printer. It also has access to a document database and fully replaces a registry office employee, the head of the registry office, Leonid Gromov said.

## HOUSE TO LET

Full furnished house at Road No. 3, North Khulshi Hill Residential Area, Chittagong with 4-bedroom (attached 4-bathroom), drawing, dining, kitchen, south face verandah, gym equipment with two car parking facilities and also it will be rented at attractive rate for Rest House/Guest House.

Contact: 01729001063 or Shah Alam: 01716370126 D-91

## CREDIT RATING REPORT



Corporate HQ  
2/F HRC Bhaban, 46 Kawran Bazar C.A., Dhaka-1215

ONE Bank Limited has been rated by the Emerging Credit Rating Limited (ECRL) on the basis of Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2019. The summary of the rating is presented below:

Date of Declaration	Valid Till	Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating
March 10, 2020	March 09, 2021	AA	ST-2
March 10, 2019	March 09, 2020	AA	ST-2

### Long Term AA means:

Commercial Banks rated AA have very strong capacity to meet their financial commitments and is generally in a position to withstand adverse developments in the economy, business and other external conditions. These institutions typically possess a good track record and have no readily apparent weaknesses.

### Short Term ST-2 means:

Commercial Banks rated in this category are considered to have strong capacity to meet its financial commitments in a timely manner. However, it is somewhat susceptible to adverse development in the economy, business and other external conditions.

By order of the Board,

*John Sarkar*  
John Sarkar

DMD & Company Secretary

## Relief hard to come by amid

FROM PAGE 12

Echoing Sadek's statement, Sekendar Ali, 50, of Lalmonirhat town's Thanapara, said he used to distribute relief among the victims in the previous years but he did not go out this year considering the Covid-19 situation.

In Pabna, Baser Pramanik, of Betil Char in Sirajganj's Chowhali upazila, has been marooned for over a month now but nobody reached him with relief.

Mentioning his expectations of relief from NGOs, he said none came forward this year to help them.

In Sunamganj, the situation was quite similar.

Mohammad Ful Miah, chairman of Gourarang union, said he saw no private initiative to help the victims this year.

"The help that is coming from the administration is not sufficient. Private initiatives could help the victims," he said.

In Nilphamari, Dimla and Jaldhaka upazilas were the worst affected. People there were suffering immensely as a second spell of flood hit them.

Moynul Islam, chairman of worst flood hit Tepakharibari union in Dimla upazila, said 18 voluntary organisations and individuals generously came forward to help the victims in the previous year.

"But this year, the picture is different.

Probably because they want to keep themselves away from aid programmes due to the fear of Covid-19 infection," he added.

In Jamalpur, solvent individuals, private or social organisations, political leaders and other were yet to come out to help the flood victims due to the virus outbreak.

In Bogura, around 1 lakh people are directly affected by flood in three upazilas -- Dhunat, Sonatala and Sariakandi.

Thousands of flood victims are yet to get relief for the first time either from the government or any private individual or organisation.

Asor Ali, 55, another flood victim, said, "Even the government did not distribute relief among us. They did not even visit us for once."

Touhid Parvej Biplob, a local businessman, said they used to distribute relief every year, but this time they were unable to provide relief goods.

Biplob said, "I tested positive for coronavirus. Plus, we have no fund to buy relief for the flood affected people."

Meanwhile in Munshiganj, the Padma was swelling up to the danger mark, posing a risk of inundating to nearby localities.

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

## BUILDING & LAND SALE

(Suitable for Factory/Hospital/University)

Two Building (each 6 Storied@ 90,000sqft) total 1,80,000sqft, Land 5.50 bigha with Electricity /Gas/Water Facility. Both Building Accord Approved with Full Compliance. Presently Garments Factory running at Dhaka Road, Vogra before Gazipur Chowrasta. Contact: 01711-525563, email-1960skt@gmail.com

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd.  
Liaison Office

A meeting of the Directors of Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd. in Hong Kong was duly convened and held at 17/F., Office 1 Grand Century Place (MOKO), 193 Prince Edward Road W, Mongkok, Kowloon, Hong Kong at 3 PM on the 7th day of July 2020. It has been resolved to permanently close the Liaison Office and dissolve the affairs of Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd. Liaison Office in Bangladesh with petition to Bangladesh Investment Development Authority. Claims, if any, against the Company's Liaison Office, of the members of the public may be sent within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this public notice to:

Shuk Fong Kwan

Sears Holdings Global Sourcing Ltd. Liaison

POETRY

# Manifesto 2020

ANISUL HOQUE, TRANSLATED FROM THE BENGALI BY MOHAMMAD SHAFIQUIL ISLAM

Do you know, Mr Trump, for deaths of thousands of Americans you're responsible? You're liable for the heartrending laments of millions of mothers losing children around the world?

Do you know, Mr Putin, for humankind's helpless submission to a tiny microbe—neither an animal nor a plant, nor even a lifeless creature—you're responsible?

General Secretary of the United Nations, António Guterres, do you know you've totally failed to stop the spread of this deadly virus country after country?

President of the World Bank, Mr David, do you know for tears, laments, and panic among humankind, you're responsible? The tiger in a New York zoo is affected by coronavirus—you've carried that virus to him.

Yes, you all.

Mr Kim, do you know?

Mr Moon, Mr Li, Mr Abe—do you know?

And Mr Boris, you?

You've brought tears to every eye on earth. You've spawned fear in minds and ailments in souls.

A mother can't embrace her children anymore, neither can children hug their old father.

No more can lovers and the beloved kiss each other. Now there's an acute crisis of land for burial.

Frozen mortuaries are abounding in dead bodies too. The earth has an abundance of oxygen but humans don't have ventilators to breathe in because you've made this world so cruel.

America's 2021 budget for submarine fleet is 128 billion dollars. 12,800 crore dollars. 10 lakh 88 thousand crore taka only for submarines!

Now there's no money to buy ventilators! New York hospitals can't afford PPE!

Slipping into dustbin bags, doctors and nurses are working! Mr Modi, with your one-year budget of atom bombs, you could supply drinking water to every Indian. Then for a little water, a Rajasthani woman wouldn't have to walk six miles on torrid sand under the blazing sun!

With the one-year budget of atom bombs, you could help every poor Indian build a toilet! Every morning sixty crore people of your country answer a call of nature under open sky—what are you proud of?

Mr Imran Khan, with one-year budget of atom bombs, you could establish one hundred thousand primary schools! And ten thousand hospitals every year!

Your globalisation has carried coronavirus to the lungs of an indigenous young girl at Amazon. With a snap of coronavirus, your globalisation is turning African indigenous woodlands yellow.

Unable to endure hunger, youths are committing suicide in remote hovels of Bangladesh.

Do you realise, Mr Modi, your Citizen Amendment Act couldn't stop even a single virus?

The youth who walked two-hundred kilometers from Delhi had to embrace death—aren't you responsible for yellow blood frozen in his heart?

Do you realise, Mr Imran Khan, tanks



PHOTO CREDIT: ORCHID CHAKMA

don't ratify security?

Your F-16 is just like a cow chewing the cud, and on the Baluchistan-Iran borders, thousands of people are congested inside tents roasting in sweltering heat—no bathrooms, no water . . . despite symptoms, no scopes for tests! Already infected, they're spreading contagion all through Pakistan! No facility! No humanity!

Mr Trump, Mr Modi, do you realise, building walls or putting up barbed-wire on the borders, no one can protect themselves? Do you realise atomic missiles can't protect you?

We know, humankind won't be conquered. We know, people will buy life after paying the price. Born again, humans will come close—they'll embrace each other yet again.

Someday a vaccine will be discovered. Soon the last coronavirus will be destroyed from the world. But another virus will still exist—its name is greed.

The world will still keep jingoism, racism, class conflict, communal clash, and extremism. IMF boss, Ms Christina, do you know you're responsible for this ignominy of humankind?

Mr Jeff Bezos, do you know a six-year-old child has died of a coronavirus that you've spread?

Mr Ambani, can you realise only money can't safeguard you?

If 80 percent resources of the world belong to 20 percent people, then coronavirus is inevitable. If 98 percent people's freedom is imperiled to only two percent, then coronavirus is inevitable. But just after one year you'll forget everything.

But only you aren't responsible, we have liabilities too for degrading humankind, for making the distressed humans weep tears. We'll also forget everything. We'll elect you President of America again, Mr Trump. We'll elect you President of Russia again, Mr Putin. And they'll make you President of World Bank, Mr David Malpass. They'll recruit young executives in World Bank, who'll send toilet rolls to Amazon, and tell the Africans to use hand sanitiser. The chimneys will spread smoke over. The sky will be dark again. With poisonous wastes, the atmosphere of this blue planet will darken. Bangladesh, Maldives, Netherlands . . . will drown with seawater rising. Again Trump will say, while using a toothpick, everything's in control. Corona is a hoax. Climate change is a spoof! Felani will hang on the barbed wire. On the Mexican border will die Rivera. On the cold covered van on the East European border will lie dead thirty homeless people. Aylan will lie dead upturned on the sands of the sea as if a doll wearing red outfit, in which there'll be stuck three seashells, plea to live in his fist, and dry salt in the pocket. Stunned, the little child Omran will see the houses falling down on his head, and blood stuck on his lips! Burnt to death, Nusrat will say—I'll convey the oppression to the whole world. Our souls are full of virus, and you're its champions, Mr Trump, Putin, Li, Modi, Imran, Boris, and Abe. But the virus doesn't differentiate between the rich and the poor, doesn't care about missiles, atom bombs, CAA, barbed wire, or border walls, because atom bombs can't ensure security. With deadly weapons, you can destroy this blue planet six times, but can't save a single child—missiles can't provide security! There's no deadlier virus than discrimination and inequality! There's no more dangerous epidemic than exploitation and greed! There's no more disastrous calamity than jingoism and communalism! There's no deadlier virus than war and envy! We want vaccines to destroy viruses in our souls. We want ventilators to nurse this earth, the ventilators that help build a pure world, where only a few people won't decide how 780 crore people will die, where 780 crore people will compose their own and joint manifesto for survival, the green manifesto affirming safety of each and every animal, plant, forest, hill, river, sea, and human!

Anisul Hoque is a Bangladeshi writer, poet and journalist who won the Bangla Academy Award for literature in 2011. He works for Prothom Alo, and is a fellow of The International Writing Program, University of Iowa. Mohammad Shafiqul Islam, author of Inner State (Daily Star Books, 2020) is Associate Professor, Department of English, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet. Email: msjewel@gmail.com

BOOK REVIEW

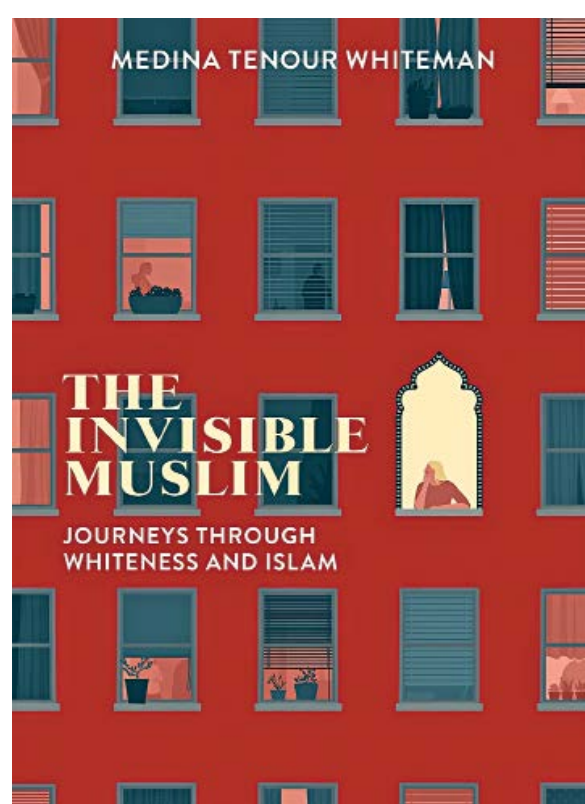
# On White privilege and Islam

SAMIRA AHMED/ THE MILLENNIAL MA

Islam is practised by 1.6 billion people across the world. But when you grow up in a predominantly Muslim country like Bangladesh, it can often exist as a localised concept in your head. Travelling to distant shores and witnessing Islam in a foreign country can evoke a mild, albeit delightful shock. I remember my first congregational prayer at East London mosque, rubbing shoulders with Muslim women from every corner of the world. That Eid, I experienced the vastness of the Ummah both physically and spiritually, an age-old, billion-strong unity that transcends borders and backgrounds. I was humbled and moved beyond words.

I found that same sense of amazement, multiplied tenfold, while reading *The Invisible Muslim: Journeys Through Whiteness and Islam* (February, 2020). In a beautifully tapestried memoir, writer-poet and musician Medina Tenour Whiteman captures her lifelong reconciliation of her White and Muslim identities, taking us along on a spiritual journey from Kenya to Tanzania, India to Turkey, Iran to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Spain to Britain, highlighting the richness of Islam's history and diversity with a refreshing honesty. A keen observer, she offers a remarkably balanced, well-researched account of the Muslim world, with nine pages of resource material expanded upon at the back of the book. Each chapter in her book is a mini travelogue comprising of life and historical events crafted with eloquent writing and sharp-witted humour.

Where are you from? This is a question every person of colour living in the UK has received at least once during their lifetime. Medina poses this question to talk about the 'otherness' people of colour are often subjected to at the hands of White privilege. Be it that inexplicable anxiety at UK Border Control after a long flight or the hellish experiences many immigrants like myself get embroiled in with the Home Office, Medina's observa-



tions as an "invisible Muslim", of those who are visibly one, are astonishingly accurate—a rarity. Having more than one identity can be a work in progress—Medina, the Anglo-American daughter of Sufi parents born in Granada, Spain who grew up in Essex, Britain, has many. And perhaps that is why her memoir felt so

relatable to me, a brown Bangladeshi woman settled in London, despite the stark difference in our skin colours, passports, and hence lived experiences.

In examining her privileges, Medina speaks up about racism against Blacks, White people's appropriation of Africa (the "ghost of European colonialism, reincarnated as a tourism that objectifies and exploits"), and the prejudices that exist within Arab and South Asian communities that "are still guilty of anti-Black oppression, in fact we are often some of the worst culprits". In the chapter "Love in a Lacuna, Sex and Marriage", she navigates the tricky waters of these topics in Islam, from intercourse to divorce, and sex education to app dating, forcing us to think of our religion in ways many of us have simply not been taught.

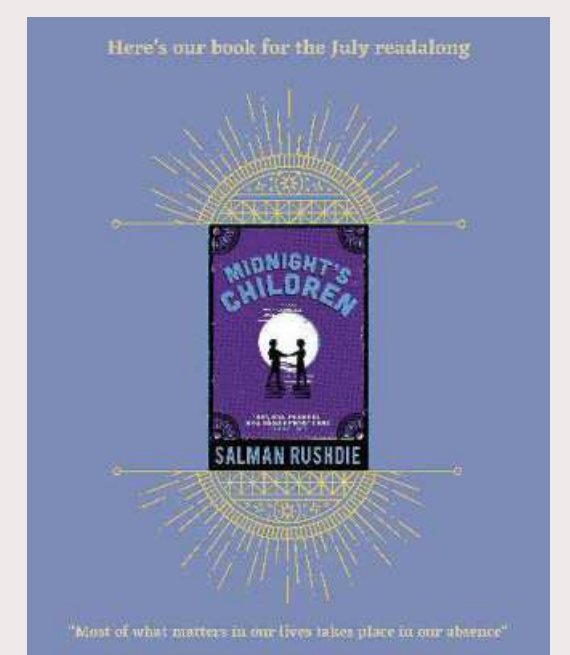
*The Invisible Muslim* celebrates diversity in the Muslim world in all its nuanced forms and shades. It offers a topical read to better understand the anti-racism conversation raging across the world right now as well as a case study of what it means to be a Muslim in the West in the 21st century. Candid personal reflections interlaced with insightful analysis of world affairs both old and new make it a valuable addition to the list of modern day memoirs.

For Muslims who wish to explore Islam through the lens of history and the varied lived experiences of the Ummah across the world, including the oft-overlooked lives of converts, this book can be a treat. As for non-Muslims who wish to examine White privilege while diversifying their bookshelves to do mandatory anti-racist work, Medina's memoir is a good place to start.

Samira Ahmed is an Air Traffic Control Engineer based in the UK. She blogs about millennial motherhood, books, feminism and immigrant life @the.millennial.ma.

## DAILY STAR BOOK CLUB PICK

DS BOOKS DESK



Starting July 15, we at the Daily Star Book Club have started reading Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. Read-along rules, discussions, and a list of stores where the novel is available are all up on DS Book's social media pages. Feel free to join the read-along by becoming a member of the Daily Star Book Club group on Facebook. To stay updated, follow the 'Daily Star Books' page on Facebook and @thedailystarbooks on Instagram! You can also email us at thedailystarbooks@gmail.com.

# The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR  
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 16, 2020, SHRABAN 1, 1427 BS

## Rising water levels and floods causing immense distress

*We should have been better prepared*

IN the middle of the uncertainties caused by the unchecked spread of coronavirus in Bangladesh and the global economic downturn, the situation is being made much worse in many districts due to some 14 rivers across the country flowing above the danger levels. According to a bulletin from the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre, the water levels of the Brahmaputra, Jamuna, Padma and Meghna may rise further, exacerbating the suffering of people who have already been affected by floods that have destroyed embankments, roads and homesteads, and posing a great threat to croplands as well. So far, nearly two million people have been affected in 15 districts in the northern and northeastern parts of the country.

Bangladesh as a low-lying land is prone to flooding and rising water levels in rivers. A UN study published on March 21 said that more and severe floods are likely in Bangladesh and India due to climate change, and by 2030, floods could cost South Asia as much as USD 215 billion each year. As it stands, there is no excuse for us to be unprepared in dealing with these floods, especially since climate experts have been warning us for many years of these same risks that we are facing now. There should have been a coordinated and planned strategy to prevent these sufferings, rather than trying to ease them after they occur.

We urge the government to immediately take steps and provide aid to the people who have been affected by floods. This will involve not only handing them relief but also giving them shelter, if their homesteads have been destroyed, and protecting them from Covid-19. The triple burden of the pandemic, economic downturn and floods have made these people extremely vulnerable, and they require rapid interventions to prevent them from falling into destitution.

However, we also urge the government to ensure that this situation is not repeated and the damage is minimised in the coming years. For example, around 30 villages were freshly flooded recently after 400 metres of alternative dyke collapsed in Dharla upazila in Kurigram. While the local union chairman alleged that the collapse occurred due to the negligence of the Water Development Board (WDB), the Kurigram WDB in turn blamed the locals for cutting the dyke indiscriminately. Instead of passing the buck in this way, the government must ensure that all levels of planning and administration are involved in protecting people from floods. As this example shows, some very simple steps, if taken in a timely manner, could prevent a great deal of suffering.

## Two lakh migrant workers risk deportation to a depressed economy

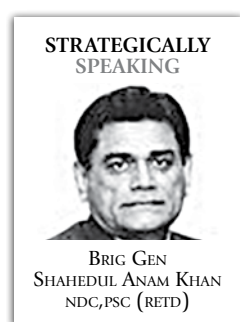
*The government must protect them in Kuwait as well as in Bangladesh*

AMIDST increasing uncertainty about future job prospects of Bangladeshi workers overseas, Kuwait, which currently employs around 3.5 lakh Bangladeshis, has proposed a bill that, if passed, may compel two lakh migrant workers to return home. The MPs who introduced the bill want to institute an expatriate quota system—under which Bangladeshis must not exceed three percent of Kuwait's total populace—to rectify a “great imbalance in the country's demography”. This development is certainly a cause for grave concern for Bangladeshi expats—many of whom are still in debt and risk being sent back home to a depressed economy, with little prospects—as well as for the Bangladeshi economy which earned more than USD 1.5 billion in remittance from workers employed in Kuwait.

We are deeply concerned about the anti-expatriate rhetoric that has escalated in Kuwait since the onset of the pandemic amid a slump in oil prices. Thousands of workers have already been forced to return. Most of them were held in jails and labour camps in miserable conditions and sent back empty-handed, without so much as their legal dues or personal belongings. The Bangladesh government needs to engage with Kuwait authorities urgently to ensure that our expats, who have played and continue to play an important role in Kuwait's economy, are treated with dignity and respect, and that they are not robbed of their due wages and entitlements. The Bangladesh High Commission in Kuwait needs to be particularly vigilant about violations of workers' rights and provide all kinds of humanitarian and legal assistance to those in need.

If the bill is ultimately passed, the government needs to create employment opportunities for the returnees at home, which is easier said than done, given the alarming level of unemployment in the country. We have repeatedly urged the government to increase the budget allocation for returnee migrants as well to develop a comprehensive plan for their rehabilitation. While the government has thus far claimed that “all is under control”, we remain concerned about the short, medium and long-term prospects of the returnees and urge the concerned authorities to address the issue in all urgency.

# Most people like Regent's chairman are always safe



STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING

BRIG GEN  
SHAHEDUL ANAM KHAN  
NDC, PSC (RETD)

“DON'T worry, I'm safe where I am now!” The scamster had thus assured his wife after multiple fraudulent acts committed by him were

exposed by the media, and he found himself a wanted man under the law—the law that he has been violating with reckless abandon as a pretender claiming an ambidextrous competence. Here is a many-faced person who employed all that a cheat has in his bag of forgeries to swindle unsuspecting people. In fact, by the latest count, there are thirty-two charges against him, including one of murder. He went by many names and many identities, sometimes as Shahed Karim, aka Shahed Hassan, sometimes as a military officer, and sometimes, perhaps most dangerously, as APS to the prime minister. He flaunted, effectively, the evidence of his links to high quarters. He chose to live in such a housing estate that many crooks had used in the past as a lair, hoping that the location would afford them safety and social credibility.

Not only was he running a hospital illegally, he was also given the permission to run Covid-19 tests. The DGHS has admitted that it was aware that Regent Hospital's license had expired, yet permission was given at the behest of the ministry. The ministry has disagreed. But both can't be telling the truth and lying at the same time. How to ascertain who is telling the truth? This was a murky decision, and surely illegal and murky decisions don't come for free.

To Shahed, I want to say that you were exposed and the law is after you only because your greed gave you away, ultimately. You charged your patients exorbitantly high for Covid-19 treatment. The health minister's comment that he was present at the agreement-signing ceremony between the DGHS and Regent Hospital “at the request” of the former sounds too innocuous to be believed.

Yes, you and your likes will be safe to run your murky trade and, when

in trouble, be kept out of public view, because that is in the interest of those that underwrite such rackets. It is not the fault of the law-enforcing agencies that it took them nearly seven days to apprehend you, because like many others of your kind, you acquire the capacity to become invisible. Like so many “wanted” criminals, you “managed” to remain invisible to the police. This is what I call “selective invisibility”, made possible with the “blessings” of the influential quarters.

you in the end.

You not only bartered the health of the nation, you also brought shame to the country by sully its image internationally. Who else but you can claim the luxury of safety after the many acts of swindling, cheating and fraud that you have long been involved in? Because, you have frothed at the mouth waxing eloquent on TV, often defending the indefensible, passing gibberish for wisdom. When it came to the party in

a president/foreign minister of India! Did you exploit your alleged political party links to gain access to them? You have claimed to be a member of AL's international affairs subcommittee. The party has denied the claim, but accepted the fact that you had been its member in the past. It is difficult to believe that you were granted an audience with a former PM and an ex-president of another country without the right words from the right quarters in Dhaka, and before a thorough verification by that country.

Shahed Hassan, or whatever your real name is, you represent the ugliest face of the society. Thank heavens that there are not many of your kind in the country. But just as a drop of acid spoils a large cauldron of milk, one like you is enough to soil the country's name. But you are in good company of the bad boys in our society. You have the Mithus and Papulis and the JKGs, the casino operators, the GK Shamims, and their godfathers who remain out of reach.

But we are better than what a few of you represent. While the Shaheds of society profit from ruining people's health and wealth, there are hundreds of others for every one of your kind, like the thousands of doctors and nurses who have risked their lives to serve the Covid-19 patients, and the dozens among them that have died because the PPEs that you provided were not of the required standard. For every one of you, there are dozens of people, of small means, who are using their service and hard-earned money to lessen the pain of the pandemic, a pain that you—and a few others like you as well as your godfathers—have colluded to exacerbate, for money.

Yes, you may not have pulled the gun on people or had a direct hand in the coronavirus deaths, but you were responsible for many of the casualties of Covid-19. Hence, you are like any other murderer, and must be treated as such. But unless those that have sponsored and backed you, who helped you to pursue your trade, are also identified and brought to justice, there will be more of the Regent Hospitals and JKGs and MP Selims and SK Shamims who will continue to “feel safe” in pursuing their trade.

Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan, ndc, psc (Retd), is a former Associate Editor of *The Daily Star*.



Members of Rapid Action Battalion arrested Md Shahed (third from left) near a border area in Satkhira on July 15, 2020.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

You played with the lives of not hundreds but thousands of unsuspecting people, who sought your service to test for Covid-19. You traded their health and security for money by issuing fake certificates. God knows how many of them have infected others by now, and in turn how many they have unknowingly passed the virus onto. How does the DG Health account for the fact that he, knowing that the Regent Hospital's license had expired, allowed it to operate for the last two years? It stretches one's credulity to believe that your shady past was not known to the authorities. And that is why you have remained safe for so long to ply your business. But the law has caught up with

power, you appeared to be more Catholic than the Pope.

You sought safety by exploiting the image and the attire of the person we revere most, Bangabandhu. You managed to get access to national-level functions and appear in places where access is restricted, despite the fact that you had served a two-year prison term, and despite the fact that you were described as a man of “dangerous fraudulent nature”. That is how a home ministry letter in 2016 labelled you, a chameleon, a person with numerous identities. How come?

You have not only managed entry into high places in Bangladesh, you are even pictured with a former prime minister,

## When and how can schools reopen?



MANZOOR AHMED

ON June 14, the ministry of education extended school closure, imposed on March 18 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, to August 6. Earlier, the prime minister had said the closure

may continue to September. Education authorities have to decide when and how schools can reopen safely and what the options are. A hasty move can push the situation beyond control.

A hot debate is raging in the USA this week after the authoritative Center for Disease Control (CDC) issued guidelines for safe school reopening which President Trump did not like. He considered it “too tough,” and threatened cutting federal government funds for schools that do not reopen with regular classes in the new academic year beginning in August and September in different states.

The painful dilemma faced in balancing what is to be done to protect livelihood and economy and save the lives and health of people cannot be underestimated. Political and public policy choices have to be made based on scientific evidence, health protection imperatives, and minimising damage to people's livelihood. The wellbeing of children, including resumption of learning, has to be a key concern.

UNESCO, UNICEF, WFP and World Bank issued guidelines in mid-May on the safe reopening of schools amidst ongoing closures affecting nearly 1.3 billion students worldwide. The UN agencies' guidelines dealt with safe operations of schools, recouping learning loss, students' wellbeing and protection, and reaching the most marginalised. Attention is also needed to providing financial support to implement the policy, investing in recovery and resilience of the system.

The UN agencies provide useful guidelines about how schools may reopen, but a prior judgement has to be made about when it is safe to open the school. Health experts and epidemiologists across the globe, including in Bangladesh, are unanimous in supporting a cautious approach to reopening schools and most economic activities. They agree that any situation that brings people together is a risk now, even with social distancing and other precautions, and can reignite the spread.

Ashish Jha, director of Harvard Global Health Institute, says that school authorities have to seriously ask themselves if they are really ready to open and stay open. They have to ask if they are ready in respect of classroom

space, hygiene, masks, temperature check, Covid-19 testing, tracing, isolation, health referral, and counselling, not just for the students, but also for the teachers and staff.

Alison Galvani, Yale University's director of Center for Infectious Disease Modeling and Analysis, reports that their study indicates that most transmission is caused by pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic carriers, a dangerous feature of Covid-19. Schools with students and teachers coming together can endanger not only these groups but also their families and all they come in contact with outside school.

But is there a benchmark for safe gathering, as in a regular classroom? The UN guideline did not indicate a benchmark and the CDC guideline also refrained from being specific, it appears, under Trump administration bullying.

Epidemiologists admit that it depends on the socioeconomic context, but the best judgement is a sustained period of infection around one to two cases for a population of 100,000. This suggests that

should be tested using the current RT-PCR testing procedure, which can be complemented by a larger sample with rapid testing, as one designed by Gonoshasthaya Kendra.

Once an estimate of the infected population is established by upazilas, the next steps for the school reopening decision can be taken. Benchmarks for three levels of infection spread—similar to the idea of red, yellow and green zones (but not implemented)—could be used to assess the status of upazilas or even parts of upazilas, where appropriate.

No area can claim to have reached a status of complete safety until zero infection is reported for several weeks or an effective vaccine is available. Schools can open in the green and yellow areas with some variation in school operation. Schools in red zones will have to remain closed until their status changes, as determined by testing and infection rates. One size cannot fit all.

An expert team including epidemiologists should establish benchmarks of rates of infection for the

*Even in a green zone, a cautious approach has to be followed because the risk of a resurgence exists. Masks, sanitisers, washing with soap and water must be available for students and teachers. Distance should be maintained in classrooms keeping a student seat vacant between two students. Classes should be held in two shifts and for shorter hours (perhaps three hours for each shift).*

an ideal safe level for reopening schools in Bangladesh would be when total current infection comes down to 2,000 to 3,000. The infection rate for the last month or so has been increasing daily by more than these numbers. It appears decisions have to be taken for partial reopening with necessary safety rules before the ideal infection level is reached.

A low national average in infection rate would be the aim, but it does vary greatly for different areas. The larger Dhaka Metropolis has about one-third of total infections in the country. An upazila (there are around 500 in the country) with an average population of 350,000 would be an appropriate unit to estimate infection rate and take necessary follow-up action.

The first step for a decision about school reopening would be to estimate as objectively as possible the upazila-wise infection rate. The testing done now is not done with any epidemiology-based sampling frame. A representative population sample from each upazila

three levels and the different protocols that can be applied for school opening decisions and continuing school operations. Some suggestions are offered below.

Even in a green zone, a cautious approach has to be followed because the risk of a resurgence exists. Masks, sanitisers, washing with soap and water must be available for students and teachers. Distance should be maintained in classrooms keeping a student seat vacant between two students. Classes should be held in two shifts and for shorter hours (perhaps three hours for each shift), because of space limitations and also to limit contact time.

Recouping learning losses should be the main objective, focusing on key foundational skills (reading, writing, math and some play and games at primary level); these plus English and science at the secondary level). Time should be devoted to teaching-learning and not on testing or preparing for testing, either public or annual school

test. Quizzes and exercises in class as part of teaching, known as formative evaluation, are useful.

Blended approach of mixing distance mode and face-to-face should be supported with teachers guiding and helping the students in this respect. Teachers will also need guidance and support for this purpose. A teacher should be assigned to a group of students, say 20, as their counsellor and mentor to advise them and give them mental support and encouragement, keeping in touch with them and their parents by phone.

Financial support should be available for schools for maintaining hygiene and washing facilities. Teacher should receive guidelines for their role and work during the pandemic and recovery phase, and should receive an allowance as an incentive. Support for them and their families' health and safety should be available.

For a yellow zone, all these measures would apply, plus some extra measures regarding distancing in classroom, attendance in shifts, and extra sanitation and disinfection measures.

Distance between students in classroom in the yellow zone should be preferably two empty seats between students. This means only one-third of the normal students can attend at a time. More shifts and shorter hours would be necessary to accommodate all. Students may have to attend school on alternate days—three days a week.

The additional sanitation measures in the yellow zone would be to disinfect and wipe all surfaces and floors every day before classes meet.

It appears Eid-ul-Azha ceremonies with animal markets and slaughtering will go on perhaps with some restrictions. There will also be travel to distant villages and homes. There is bound to be a spike in infection two weeks after the Eid. The situation should be assessed then with the epidemiological sampling of the upazilas before any decision is taken regarding school opening. The interim period should be used to prepare for the steps that have to be taken.

Public support and understanding in the communities and of parents and teachers have to be mobilised for the unusual steps in an extraordinary time. NGOs and community organisations should be involved in this effort with government oversight and financial support. The new normal should not be the old business-as-usual.

Unfortunately, the course of the pandemic remains unpredictable. A precarious balance has to be struck between life and livelihood with caution until a successful vaccine is available.

Manzoor Ahmed is professor emeritus at Brac University. The views expressed are his own.



# Is Fast Radio Burst a new storyteller of the cosmos?



QUAMRUL HAIDER

**J**UST when we thought we had chronicled all the beasts of the cosmos, including black holes, a new one—the “Fast Radio Burst”—is howling at us. The blips of the radiation

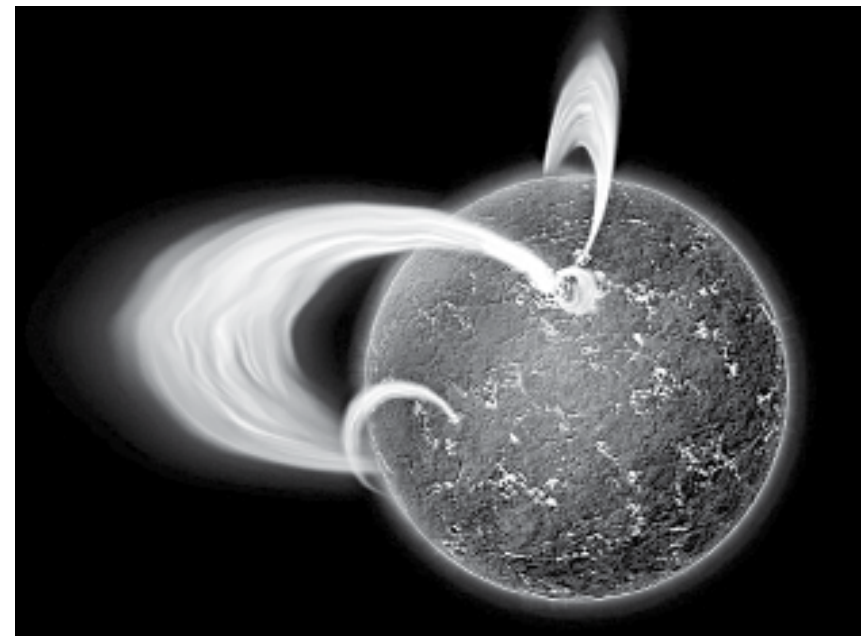
emitted by the new beast are short-lived—less than five-thousandth of a second in duration. Hence the moniker “fast.” The “radio” portion of the label is due to the fact that the emission has long wavelength distinctive of radio waves. It is called a “burst” because the blips disappear as quickly as they appear, without any warning whatsoever.

The Fast Radio Burst, or FRB for short, was discovered in 2007 by astronomers while sifting through six-year-old archival data gathered with a radio telescope at Parkes Observatory in Australia. The puzzling discovery was initially thought to be a telescopic artefact, a trick of light masquerading as a cosmic oddity. Since then, numerous FRBs shooting across the sky have been detected at observatories elsewhere. Astronomers at the Canadian Hydrogen Intensity Mapping Experiment, or CHIME, located in British Columbia, had spotted hundreds of bursts since it came online in July 2018. According to a member of the team, they “lit up our telescope like a Christmas tree.”

While astrophysicists were brainstorming to understand these fleeting eruptions as a rare one-off episode, they were thrown off balance by the discovery of bursts that repeat at regular intervals. The first repeater, as they are called, was detected in 2012 at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. In February of this year, CHIME detected a repeater that maintained a 16-day schedule, roaring for 4 days followed by 12 days of silence. The repeaters led astronomers to conclude that they “had to be something where the engine that produced [them] survived for the next flash.”

Releasing as much energy in one-thousandth of a second as the Sun releases in nearly a hundred years, the FRBs have become a cause célèbre

the bursts reach the Earth, they become low-energy radio waves.



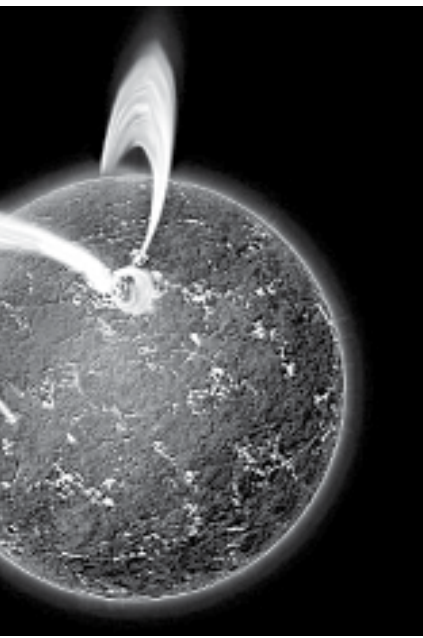
This illustration shows how an extremely rapidly rotating neutron star, which has formed from the collapse of a very massive star, can produce incredibly powerful magnetic fields.

IMAGE CREDIT: NASA/CXC/M.WEISS

in scientific circles over the past few years. While extremely energetic at their source, the strength of the bursts decreases dramatically due to interaction with interstellar electrons and collision with other particles along the way, to the extent that by the time

the bursts reach the Earth, they become low-energy radio waves.

There have been suggestions that the bursts could be generated by advanced alien civilisations trying to communicate with us. The alien hypothesis does not hold water because, among other things, in order to generate such ridiculously high-energy signals, their transmitters have to be unbelievably large, perhaps as large as our planet! Surely, by now, our



This illustration shows how an extremely rapidly rotating neutron star, which has formed from the collapse of a very massive star, can produce incredibly powerful magnetic fields.

IMAGE CREDIT: NASA/CXC/M.WEISS

space-based observatories, particularly the ever-reliable Hubble Telescope, and other deep space probes would have discovered planets housing Earth-sized transmitters.

Instead, most astronomers favour natural explanations of the incidents.

They believe that the bursts could be coming from colliding stars or fast-spinning neutron stars, which are the remnants of giant stars that died in a powerful luminous explosion known as supernova. Neutron stars are ultra-dense with roughly twice the Sun’s mass crammed into a sphere barely 20 kilometres in diameter.

Assuming FRBs last one-thousandth of a second and because the speed of radio waves is 300,000 kilometres per second, any object producing them could not be larger than 300 kilometres across—the distance radio waves can cover in one-thousandth of a second. This suggests that the source is considerably smaller than an ordinary star. It is, therefore, quite likely that the bursts are indeed coming from neutron stars.

Out of several dozen theories postulated to explain these rare occurrences, the one that is tenable posits that the source of Fast Radio Bursts could be magnetars, which are rapidly rotating neutron stars endowed with the strongest magnetic field observed in the Universe, as much as one thousand trillion times stronger than Earth’s magnetic field. Moreover, magnetars are known to erupt without warning, some for hours and others for months, before dimming and disappearing. Magnetars do not remain insanely magnetic for long, though. They have a lifespan of approximately 10,000 years, after which they settle down and become normal neutron stars.

Astronomers at CHIME did detect a one-off Fast Radio Burst that appeared to flare out of a magnetar inside our home galaxy, the Milky Way. However, scientists believe that the source of all blasts may not be magnetars. In fact, a star-forming dwarf galaxy that lies three billion light years away from Earth has been identified by researchers as

the source of a repeater. (A light year is the distance travelled by light in one year and is equal to 9.46 trillion kilometres.)

But this is not the end of the story. Although the ability to determine the location of the Fast Radio Bursts is a big leap towards solving the mystery, how they are produced still remains unknown. That is because establishing an acceptable theory of an astronomical phenomenon based on a few observations, as in the case of FRBs, is not easy. More observational data and detection of additional heretofore unseen patterns of the bursts are needed to nail down their source, as well as uncover the physics behind the creation of these enigmatic, terrifying cosmic monsters. In the meantime, all we can do is wait and watch with awe the fearsome display of their power.

To date, we have two storytellers of the Universe—Red Shift and Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation (CMBR). A red shift is the drift of the wavelength of a radiation toward longer values if sources of radiation are receding from the observer. The CMBR, on the other hand, is a relic of the hot, short wavelength radiation that emanated 378,000 years after the Big Bang and got red-shifted to cold, long wavelength microwaves characteristic of a temperature of negative 270 degrees Celsius.

By observing red shift in the spectra of radiation from far away galaxies, the first storyteller revealed to us that the Universe is expanding. The second storyteller, the CMBR, allows us to take a peek deep into space, and thus back into time. Now it seems Fast Radio Bursts have the potential to be the third storyteller to narrate hitherto untold tales of the cosmos.

Quamrul Haider is a professor of physics at Fordham University, New York.

# Digital Bangladesh Needs Digital Currency



TAMIM SUJAT

**M**ANY remember 2009 as the period of the worst global financial crisis. But 2009 also gave us a new form of currency, redefining

the meaning of money. Bitcoin was launched in 2009 by an individual or a group known by the pseudonym “Satoshi Nakamoto”. Bitcoin gave the world the first application of blockchain and opened the realm of digital currencies, decentralised finance companies, and a 24/7 financial trading market.

Bangladesh is one of the few countries in the world that consider bitcoin and all other types of cryptocurrency as “hostile”. Bangladesh Bank considers bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies as illegal under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947, and the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012. However, there is much debate on how these laws can be enacted in court since the central bank never correctly defined bitcoin as a currency or commodity. Regardless, the Bangladeshi authorities are adamant to stop the use of bitcoin and had issued warnings and even made arrests in relation to bitcoin trading and selling.

As we near the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh’ independence and continue our transition into the digital era, I think the country should reconsider how digital currencies can be more beneficial. Our closest neighbour, India has recently legalised buying and trading of cryptocurrencies. In March 2020, after a historic verdict

by the Supreme Court of India, cryptocurrencies were made legal and a previous ban imposed by the Reserve Bank of India was overruled. The way legalisation can be done can vary, but for now let me discuss why cryptocurrency adoption is helpful.

As a resident of Canada, I rarely visit the bank. Most of my banking needs are fulfilled online via a smartphone or computer. As Covid-19 took the world by storm, a strange incident shocked

their arrival was the collection of their salaries in person. Half of the country still does not have a bank account and many of these people still carry out their day-to-day spending in the form of cash. This is one of the core issues that digital currency can solve.

Over the last decade, there has been a significant increase in the number of private banks in Bangladesh. But despite the large increase, the percentage of the unbanked population remains high. Moreover, with several private banks having ever-increasingly large amounts of default loans and scandals, the general people by and large are sceptical of the banking system. Furthermore, the DSEX (Dhaka Stock Exchange Index) has gone from its peak of 8830 points in 2011 to about 4000 points at the present day. Looking in particular to the financial sector, the value is one-fourth of the 2011 peak.

Digital Taka is one of the ways the central bank can regain the faith of common citizens. By utilising a blockchain platform such as Ethereum (ETH), the central bank can itself issue an amount of Digital Taka and directly make it available at a 1:1 ratio to BDT for Bangladeshi citizens. The value of this money can be directly backed by central bank reserves and this requires no intervention from any third-party banks.

The citizens can utilise Digital Taka via a simple application, website, or text messaging.

The market capitalisation of all cryptocurrencies is about USD 274 billion, or about the same as Bangladesh’s GDP of 2018. Legalising cryptocurrencies provides the public with an opportunity to invest in a truly global market and at the same time create an ecosystem of decentralised

finance companies to start in Bangladesh.

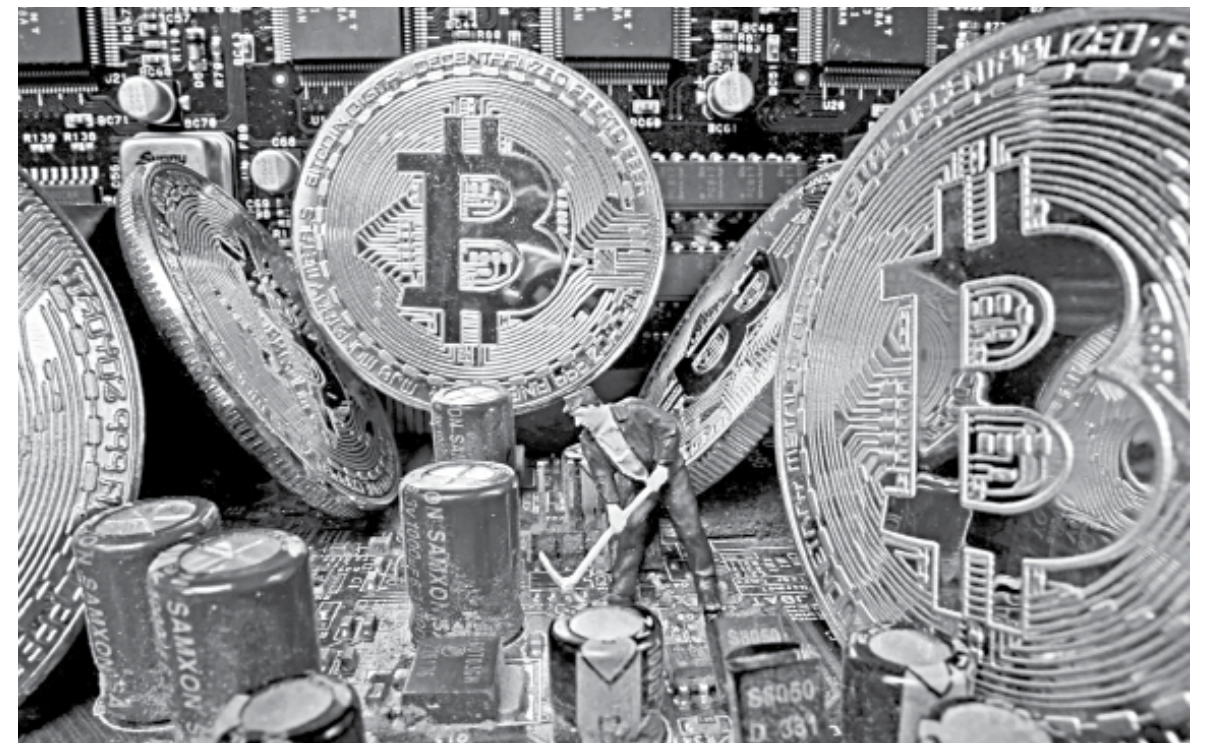
One of the worries that the government may have is the foreign flight of local capital. The Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012 can be a useful tool to address this concern. It can ensure compliance for bitcoin and all other cryptocurrencies through the utilisation of foreign currency limits on cryptocurrencies, similar to the limits on standard

user-based quotas on National ID or passport. The government can also benefit from the large sum of capital tax gains this opportunity provides. After all, bitcoin is considered by many experts as the best performing asset class of the last decade.

These are just some of the many ways that digital currencies can revolutionise the archaic financial system we continue to rely on. A form of acceptance for the digital currency

*As we near the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh’ independence and continue our transition into the digital era, I think the country should reconsider how digital currencies can be more beneficial. Our closest neighbour, India has recently legalised buying and trading of cryptocurrencies.*

me and many others. While Bangladesh was on lockdown, thousands of RMG workers walked to the capital city and nearby districts from faraway destinations. The primary reason for



A visual representation of the virtual currency bitcoin.

PHOTO: REUTERS

foreign currencies as the US Dollar, Euro or Pound Sterling. This can be established by government-approved cryptocurrency exchanges and having

world can help us stay on the path of a truly Digital Bangladesh.

Tamim Sujat is an electrical engineer based in Toronto, Canada.

## QUOTABLE Quote



PETER DRUCKER (1909-2005)

Austrian-born US management consultant, educator, and author.

*There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.*

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 “-job!”
  - 5 Dance bit
  - 9 Available, as a room
  - 10 One of the primates
  - 12 Ticket category
  - 13 Copy for pasteup
  - 14 Kind of crisis
  - 16 Whole bunch
  - 17 Genesis name
  - 18 Pig’s wallowing spot
  - 20 One of Santa’s team
  - 22 Took in
  - 23 Famed fur tycoon
  - 25 Jai-
- DOWN**
- 1 Lady of riding fame
  - 2 Dodges
  - 3 Gambler’s giveaway
  - 4 Now and then
  - 5 Tatter
  - 6 Cal. abbr.
  - 7 Take on
  - 8 Prisoner’s hope
  - 9 Not feral
  - 11 Famous
  - 15 Sneaky
  - 19 Vengeful goddess
  - 21 Hard precipitation
  - 24 Phrase on a coin
  - 25 Fossil resin
  - 26 Mountain shrub
  - 27 Regard
  - 29 Enterprise captain
  - 30 Gives an address
  - 31 Valleys
  - 33 Muscat man
  - 37 Persia, today
  - 39 Cleveland cager

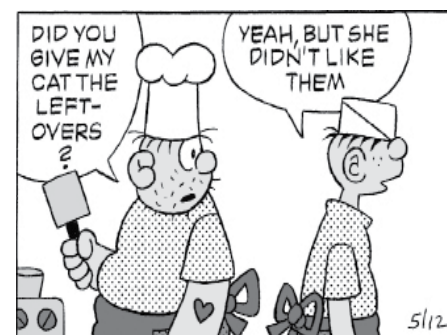
WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.



## YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

B A J A C O W S  
A Z U R E O P A L S  
N A M E D M E L E E  
A L P W R E C K E D  
L E E R I E R E V A  
A D A N O E D E N  
T I S B A T  
J O H N M O T H S  
A P E T E A S E T S  
M E L L O W S L O T  
B R I A N T W I N E  
S A N D Y S I N E W  
S E E S T E S

## BEETLE BAILEY



## BY MORT WALKER



## BABY BLUES



## BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



COVER STORY

## Future of Bangladeshi web series

Recently, the entertainment industry is buzzing about censorship of web content. Based on the talk of the town, The Daily Star - Star Showbiz held an Uncensored with Rafi Hossain live episode on "Future of Bangladeshi web series." The guests for the episode were Amitabh Reza Chowdhury, Piplu R Khan, Nurul Alam Atique, Abu Shahed Emon, Shameem Akhtar, S A Haque Olike, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Masum Reza, Animesh Aich and Bonna Mirza. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, the versatile panel brought forward the importance of using web platforms and what they hope for the future of the industry.

### AMITABH REZA CHOWDHURY

"In these current times, I find it hard to make projects where I can fully express my emotions and not get criticised by people. I am honestly scared to make movies or web series at times because I know that if I make something that people might find even a little indecent, I would be putting my life at risk. I have even seen that some people take small out-of-context clips from a web series and spread it around. This really hurts me to see people do this. If you do not like something, then give constructive criticism regarding why you are against it instead of sending threats. There are examples of many great films which cannot be released because people spread around out-of-context clips from it and everyone started to call it vulgar. Regarding web series and the platforms where they are released, I must point out that they are not audience based. Cinemas or television are audience media, but the streaming platforms have users. There is a huge difference in the psychology of an audience and a user in my opinion. The producers in this new medium has also changed a lot. The people who subscribe to these platforms become the producer as they pay to subscribe. We must also make sure that the people running these platforms know about what they are doing. If they are just people who want to make money in whatever way possible, it will cause more harm for us. This is a completely different medium from what we are used to. The mentality, the way it works, the business side, it is all different from the film or television industry."



Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

### PIPLU R KHAN

"The pandemic provided us with a great opportunity to come forward with constructive solutions, rather than concentrating on the minor issues. I believe that this discussion regarding the future of web series has the perfect timeliness value because it sheds light on the forthcoming post-pandemic situation of arts and culture. We are heading towards a new normal and now is the time to adapt to the changes and find internal and external ways to overcome the challenges. So, keeping the future in mind, there is hope for better, at the same time threat for the industry if we cannot make use of the proper methods. For fifty years now, our culture has held onto a glorious past where artists have given us remarkable work of art. But, what we fail to realise is that times have changed; we no longer have that glory. We have become a minority within ourselves because whenever we try to express our viewpoints, we have an apologetic approach to each other. I feel that we have an issue of proximity not only among ourselves but also with those who create policies for our industry. We have a generation who is growing up with practices of internet and technology. Our focus right now should be on what we can offer for them in regards to theatre, television and cinema in our country. I feel that we need a



complete rebuild and reformed structure in our industry. We should be allowed to function with our contemporary style of work, with creative liberty and authorisation. It's high time we should unite to save ourselves and not let others decide the future of our industry."

Star Showbiz Desk

### NURUL ALAM ATIQUE

"In the television industry, there is a huge crisis going on as there is a shortage of stories. All the stories that are made revolve around the same conventional idea. If we try to be too progressive and maintain too much vulgarity in our web series, we might be headed to a similar crisis. There are things that people might do at home, but that does not mean we have to show it in our projects. If we just follow industries from other countries and base our projects on their representation of sexuality and obscenity, we will make a very big mistake. We should do our projects keeping in mind what the industry will be like in the future. So, we should not do anything that might damage the industry in any way. After the pandemic is over, we all need to sit and discuss how we can make sure that those who work in the industry can work properly in the future. We are dealing with a completely different kind of medium. The problems we may encounter will be difficult for us to face. We will see a lot of people trying to take advantage and manipulate this medium. There are a lot of people, both in front of and behind the camera. We have never been able to unite and provide a voice for the people. We have been busy with ourselves for so long, but now is time for us to come together and work to save this new medium from anyone who might try to manipulate it."



Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

### ABU SHAHED EMON

"In recent times, due to the unprecedented crisis, audience or viewers have turned to web platforms for entertainment. The rise of different web platforms, new web contents, viewership, and so on has always been a topic of discussion among directors and producers in the industry. However, this pandemic has allowed us to carry forward a focal discussion on the future of Bangladeshi web series. I believe this discussion benefits in bringing forth different viewpoints regarding the scope we have for the enrichment of web contents and how we can reach out to the Bengali speaking masses around the globe post-pandemic. To make that happen, we need an action plan for audiovisual platforms. So, we are ready to tackle the pandemic and post-pandemic crisis. We need to talk about different elements such as cinema halls, OTT platforms and speak up about improvements. We need to talk about the need for education, training and workshops on the concepts of media and technology. We should speak up about government support, tax incentives on film festivals and so on. We have lost our freedom of



expression over time. So, I feel that it is necessary to discuss and carry out a practical guideline keeping all the market changes in mind. We should summarise all our points and let our government know that this is what we want in our industry."

Star Showbiz Desk

### SHAMEEM AKHTAR

"The debate about obscenity in movies and who should be in charge of censorship has been ongoing for quite some time now. I believe that it is entirely subjective. Back in our time, despite significant adversity, including that from the mainstream media, people spoke up about this issue. They expressed their opinions and brought it into the light, and created a space for this to be discussed. Nowadays, these matters are not talked about, and we need to figure out why that is. We need to identify our lacking and make changes, and speak up about this matter once again."



Shreya Shomoyeeta

### S A HAQUE OLIKE

"Firstly, I have nothing 'for' or 'against' web series. We all are filmmakers and creators with different perspectives with a similar goal. Our aim involves working with web series and taking Bangladeshi web contents to global standards. This is a new platform, a new normal, a new possibility for our industry. There is a lot of scope and hope for our industry to grow in regards to the platforms. However, I am also concerned about how much we will be able to execute and adapt to the new changes. I feel that we need to discuss and talk more on the issues so that we can come up with a concrete plan for execution. I believe today's discussion is just the beginning and we still have to look into the overall scenario of our entertainment industry. I would like to add one point regarding the future of web platforms. The platform *Binge* sent out a letter apologising and acknowledging the concern of their contents. However, there was one line in the letter with which I disagree. They stated filmmakers had their utmost liberty in the making of the web content and they provided the filmmakers with the authorisation to release such obscene contents. So, the entire fault falls on the shoulder of a director. We are all aware of the structure and decision-making processes of any platform, agency or organisation. Before finalising and releasing any content, the director and the team involved with the project goes through several meetings. So, I disagree with the point that the directors are entirely to blame for the release of such content. However, based on this hyped talk of the town, we should now keep our focus on creating a structured guideline to use the web platforms. I feel that everyone present today in this forum should sit for more discussions and plan for the future of web platforms and series."



Star Showbiz Desk

### SHAHIDUZZAMAN SELIM

"As an artist, I would have to say that I would never want an avenue of my work to be closed because it does have to do with my financial situation. If people are diverted from television to web platforms, the revenue going to them will stop. Moreover, the creators of these are view-hungry. They want their shows to gain popularity immediately, so they upload it on *YouTube*. In that case, how will they get the revenue for their work? They could have used a platform similar to *Netflix* or *Hoichoi* to ensure that the audience has to contribute to watch it. With the rise of social media like *Facebook* in Bangladesh, it seems that everyone is a critic now. They are exposed to the works of international creators, which they love, but when it comes to the works of our country, they are extremely nit-picky. They blame the creators. But, how is it the creators' fault? They have to work. If they knew that the exposure would be limited to those who contribute, they would work harder and express themselves more. The topic of decency is completely up to the individual. They decide if their work is decent or not. This is true for films, series or paintings. What one will and won't show is entirely personal. I have worked with most of the people we're talking to today, and I have complete faith that they are the ones who will revolutionise films and web series alike. What I want is to make sure that we can hold web series above anyone who might sully it. There is an apparent solution to this which is taking it to the government and asking them to look into the types of content we would deem inappropriate. However, the government is very likely to ban web series as a whole. We have to make sure this does not happen."



Amina Hossain

### MASUM REZA

"I believe that it's our fault for being unable to present the audience with our views and vision on this matter, for which some people still view nudity as indecency. We often pride ourselves on having modern ideologies and views, but it is also important to convey this to the society itself. Another issue that is being discussed is the revenue. We should not be looking for commercial openings. Nowadays, television dramas make the same amount of money, but the amount decreases drastically by the time it gets to the director, rather than the revenue earned. Many people enter the industry with the mindset to make a profit, and that is resulting in these issues. I am ready to give my all to make a good project, but I do not want it to be ruined by profiteering minds. I want to point out that the process through which profits are divided and distributed is often corrupted. Many directors who have created exceptional television dramas and shows are leaving the industry for this reason. We are in charge of writing, creating, and bringing a project



to life. We should not be dealing with the sales and finance section of the process."

Shreya Shomoyeeta

### ANIMESH AICH

"In our discussions, we do not just think about what the industry is like now, we also talk about what it will be, say, after fifty years. None of us know what the world will be like then. It is not just that there will be a lot of technological advancement then, we will also have very different stories. We need to be futuristic when making any project and should keep with the current times. There have always been restrictions whenever we make movies or web series, but every day, the restrictions are getting stricter and are being enforced more. I think that all of us directors should appeal to the government and ask for more freedom of speech in our projects. We know what we should not say and what we can say. We all have our own idea of self-censorship, so I think that if our ideas get censored more, that is bad for our projects. I must add that what is decent or indecent is very subjective. We all need to talk about how we can leave a good place for the next generation through our cultural media, and work for it. We also need to take responsibility for the decline of the television industry, and we must make sure that the same thing does not happen to the web platforms. All sorts of constructive criticism are welcome regarding projects, but that criticism must be constructive or warranted."



Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

### BONNA MIRZA

"The discussion of indecency in media, especially in web series, is quite unnecessary in my opinion because who decides what's decent and what's not? Where is the standard of decency and who creates it? I think that we should concentrate more on how we can use and introduce new and old platforms to display the works of our creative minds in the global market. The apparent indecent material that are coming out do have ratings, so it is ultimately up to the audience to decide what they want to see. If we are to restrict the exposure, we have to also think about how we can do that since everything is out in the open anyways. I believe that we need to ask ourselves if sexuality is inherently obscene and what truly is decent and indecent. If we can answer these, I think we can progress. Web series, at the end of the day, are products, so they should be created, produced and promoted. We need to be able to use this new platform, so that we open a new area of opportunities for the entertainment industry. Finally, I have to say that we must stop pointing fingers at women, be it for their clothes or attitude. Many female actors have been victims of such over the years, and this issue is saddening. We need to move away from this."



Amina Hossain

### IN REMEMBRANCE

Joana Nomrata Mazumder

Leaving behind a plethora of playback classics, a gem of the music industry, Andrew Kishore, will forever be in our hearts. After battling cancer for almost ten months, the 'playback king' bid farewell to us all on July 7, 2020. With a career spanning over four decades, the singer gave voice to fifteen thousand songs and had achieved the 'National Film Award' eight times. His devotion to music and humble nature has always been well noted among his peers and followers. To keep his memory alive, we reminisce twenty iconic songs of Andrew Kishore which will reverberate for generations to come as his legacy.



- Hayre Manush Rongin Phanush
- Amar Buker Moddhekhane
- Amar Babar Mukhe Prothom Jedin Shunechilam Gan
- Amar Gorur Garite
- Tomake Dhekke Mone Hoi
- Porena Chokher Polok
- Premer Shomadhi Bhenge
- Shobai to Bhalobasha Chai
- Amar Sara Deho
- Beder Meye Josna
- Bhalobeshe Gelam Shudhu Bhalobasha Pelam Na
- Shono Go Chad, Shono Tara
- Ami Akdin Tomai Na Dekhile
- Tumi Aaj Kotha Diyecho
- Ami Chirokal Preme Khangal
- Ak Bindhu Bhalobasha Dao
- Ak Chor Jai Chole
- Bhalo Achi Bhalo Theko
- Jiboner Golpo Ache Baki Olpo
- Dak Diyachen Doyal Amare

## Root returns as Windies eye series win

AFP, London

England will hope the return of captain Joe Root proves inspirational in the second Test against the West Indies at Old Trafford starting Thursday.

Root missed England's four-wicket defeat at Southampton in international cricket's return from lockdown last week after attending the birth of his second child.

He has rejoined the squad, with West Indies needing just one win from the two remaining Tests at Old Trafford to clinch a first series win in England for 32 years.

Although all three fixtures are being played behind closed doors because of the pandemic, Root will be in a familiar situation.

England have now lost the opening match of a series for the eighth time in ten campaigns, a run dating back to the 2017/18 Ashes in Australia. Most recently in South Africa they did recover from a heavy defeat in the first Test to win that series 3-1.

But now at 1-0 down with just two to play, there is far less margin for error. Joe Denly appears to be the most likely candidate to make way for Root. England wicketkeeper Jos Buttler is also



### HIGHLIGHTS

With two Tests remaining at Old Trafford, visitors West Indies are just one win away from recording their first Test series victory in England since 1988. On that tour, the Caribbeans, led by Sir Vivian Richards, beat the hosts 4-0 in a five-match series.

Since the 2017-18 Ashes in Australia, England now have lost the first Test of a series for the eighth time in the last ten occasions. The most recent of such instances was in South Africa when they came back strongly to win the series 3-1 after a heavy defeat in the opening match.

The hosts have lost only once in their last 12 Tests at the Manchester venue.

under the scanner, although coach Chris Silverwood said: "First and foremost we want to give Jos the best opportunity to succeed. He just needs to go and make those big scores now doesn't he? He knows that as well."

Meanwhile, with six Tests in seven weeks, including three against Pakistan, England could

yet recall Broad in Manchester, having already said they plan to rotate their battery of quicks.

It was West Indies fast bowler Shannon Gabriel, however, who was named man-of-the-match in the first Test for a nine-wicket haul.

Gabriel was only included in the squad after being named as a reserve following ankle surgery.

Given the second Test starts just days after the end of the first, fitness is likely to be the West Indies' biggest issue as they return to Old Trafford, the venue for their quarantine period amid the pandemic and two subsequent intra-squad warm-up matches.

The West Indies arrived in England with many doubting if their batsmen could give an impressive fast-bowling unit enough runs to play with. But they built a first-innings lead of over a hundred runs at Southampton after captain Jason Holder took a Test-best 6-42 in England's lowly 204.

Set 200 to win, the West Indies did then collapse to 27-3.

But Blackwood stepped up, even if the rashness that has characterised his stop-start West Indies career saw him fall five runs short of what would have been only his second Test century.



## Despite green light, cricketers reluctant to resume training

EKUSH TAPADER



Despite the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Monday deciding to allow interested players across the country to avail the board's training facilities and resume individual practice following a four-month halt due to the coronavirus pandemic, a few players remain in a state of confusion.

Local authorities at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, an international standard venue, have prepared the ground and are ready to allow entry to interested players for individual training.

But several local cricketers would rather continue doing fitness work at home as they have been since the enforced break. While some cricketers are backtracking due to coronavirus fears, others are waiting for a clear official announcement from the BCB regarding the resumption of practice.

The BCB considered making their facilities available after numerous videos of national team players, including wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiqur Rahim, practising outdoor were posted on social media, stirring discussion. Some players have avoided resuming practice due to fears of being dragged into such conversations.

Right-arm pacer Abu Jayed, a regular member of the Bangladesh Test team, mentioned that he would await BCB's official announcement before taking the field.

"I will go to the field the day the BCB allows me to start bowling. I won't go without such notice from the board. The board is prioritising our safety and we should keep that in mind. I am not worried about my skills because I think if I can keep my fitness then I can get my rhythm back quickly," said Jayed, who has been doing regular running sessions in

front of his residence in Mirabazar, Sylhet.

Another reason behind players' reluctance to return to the field is the uncertainty regarding international tours and series. It is still unclear at this time if there will be any international tours this year -- especially after the postponement of the Asia Cup, originally scheduled for September.

Even the resumption of the Dhaka Premier League, which was halted after the completion of the first round in mid-March, is unconfirmed. With no cricket on the horizon, players are opting to bide their time before taking the risk of going out to practice.

Cricketers are maintaining fitness by doing gym and running sessions regularly but it is skills training that players have been missing most during the halt.

Khaled Ahmed, another national pacer from Sylhet, has been honing his skills in an open space in front of his house in Alompur. But, for now, Khaled will be practising in his front yard rather than hurrying to avail facilities at international grounds.

"I haven't set a date [to return to practice] yet. The BCB also did not relay any message to us. We have been in touch with the coach [Russell Domingo] and he has asked us to work on our fitness from home as we do not have any upcoming series. He asked us not to rush into anything now. So I'll just wait out this month before returning to training," said Khaled.

Meanwhile, Ebadot Hossain, another national pacer, has been availing the gym facilities at his residence in Moulvibazar and doing regular running sessions to keep himself fit. Bangladesh Under-19 pacer Tanzim Sakib is also walking the same line.

It was confirmed after discussion with a few cricketers that they are now awaiting a proper guideline from the BCB before returning to cricket.

## 'Soton Test erased swing doubts'

REUTERS

The ball moved enough in last week's Southampton Test between England and West Indies to erase any lingering doubt about swing bowling under cricket's COVID-19 protocols, manufacturer of the Dukes ball told Reuters.

Strict health regulations included a ban on saliva to shine the ball, even though players can still use sweat to polish it in order to generate swing.

"The ball did swing and it was a balanced game of cricket," Dilip Jajodia, managing director of British Cricket Balls Ltd, which produces the Dukes balls, told Reuters. "When you flick your wrist, there are so many things that apply to swing. Not just anybody can run up and swing a ball. There are swing bowlers and there are fast bowlers."

"You can't look at Mark Wood or Jofra Archer and say 'oh, the ball is not swinging'. They are not swing bowlers, they are fast bowlers. Likewise, Shannon Gabriel is not a swing bowler either. For them, Jason Holder swings the ball and he was moving it."

## Marauding Atalanta go second

AFP, Milan



Mario Pasalic scored a hat-trick as Atalanta brushed aside struggling local rivals Brescia 6-2 to move second in Serie A on Tuesday.

Gian Piero Gasperini's side extended their unbeaten league run to 13 games to move six points behind leaders Juventus who visit eighth-placed Sassuolo on Wednesday. Inter Milan and Lazio are two points behind Atalanta before they play against SPAL and Udinese respectively later this week.

Gasperini's side have scored 93 league goals so far this season -- 26 more than eight-time reigning champions Juventus.

The game between high-scoring Atalanta and 19th-placed Brescia was one between two neighbouring teams from cities ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic.

A minute's silence took place before kick-off with players forming a circle with the backdrop of the music "Rinascero, Rinascerei" (I will be reborn, you will be reborn) by Bergamo musician Roby Facchinetti.

Atalanta's top scorer Luis Muriel, with 17 league goals this season, watched from the stands hours after the Colombian left hospital after suffering a head injury in a fall at his home.

But his absence was not felt with Croatian Pasalic opening the scoring within two minutes at the Gewiss Stadium connecting with a Ruslan Malinovskyi cross.



Atalanta's Croatian midfielder Mario Pasalic celebrates the first of his three goals during a 6-2 thumping of Brescia on Tuesday. The Bergamo-based outfit, who have scored a staggering 93 goals in 33 matches so far, have moved back to the second spot in Serie A.

PHOTO: ATALANTA BC

Brescia hit back minutes later with Ernesto Torregrossa pouncing on Atalanta defender Mattia Caldara's poor clearance.

But the hosts got back into their stride and were four-goals up after half an hour with Marten De Roon, Malinovskyi and a Duvan Zapata header within a five-minute spell.

The punishment continued in the second half with Malinovskyi again setting up Pasalic to beat Lorenzo Andreacci in the Brescia goal after 55 minutes.

The Croatian added a third three minutes later sending in Ebrima Colley's cross for his ninth goal this season, five of them against Brescia, having scored a brace in the away leg last November.

Nikolas Spalek pulled a goal back for Brescia who move closer to Serie B next season.

Atalanta however are having one of the best seasons in the club's 112-year history with a berth in the Champions League quarterfinals in their debut season.

### SHORT CORNER

#### SA cricket divided over Ngidi's BLM stance

Racial divisions in South African cricket were laid bare on Tuesday when 30 black former international players issued a statement alleging racism remained a factor in the game.

The letter commended current fast bowler Lungi Ngidi, who last week expressed support for Black Lives Matter, and called for Cricket South Africa (CSA) to come out strongly in favour of the movement. Signatories included fast bowler Makhaya Ntini, Vernon Philander, Herschelle Gibbs, Ashwell Prince, Paul Adams and JP Duminy. A total of 36 people, including five coaches, were named on the document.

Current black players such as Kagiso Rabada and Ngidi were not included, nor were any white players.

The statement claimed despite three decades of cricket unity, "the views expressed from one side of the racial divide are still very much part of our lives... We see this an opportunity for CSA to be unequivocal about its position and to make sure the problem is confronted and we also invite our fellow white cricketers to join in this move to defend human dignity."

The statement noted criticism of Ngidi by former players, including Pat Symcox, Boeta Dippenaar and Rudi Steyn. -- AFP

#### Asian Tour's restart delayed

Golf's Taiwan Masters was cancelled Wednesday because of the coronavirus pandemic, casting doubt over the planned September resumption of the Asian Tour season. The long-standing, \$950,000 tournament was scheduled to tee off at the Taiwan Golf and Country Club from September 17-20.

The tournament was scrapped because of health concerns and travel restrictions on players living outside Taiwan, the tour announced in a statement.

The Asian Tour, which has been suspended since American Trevor Simmsby won the Malaysia Open on March 7, still hopes to return at the \$1.181 million Shinhan Donghae Open from September 10-13 in South Korea. -- AFP

#### Big Bash from December 3

Cricket Australia announced Wednesday plans for a full Twenty20 Big Bash League season starting in December, but acknowledged the schedule could be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 10th BBL will begin on December 3 when Adelaide Strikers host Melbourne Renegades, followed by 60 matches across the country and a final on February 6. The ambitious fixture list, which will follow the Women's Big Bash League means Cricket Australia will meet its commitments to broadcasters and not face penalties for reduced content. -- AFP

#### 2022 WORLD CUP Four games a day confirmed

REUTERS

World Cup fans will be able to watch an unprecedented four games a day on TV during the group stage of the Qatar 2022 World Cup after the schedule was confirmed on Wednesday.

With the relatively short travel distances for the venues, it could be possible for fans at the 32-team tournament to attend multiple games each day. The early games will kickoff at 1000GMT with the fourth match starting at 1900GMT. The tournament's opening game will be on Nov. 21 while the final will be on Dec. 18.

"The World Cup is always a festival of football, a real celebration for the fans who come on-site and watch. In Qatar, with the compact nature, this is going to be amplified even more with 32 teams and 32 sets of supporters all in and around Doha," said FIFA Chief Tournaments and Events Officer, Colin Smith.

## Petkovic's volley to Insta troll

AFP, Berlin



Andrea Petkovic has dealt with a critic on social media by telling him to try dealing with Petra Kvitová's serves after the German lost in straight sets to the former Wimbledon champion at an exhibition event in Berlin.

"You are so terrible! I think you should quit tennis and do a different career," wrote an Instagram user after Petkovic's 6-4, 6-1 defeat to Czech Republic star Kvitová, ranked 12th in the world, on Monday.

However, Petkovic, 32, fired back in style on Twitter alongside a screen shot of the social media troll's comments. "Missed this!," Petkovic replied after defeat in her first match for ten months.

"Bro, have you been living under a rock? 1) I have 3 careers going at the same and hate to toot my own horn but I'm awesome and 2) you try returning Petr's leftie serve on grass and then get back to me. Love."

Petkovic, who is ranked 87th in the world having last been in the top ten in 2015, had planned to end her career in 2020, but will play on into next year because this season has been affected by the coronavirus pandemic.



Germany's Andrea Petkovic (L) and Czech Republic's Petra Kvitova do a racquet-bump after an exhibition match in Berlin on Monday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

The German then followed up on Twitter by adding, "oh and btw, I got used to these things years back and do not care whatsoever."

"I had ten of these today AFTER AN EXHO (exhibition game), but the career thing was funny to me -- wrong person, buddy, wrong person."

As well playing tennis professionally, Petkovic is also a presenter for German broadcaster ZDF.

The renowned bookworm has written her biography, due out in October, and in March she founded an online book club, which has just under 5,000 followers on Instagram.

# Cumilla not doing well

*Covid cases, deaths rising alarmingly*

KHALID BIN NAZRUL

The coronavirus situation in Cumilla is getting worse day by day.

The first Covid-19 patient in the district was detected on April 8, and by May 1, the number of cases rose to 80.

Between May 1 and June 1, the total increase in the number of Covid-19 patients was 940.

From June 1 to July 1, the number of cases rose by 2,542. In the next 15 days, more than a thousand new cases were added to the tally.

According to the website of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, based on total cases as of July 13, Cumilla is the fourth worst affected district in the country after Dhaka, Chattogram and Narayanganj.

Cumilla's Civil Surgeon Dr Md Neyatuzzaman claimed that all preventive steps were taken, yet community transmission just exploded in the district with 17 upazilas.

"At first, the intensity of infection was high in the upazilas but now Cumilla city is the worst affected," he said, hoping that the situation will improve in red zones as lockdown has been imposed in four ward areas.

As of yesterday, Cumilla city had 1,227 coronavirus cases out of the district's total of 4,698.

CUMILLA DISTRICT			
NUMBER OF POSITIVE CASES		NUMBER OF DEATHS	
80	MAY 1	0	
1,020	JUNE 1	28	
3,562	JULY 1	100	
4,698	JULY 15	124	



Underprivileged children living at the city's Suhrawardy Udyan are delighted with the burflowers they picked for themselves. Like many impoverished children across the globe, they have nothing to protect themselves from the horrors of the Covid-19 pandemic and yet are able to find immense joy in the little things. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## INTERVIEW TO MEDIA

### Four BRTC bus drivers suspended

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has suspended four of its drivers for giving interviews to the electronic media about their long pending arrears.

The chairman of the state-owned corporation issued the suspension order on July 1, but the drivers received the letters on July 11.

On Tuesday, a corporation official interrogated the four at a BRTC Bus Depot in the capital.

All four drivers had been working at the capital's Joar Sahara BRTC Bus Depot on April 21 when they gave the interviews. But two of them were transferred to Bagura and Dinajpur BRTC bus depots last month allegedly for the same reason.

The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the suspension order.

In the letter, BRTC Chairman Ehsan-E-Elahi said they gave "false and

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## Pandemic stalls planned workers migration

*Over 85,000 Bangladeshi workers can't go abroad to work*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The pandemic has either delayed or stalled the process of sending of 85,405 workers to different labour-receiving countries, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies said yesterday.

Of them, 30,422 workers are waiting for visas, 22,987 received the visas and completed all procedures but could not get flights, while another 19,198 received visas only, Baira said during a virtual views-exchange meeting with the media.

Some 2,816 work visas had expired and flights of another 3,078 workers had been cancelled.

Process of 6,904 workers obtaining visas remains stalled for various reasons, said the country's apex trade body for overseas recruitment which organised the meeting on the pandemic to find ways forward.

Baira Secretary General Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman said the data was from only 328 out of the over 1,200 member agencies of Baira.

"Information from the other agencies could not be obtained because offices of most of them remained closed due to the pandemic," he said.

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

### Freedom of press assured



Bangabandhu speaking at the inaugural session of the first annual general meeting of the Dhaka Union of Journalists at the Jatiya Press Club on July 16, 1972.

July 16, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

#### STICK TO ETHICS, MUJIB SAYS TO JOURNALISTS

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today assures that his government would not curb the freedom of the press provided the press sticks to its ethics and act responsibly keeping in view the national interest. Inaugurating the Annual General Meeting of the Dhaka Union of Journalists at the Jatiya Press Club, Bangabandhu says as a democracy, one of the four state principles, presupposes adherence to a set of principles so the press is supposed to follow a set of principles. He asserts that press in Bangladesh enjoys maximum freedom because the government believes in democracy and the freedom of speech. Nobody can justifiably say that his government has interfered in the affairs of the press. He urges

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## Over 25pc samples test positive

*3,533 cases detected, 33 more die*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh registered its highest positivity rate yesterday, 25.23 percent.

At least 3,533 people tested positive for Covid-19 after 14,002 samples were tested in 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday.

The tests were carried out in 79 labs across the country.

Experts said, rise in positivity rate indicates the transmission is rising in many parts of the country, especially outside the major hotspots like Dhaka and Narayanganj.

Between July 5 and July 13 (Monday), the day-on-day positivity rate rose from 19.57 to 24.87 percent but decreased to 23.51 on Tuesday.

"The rising trend in the positivity rate indicates the transmission is rising and probably, it is outside

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## Humanoid clerk helps to cut red tape in Russia



REUTERS, Moscow

A human-like robot designed to look and act like a female clerk has started providing services to the public at a government office in Siberia.

The humanoid, with long blond hair and brown eyes, is serving customers in Perm, a city 1,100 km (680 miles) east of Moscow.

So far it only helps with issuing certificates to testify that people have a clean criminal record and no record of drug use, documents required in Russia to complete various legal transactions.

The robot has been designed to look like an average Russian woman, the company behind

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## UNITED HOSPITAL FIRE HC orders it to pay Tk 30 lakh to each victim's family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the United Hospital authorities to pay Tk 30 lakh to each of the four victims' families who were killed in a fire at its isolation unit on May 27.

The hospital authorities have been directed to pay the money as an initial payment in 15 days of receiving the copy of the order.

The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim came up with the directive after he heard virtually five writ petitions filed on behalf of the victims' families, seeking compensation from the hospital authorities.

Niaz Mohammad Mahboob, who moved one of the writ petitions, told The Daily Star that the family of Minor Hossain, one of the five victims who

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## INT'L STUDENTS US drops its plan to revoke visas

REUTERS, NEW YORK/WASHINGTON

In a stunning reversal of policy, the Trump administration on Tuesday abandoned a plan that would have forced out tens of thousands of foreign students following widespread condemnation of the move and pressure from colleges and major businesses.

US officials announced last week that international students at schools that had moved to online-only classes due to the coronavirus pandemic would have to leave the country if they were unable to transfer to a college with

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### PRAYER TIMING JULY 16

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4-15 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-15  
JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



People standing in floodwaters, some loading boats on which they live now with necessities they have salvaged from their inundated homes. The water of the Jamuna in Bogura's Sariakandi upazila has been flowing 121cm above the danger level. In this second round of flash floods, around 80,000 people of the district are left stranded.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUI

## FLOOD-HIT PEOPLE Relief hard to come by amid pandemic

STAR REPORT

The volume of relief and food aid distributed by individuals and private organisations among the flood victims has significantly reduced this year.

The poor response from individuals and private organisations might have caused for coronavirus, said locals in the flood-hit areas.

Many individuals and business institutions have been making less profit and incurring losses due to the pandemic. Thus, they were less interested in distributing relief, they added.

Also, a large number of affluent people do not want to go out of their houses to minimise the risk of being infected with Covid-19, they further added.

Meanwhile, at least 11 rivers across the country were flowing above the danger level yesterday.

At this time when thousands of people remained marooned in northern and northeastern regions, fresh areas in districts adjacent to the capital were feared to be inundated.

In Lalmonirhat and Kurigram, no Non-Government Organisation (NGO) and individual was seen in the flood affected areas.

Sadek Ali, 66, a flood victim at Sardob village in Kurigram Sadar upazila, said individuals and NGOs previously offered them help with dry food, candle, fire box, soap, saline, lamp, and kerosene oil.

"None of them came forward to help us this year," he said.

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