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# Govt going for **DGHS** shake-up

After the DG's resignation, director of hospitals unit set to be removed from the directorate beset with controversies, criticisms

WASIM BIN HABIB and MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN

CORONAVIRUS

million as Trump admits

situation to 'get worse'

**SEE PAGE 6** 

PANDEMIC Global cases exceed 15

Following weeks of controversies and a day after the director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) quit, the government has decided to make some reshuffles at the top end of the directorate.

Prof Abul Kalam Azad resigned from the post of DG of DGHS on Tuesday after a blame game between the ministry and the directorate over the signing of a deal with Regent Hospital that issued fake Covid-19 test reports.

The health ministry has now decided to remove Aminul Hasan, director of hospitals and clinics unit of the DGHS. A circular would be issued soon, said sources in the ministry.

They said the director of hospitals and clinics, Aminul, was responsible for making sure that the private hospitals and clinics run following rules. His section was directly responsible for signing deals with hospitals for Covid-19 testing and treatment.

They said the removal of Aminul was just the tip of the iceberg. Officials of other sections, including administration, planning, and government hospital unit,

would also be changed soon. Experts, however, said removing a few people would not solve the problems the health sector has long been facing and a major overhaul was imperative.

"Removing any person will not bring any result, unless the whole system is rearranged. It is urgent to assign skilled, efficient and honest people everywhere, especially in administrative posts," said Prof ABM Abdullah, noted medicine specialist.

"If we do not take effective measures, our development will be hampered. We have to take up programmes to rearrange the entire system," he told The Daily Star.

Ehteshamul Huq Choudhury, secretary general of Bangladesh Medical Association, said, "The government has started at the right place. But removing only a person will not bear any fruit. Everyone involved in irregularities and the inefficient people

"Besides, the people involved in anomalies must be held accountable."

If any allegation is raised against the health ministry, it should also be SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



discuss Covid-19 situation, floods



Low-income families still in need of help but food relief and charity now scarce

#### Nilima Jahan

With the lifting of the shutdown, food families saw no recovery.

Those who had lost their jobs in the

to maintain our family of four, pay the house rent and loan instalments [against the amount] that I borrowed earlier from microcredit [organisations] and some relatives," she added.

The income of Eti's family from Mirpur's Bauniabadh slum have also reduced

A formula for

disaster?

At least four labs using one kit for

testing two Covid-19 samples

Some government-approved laboratories are using a single kit for RT-

PCR testing of two samples for the novel coronavirus -- a novelty practice

that several experts termed not only unscientific and unethical but also







People walking nonchalantly on the rail lines even though the approaching train is quite close. This habit

not only results in accidents but also is a constant annoyance for the drivers. The photo was taken in the

Imran Khan calls Hasina Shutdown ended, not their hardship The two leaders



relief and cash charity have almost come to a standstill, though incomes of many poor

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

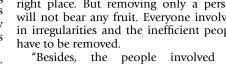
## Don't let private hospitals go beyond control

BANGLADESH UPDATE 2,744 New cases in 24hrs

HC tells govt; says authorities should have restrained some of the hospital owners

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court vesterday observed that the authorities concerned of the government should remain cautious so that private hospitals cannot go beyond control. The authorities should have restrained the owners of some private hospitals from showing their powers, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim said during virtual hearing of five writ petitions filed seeking necessary orders to ensure treatment of patients at all hospitals. The bench made the observation in response to a discussion over the Shahabuddin Medical College Hospital's owners reportedly meeting with the home minister after the law enforcers raided the hospital for irregularities, court sources said.



MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

something that risks producing faulty results.

The court also said duties of mobile court magistrates are to conduct the courts on specific allegations and punish the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

They even said it may allow the highly contagious virus to spread further.

The Daily Star found at least four laboratories doing such tests and officials of those facilities said they were following this practice due to an acute shortage of testing kits.

These lab officials claimed they have got the full support of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) for employing this unconventional method.

They said they were getting similar results by using this method as achieved with the use of one kit for one test -- which is standard practice here and worldwide. The national guideline on Covid-19 test also recommends one kit for one sample.

A RT-PCR kit contains reagent, the main ingredient of this or any chemical test, which is prescribed for testing one sample. The officials of these four laboratories, however, say they are using half of the reagent in the kit for testing each sample.

Additionally, the national guideline on Covid-19 does not specify the amount of reagent required in a testing kit.

The Daily Star asked several experts in the field about this method but received a mixed response as to whether the practice is scientifically accurate. SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

greetings with her Pakistan counterpart Imran Khan yesterday afternoon when

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina exchanged

the latter called her. The two prime ministers discussed various issues, including Covid-19 and

the flood situation in Bangladesh, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim said, reports UNB. Imran phoned Hasina

around 1:00pm and they talked for about 15 minutes.

After exchanging greetings, Imran wanted to know about the Covid-19 situation in Bangladesh SEE PAGE 2 COL 6 coronavirus-induced shutdown are not faring any better in the partially reopened economy.

Many told this correspondent that they have not received any food or monetary assistance from anyone after Eid-ul-Fitr, observed on May 25.

Rimu from Mirpur's Bhashantek slum said she had received some dry food including rice, lentils, oil, potatoes and sugar from the local commissioner, NGOs and some youth groups twice during the shutdown.

It was a big help, said the 26-year-old wife of a day labourer.

Though her husband's income has halved now, no one visits them any longer to see how they are doing, Rimu lamented. "We need at least Tk 12,000 per month

drastically since the pandemic.

Three members of the family once had work -- Eti did handicraft, her mother worked as a part-time maid, while her father pulled a rickshaw.

Together their income sometimes neared Tk 20,000 a month.

But now, only Eti's 55-year-old father has his earnings of about Tk 500 a day.

Eti stopped getting orders for her work from the last week of March, while all six employers of her mother refused to allow her in their houses because she lives in a slum.

"My mother is now jobless," said 15-year-old Eti.

It has become hard to maintain the rent, food and other expenses for the family with just one member's income, she said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Seven killed in Cox's Bazar road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's

At least seven people were killed and several others injured in a headon collision of a human haulier and lorry on Chattogram-Cox's Bazar road in Chakariya area amid heavy rains yesterday evening.

Police could confirm the identities of Badiul Alam, 50, of Harbang area in Chakariya; Al Amin, 48, of Bandarban's Lama; haulier driver Minar Uddin, 23, of Amirabad area in Lohagara, Chattogram; and Firoz Ahmed, 32, and Bablu, 40, of Konakhali, Chakariya.

They died at the scene, police said, adding that seven others injured in the crash were sent to a nearby hospital.

Both the vehicles skidded off the road and fell into a ditch after the collision around 6:00pm, they added.

Anisur Rahman, in-charge of Chiringa Highway Police Outpost, said locals, police, and SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

Cattle traders bringing cows to Sagorika market by trucks in Chattogram city. Truckloads of sacrificial animals have been arriving in the port city from different districts for the last few days as the Eid approaches.

PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN** 

## 'Cattle train' plan draws a blank

Farmers still find trucks suitable, economically viable to transport sacrificial animal for Eid

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

A government move to transport cattle to Dhaka and other big cities by train ahead of Eid-ul-Azha has so far failed to draw any response from farmers and traders.

As a result, Bangladesh Railways (BR) has not been able to operate a single such train till last night, just over a week before the festival on August 1.

Talking to The Daily Star, farmers and cattle traders said carrying the sacrificial animals by trucks, which they always do, is economically viable for them. It also involves less hassle, they said.

In such a situation, the special "cattle train service" is apparently left in limbo.

The railway ministry made the decision of introducing the service during a meeting in the first week of this month. The aim was to bring the cattle to the capital and other cities from southern and northern districts hassle-free, said railways officials.

The BR was supposed to run the first such train from Khulna to Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka 10 days before Eid, with five stoppages for loading and unloading the animals.

The plan was to extend the service to other big cities, including Chattogram, said the officials.

Nasir Uddin, divisional transportation officer of railways (Pakshey), said the authorities yesterday fixed Tk 12,000 for each cattle cart, which can carry 16 bulls/buffalos or 30 goats/lambs.

It means carrying cost for each bull/buffalo will be Tk 750, while it will be Tk 400 for each goat or lamb.

## Help protect local fish species from extinction

PM calls for using modern, advanced farming methods, inaugurates National Fisheries Week 2020

#### UNB, Dhaka

Minister Sheikh Hasina Prime yesterday urged people to protect the local species of fish from extinction by using advanced and modern fish farming methods.

"The prime minister has asked the people to protect the native species of fish from extinction coming out of the traditional fish farming methods by adopting advanced and modern systems," said PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim.

Hasina made the call while inaugurating the National Fisheries Week 2020 in the morning by releasing fingerlings into the lake of the Gono Bhaban.

The PM said there are some 475 species of marine fish and more than 250 varieties of freshwater fish in the country. There is also a huge demand for shrimp, crabs, snails, and other fisheries resources in the regional and international markets, she added

She said new jobs are being created in the fisheries sector and the national economy is being enriched due to investment in the sector.

Hasina said the Awami League government has taken various effective and fruitful measures to protect the country's fisheries and boost fish production.

"As a result, fish production has increased by more than 50 percent in the last 11 years.

The PM said according to the 2020 report of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Bangladesh has moved up to the second spot in the world in terms of growth rate of freshwater fish production.

"The country today is self-

Ratikandi village in Sirajganj's

Shahjadpur, however, explained why

he would prefer trucks to trains to

from our village and unload them

at a certain cattle market in Dhaka,

Chattogram or any other district. We

have to pay Tk 1,200 to Tk 1,500 for

"If I want to use the train, I will

each bull or buffalo," he said.

"We load our cattle onto trucks

transport his animals.

'Cattle train' plan

Nur Nabi, a cattle farmer of Char has not been operated yet as there is

have to hire a truck or Nasiman [a preparations to run at least one "cattle

locally-made three-wheeler] to take train" every day with five carriages.

the animals to the station. It will cost He added that the train would stop at

traders.

sufficient in fish production. At present, we are consuming 62.58 grams of fish against the daily demand of 60 grams per capita," said the premier.

She thanked all concerned, including the staffers of the Department of Fisheries, for the way they continued to produce, market, and export fish amid the pandemic. "This trend will have to be continued for the interest of the country."

Hasina recalled that Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman officially released fish fry at the Gono Bhaban Lake in 1973 to inspire people to increase fish production through farming.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister SM Rezaul Karim said some 6.5 million people were employed in the fish sector in the last 11 years and income of fish farmers and fishers increased.

Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Rawnak Mahmud, PMO Secretary Md Tofazzel Hossain Miah and PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim were present on the occasion.

This year, the Fisheries Week is being observed from July 21 to 27 with the theme "Machh Utpadan Briddhi Kori, Shukhi Samriddha Desh Gori" (Let us increase fish production and build a happy and prosperous country).

#### Seven killed FROM PAGE 1

firefighters rescued the victims from the damaged haulier.

Doctors at Chakariya Health Complex said two seriously injured men were sent to Chattogram Medical College Hospital for better treatment.

BR sources said the special train

Asadul Haque, Pakshey divisional

hardly any demand for it among the

railway manager, admitted that they

were not getting any response even

after engaging field officials of the

Department of Livestock in attracting

the cattle farmers to avail the special

"We are trying hard," he said.

Asadul said they have made all

"cattle train service".

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina releasing fish in the lake on the Gono Bhaban premises while inaugurating the National Fish Week-2020 yesterday.

Non-resident Bangladeshis, who

Tanzina said she has stopped

Habib Prince, a member of charity

"Our members, who are service

"The ones, who run businesses,

organisation Prottoy, said they too

had to stop their relief activities due

holders, are facing a salary cut and are

anxious about their job security.

donated to Tanzina Aktari's Tears of

Middle Class, also hold similar views.

contacting people for donations

PHOTO: PID

Shutdown ended, not their hardship

FROM PAGE 1

The family didn't receive any food option to work, earn and buy food, or monetary support from anyone said one of the representatives of since the beginning of the Covid-19 Bidyanondo, who has been with the outbreak. organisation since its inception.

Eti said she had submitted photocopies of her father's NID to a local political leader's associates in the slum for relief but nothing has happened.

'In fact, there has been no relief distribution in our slum after the Eidul- Fitr," she said.

Md Billal Hossain, a barber who lives near Bauniabadh slum area of Mirpur, said it seems that the days of distributing relief items, taking photos and uploading those on the internet have come to an end.

"These days, nobody is here to give me a fistful of rice without work," said Billal

#### FUNDS RUNNING DRY

Although there is still need for assistance, many private charities and benevolent individuals cannot help as they are not able to raise funds. Bidyanondo Foundation,

voluntary organisation that worked on large scale relief distribution during the shutdown, has shifted their focus on providing health support.

They stopped that programme are facing huge losses due to the

## Govt going for DGHS shake-up

investigated and people responsible in the health sector and make recommendations to the government.

Prof Nasima Sultana, additional

general Prof Azad quit on Tuesday and During yesterday's briefing at his his resignation was accepted yesterday. Four people have been shortlisted to replace Azad, sources said. The shortlisted are: Nasima Sultana, AHM Enayet Hussain, director general of Medical Education at the DGHS, Nazmul Islam Munna, line director of medical education at the DGHS, and the US. But the mortality rate is 1.26 Bayezid Khurshid Zahan, director of percent in Bangladesh, he said.

because they feel people now have the shutdown. Those who live abroad are unable to send remittance like before. This is why we are taking a break,' said Habib.

Before Eid-ul-Fitr, Prottoy had food, masks, hygiene provided products to 500 lower-income families of Kapasia in Gazipur. BRAC STUDY

A Brac survey conducted among 2,317 respondents across the country showed that 95 percent households experienced income loss because of the pandemic.

study, titled "Economic The Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic and Way Forward for Bangladesh", also found that average household income decreased to 76 percent of the normal in April and May.

Released last month, the survey was conducted between May 9 and 13 with 68 percent respondents from rural areas and 32 percent from urban

It also showed that 69 percent of households, who needed help, received none while only 14 percent received cash or food assistance.

More than half the respondents opined that the government should continue food and cash aid.

ministry, Health Minister Zahid

claimed that his ministry was

doing well in the fight against the

pandemic, compared to the US and

The death rate from the virus is 6

percent globally and 10 percent in

other countries.

## 2,744 more test Covid positive

#### 42 die in a day

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-two people died in the country from novel coronavirus in 24 hours till 2:30pm yesterday, said Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the Directorate General of Health Services.

Speaking at the regular online briefing yesterday, she said the death toll from Covid-19 in Bangladesh now stands at 2,751 and the death rate at 1.29 percent.

She said 2,744 more people tested positive for the virus during the 24hour period. With them, the total number of novel coronavirus cases in the country rose to 213,254.

The total infection rate stands at 19.99 percent, according to the DGHS. Bangladesh is currently on the 16th position in the list of worst affected countries in the world in terms of number of Covid-19 cases, according to worldometers.info.

A total of 12,050 samples were tested across the country during the same 24-hour period, said Nasima.

Meanwhile, 1,805 Covid-19 patients have recovered during the period. With them, the total number of recoveries stands at 117,202 and the recovery rate at 54.96 percent.

The DGHS official said among the 42 dead were 30 males and 12 females. Of them, one was aged between 11 and 20, one between 21 and 30, three were between 31 and 40, three between 41 and 50, 11 between 51 and 60, 14 between 61 and 70, eight between 71 and 80 and one was aged between 81 and 90.

## China says French claims on Uighur rights are 'lies' AFP, Beijing

French claims about the imprisonment of ethnic and religious minorities in China's Xinjiang region were unacceptable, Beijing said yesterday, criticising the accusations as "false".

China's response came a day after Paris demanded it let independent human rights observers visit the northwestern region, where rights groups and experts estimate over one million Uighurs and other Turkic-speaking minorities have been rounded up into a network of internment camps.

France's foreign affairs minister Jean-Yves le Drian said China's actions were "unacceptable" and said they 'condemn them firmly"

Beijing has defended its strategy n Xinjiang as necessary to avoid extremism.

foreign Chinese ministrv spokesman Wang Wenbin told a regular press briefing yesterday that "China has repeatedly responded

FROM PACE 1

should be held accountable, he said. He suggested forming a national commission to look into problems

Meanwhile, a team of Detective Branch of police went to DGHS yesterday afternoon and spoke to

#### because she feels nobody is willing to donate money in such uncertain times Donors themselves are afraid for their future survival, she said. "These days, many are helping

families.

to fund scarcity.

their relatives in distress, saying their poorer relatives need the support," she added. During the first few months of the

pandemic, Tears of Middle Class had sent money through mobile banking to more than 100 middle-income

Tk 500 to Tk 600 for each animal Again, I will have to do the same for transporting the cattle to the market from the Kamalapur station in Dhaka," he said.

As the train would stop at different stations to pick and drop other cattle, the train journey will take more time, which means his cattle will need more food.

"In the end, I will have to spend around Tk 2,000 to Tk 2,500 for taking each cattle to the market," Nur Nabi said, adding that loading and unloading cattle multiple times would be a hassle.

Several other cattle farmers and traders in Pabna, Sirajganj, and Kushtia echoed his views.

Mobarakganj, Chuadanga, Poradan Kushtia, and Ullapara stations.

Aminul Islam Mollah, deputy director of livestock department (Khulna division), said their officials were working to encourage farmers to take the train, instead of trucks, for the safety of the "journey".

"But the farmers seem reluctant to use train," he said.

He also said about 8.93 lakh cattle are supposed to be transported to Dhaka, Chattogram, and elsewhere from Khulna division alone ahead of Eid

"Most traders from Dhaka and other districts haven't arrived here yet," he added.

director general (administration), and Aminul over JKG Health Care's fake Covid-19 testing.

They wanted to collect evidence regarding JKG's "Chairman" Sabrina Arif Chowdhury and Chief Executive Officer Ariful Haque Chowdhury and their involvement in the scam, said DB sources.

reports There were of mismanagement and irregularities centring the state-run organisation that spearheads the country's war on Covid-19. The fraudulence of Regent Hospital and JKG over coronavirus testing brought the directorate's deals with hospitals into the spotlight.

Amid controversies and severe criticism, embattled DGHS director

the National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM).

A high official of the DGHS seeking anonymity told this newspaper yesterday that intelligence agencies had already started vetting these people.

Speaking on the appointment of a new DG, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said the decision of appointing a new DG would be made after consulting with people concerned.

"If necessary, we will talk to the highest level of the government," he added.

He said a taskforce had been formed to examine any irregularities

in public, private hospitals and clinics. "HEALTH SERVICES IMPROVED"

A formula for disaster?

"This vardstick confirms that have done a good job," he said.

The minister said the number of patients in hospitals dedicated to Covid-19 dropped by half, especially in Dhaka city. "You may ask why, because the health services have been improved a lot," he said.

More than 3,000 Covid-19 beds are vacant in Dhaka now, he said.

Zahid said the government would decide on the application of Chinese Covid-19 vaccine in the country after discussing with the national technical advisory committee.

"We are closely observing the efficacy of vaccines under development globally ... we are communicating with countries that are in the final stage of coronavirus vaccine development," he said.

to and clarified false reports and on Xinjiang-related accusations issues".

## Imran Khan

#### FROM PAGE 1

and the steps taken by the government, Ihsanul said

The Bangladesh premier described the initiatives and measures taken by her government to contain the spread of the virus. She also elaborated on other steps taken for medical purposes and the overall flood situation.

Meanwhile, Pakistani Prime Minister's Office in a statement yesterday said Imran offered condolences to his counterpart for the loss of lives in Bangladesh due to Covid-19 and flooding.

He commended the Bangladesh government for the measures taken by it to curb the spread of novel coronavirus.

Imran also wished early recovery of he people affected by flooding.

He apprised Hasina of his government's measures to save people's lives and livelihoods, and also of his 'Global Initiative on Debt Relief" for developing countries.

Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment o Saarc, Imran underlined the importance of both countries working for enhanced regional cooperation for sustainable peace and prosperity.

Sharing Pakistan's perspective on what he said the grave situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJ&K), Imran stressed the importance of peaceful resolution of the dispute for a safe and prosperous region.

He reiterated his invitation to Hasina to visit Pakistan and said his country was committed to deepening fraternal relations with Bangladesh on the basis of mutual trust, mutual respect and sovereign equality.

Earlier in October last year, Imran called Hasina, hours ahead of her visit to India amid his campaign on the Kashmir issue after the Indian government had revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

Diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan soured since the beginning of the trial and execution of war criminals in Bangladesh.

Despite Dhaka's repeated calls to Islamabad not to interfere in the internal matters of Bangladesh, Pakistan's national and provincial parliaments adopted resolutions against the trial of war criminals in 2016.

## Don't let private

#### FROM PAGE 1

offenders, but a few of them are talking to the media to justify their actions. The HC judge asked Attorney General Mahbubey Alam to look into the matter.

The attorney general told the HC that the government has taken necessary steps so that the private hospitals run properly.

The court said it did not pass any order against doctors, but its directives are against the hospitals' irregularities and mismanagement.

At one stage of the hearing, Mahbubey Alam sought time from the HC to submit a compliance report on its July 6 directives.

The court granted the time and asked the government to submit the report by August 16.

During a hearing of the writ petitions, the HC bench on July 6 directed the health secretary and the director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) to conduct an enquiry into the reported allegations against some private and government hospitals of denying treatment to patients during the pandemic.

They had been ordered to submit the enquiry report to the HC by July

Yesterday, the DGHS submitted a partial compliance report to the HC through the attorney general and said four-member committees led by civil surgeons have been formed in every district to investigate allegations

against hospitals, according to court sources.

On July 6, the HC asked the DG of DGHS to take necessary measures so that the patients, who are deprived of treatment at any hospital, can lodge complaints with the office concerned by email.

It also asked the authorities concerned to take necessary steps so that the patients suffering from serious diseases like cancer and kidney are tested for Covid-19, test reports are provided within 36 to 48 hours, and their treatment is ensured at the hospitals concerned.

The government has also been directed to fix the retail and refilling prices of oxygen cylinders in 10 working days.

People can lodge complaints with the Anti-Corruption Commission if they were charged extra for the oxygen cylinders, the court said.

Jamiul Hoque Faisal and AKM Ehsanur Rahman, two of the writ petitioners, told The Daily Star on July 6 that they have found more than 20 allegations published in newspapers against some government and private hospitals of denying treatment to the Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 patients during the pandemic and submitted a statement containing the reported allegations to the HC.

Aneek R Haque, Mahfuzur Rahman Milon, and Yeadia Zaman also appeared for the petitioners, while Attorney General Mahbubey Alam represented the state.

"One kit is manufactured for one test. There is no scope of compromising reagents. If it is compromised, the result will be questionable," said Dr Jahidur Rahman, virologist and assistant professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College.

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Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) of DGHS, said from the perspective of laboratory science, without the approval of DGHS and without a standard operating procedure (SOP), such a practice is unscientific and unethical.

"It may give false results and it is not acceptable," he said.

Dr Jamal Uddin, virologist and public health specialist of National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM), however, claimed that the process is scientific and that the result does not vary if two tests are done using a single kit.

Asked whether any other country in the world uses this method, he said, "Probably India. The kit crisis is acute across the world and some other countries may use this technique, but we don't know."

Prof Dr Shakil Ahmed, in-charge of the Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (BITID) laboratory, said a shortage of testing kits prompted them to use this method of conducting more testing with fewer kits.

He said Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute first initiated this method "They did a study first and found

positive results. We followed them, and in our study, we also got similar results," said Prof Shakil.

However, the BITID lab study only had a sample size of 15 which they tested over three days.

to do fewer tests or go for more tests reducing the reagent used. I chose the second option."

Prof Shakil said they received 2,500 testing kits against their demand of 5,000 on July 2. BITID conducts around 200 tests each day.

Chattogram Medical College Hospital is also following the same practice but they declined to officially comment on the matter.

"DGHS has asked us to use the reagent of one kit for testing two samples and we are complying with the order," an official related to the testing process told The Daily Star, wishing not to be named.

The 300-bed Narayanganj Hospital also uses less reagent than normal when testing for Covid-19.

"We are getting good results. We are not facing any problems," said Goutam Roy, superintendent of the hospital.

The Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (CVASU) Covid-19 testing lab is also using

one kit for testing two samples. The facility tests around 200 samples per day.

"We came to know from our other colleagues that using half the reagent of a kit gives the same result. We talked to DGHS and DGHS officials said if it is effective, then to go for it as there is a shortage of kits," said Zonaed Siddiki, lab in-charge of CVASU.

Contacted, DGHS officials said they were aware of the practice but did not give any formal directives in this regard.

"A few labs are getting good results using a single kit for testing two samples. The issue is in our knowledge but we did not give any directives," Dr Ayesha Akhter, spokesperson of DGHS, said.

She also said those who are getting good results are following this practice and the remaining laboratories are following the regular process, i.e. one kit for one test.

Currently, 80 institutions countrywide are conducting Covid-19 tests. The average daily testing capacity in those facilities is between 13,000 and 19,000.

Bangladesh performs low in testing coverage in the region with 2,412 tests conducted per 1 million of the population -- which is lower than in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, according to a WHO country Covid-19 situation report last month.

When asked if the sample size was enough for taking such a crucial decision, he said, "As there is a shortage of testing kits, either I have

## Doctor couple severely burnt in capital

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A doctor couple was burnt severely in a fire, reportedly igniting after a cigarette came in contact with hand sanitiser at their home in Dhaka's Hatirpool area early yesterday.

They are: Rajib Bhattacharjee (36), a neurosurgeon at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, and his wife Anushua Bhattacharjee, physician at a private medical college.

They were rushed to the Sheikh Hasina National Burn and Plastic Surgery Institute after the fire started around 1:00am. Dr Samanta Lal Sen, chief coordinator of the institute, said Rajib was put on life support with 87 percent burns while his wife sustained 20 percent burns.

Talking to reporters at the hospital, Rajib's friend Dr Sudip Dey said they came to know that Rajib was smoking when he was pouring hand sanitiser in a smaller bottle. Suddenly, he caught on fire and it spread. His wife sustained burns as she tired to douse the fire to save Rajib. The couple's only daughter Rajashree Bhattacharjee (5) was at her grandfather's house in Cumilla during the incident, Sudip said.

Rasel Sikder, duty officer of Fire Service, said they were not informed about such

For the past seven years, Jibon (left) has been buying old computer parts from households across the capital for Tk 200-300. He then tries to repair the parts and make working computers, and if possible, sell them to poor students or shop owners at a low price. Whatever is irreparable goes to scrap shops. The photo was taken recently from Segunbagicha area. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Roads & Highways to sign first major contract since virus outbreak

#### TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Roads and Highways Department's ongoing projects had slowed down. Today, the department will sign its first major contract since the virus hit Bangladesh.

Under the deal, three companies will build 21 bridges in different parts of the country, said RHD officials. Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader is expected to join the contract signing ceremony, which would be held at RHD's Banani office, through Zoom, they added

"We were supposed to sign the deal in April but it got delayed due to the pandemic. This is the first major contract RHD is going to sign since the outbreak began. Some small contracts might have been signed in the meantime," Abdus Sabur, additional chief engineer of RHD, said.

Abdus Sabur is also the project director of Western Bangladesh Bridges Improvement Project (WBBIP), under which all the bridges will be constructed.

"We have resumed works of the project after more than two months of halt due to pandemic and works is now going on in full swing," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

RHD Chief Engineer Quazi Shahriar Hossain recently said the implementation of their projects was hampered by the pandemic as work of those projects was suspended for more than two months since late March

"We have resumed work but still cannot work in full swing as many foreign experts are yet to return," he told The Daily Star on July 13.

Replying to another question, Shahriar said, "The pandemic will affect every project, and we have to extend the deadline by at least three months. We have already got such indications from the project officials.

The government declared shutdown of all public and private offices SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## MONEY LAUNDERING CASE Charges pressed against Enamul-Rupon, 8 others COURT CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday pressed charges against "Casino Brothers " -- Enamul Haque Enu and Rupon Bhuiyan -- and eight others in a case filed over laundering Tk 17 crore.

Inspector Mehedi Maksud, also the case's investigation officer, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka, showing 25 people as prosecution witnesses.

Enamul is a former vice-president of the Gendaria unit of Awami League while Rupon is joint general secretary of the same unit.

The other accused are -- their three brothers Shahidul Haque Bhuiyan, Rashidul Haque Bhuiyan and Merajul Haque Bhuiyan, general secretary of Wanderer's Club in Motijheel Joy Gopal Sarkar and their accomplices Tuhin Munshi, Nabin Hossain Sikder, Saiful Islam and Pavel Rahman. Of them, Enu, Rupon, Joy Gopal, Tuhin, Nabin SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

#### Police foil LDA COVID-19 AFFECTED AREAS demo in Sylhet **OUR CORRESPONDENT**, Sylhet

Police yesterday foiled a demonstration staged by Left Democratic Alliance in front of deputy commissioner in Sylhet, to press home its eight-point demand including free Covid-19 test for all.

At least 10 people were injured in a scuffle with police, LDA said, although

law enforcers denied it. They later rallied at Court Point, where speakers demanded healthcare for all, increasing the number of coronavirus tests and

sample collection booths, and quick report delivery. Leaders and activists of BSD, Communist Party of

Bangladesh, Juba Union, Chhatra Front and Chhatra Union were present at the programme.

## HC refuses to pass order on cattle markets STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday refused to pass any order asking the government to stop setting up cattle markets in coronavirus-affected areas -- including Dhaka, Chattogram, Narayanganj and Gazipur cities. The bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim dropped a writ petition filed, seeking its directive on the government to stop setting up such markets in the virus-affected areas from its hearing list.

The bench came up with the order after holding a virtual hearing on the petition. Petitioner's Advocate Md Eunus Ali Akond told The Daily Star that the HC refused to interfere in the government's decision to set up cattle markets as the issue involves religious sentiments.

So, cattle markets can be set up even in Covid-19 affected areas following the health guidelines, he added. Eunus submitted the writ petition as a public interest litigation on July 16 via email, praying to the court to stop setting up such markets to protect people from the pandemic.

He said the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19 recommend not to set up cattle markets in areas heavily affected by coronavirus. However, authorities have allowed markets in those areas, ignoring its recommendation, in violation of law, the lawyer stated.

## 'Same old story every year'

Low-lying areas in Ctg inundated after rain

#### ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

Incessant rain brought sufferings to port city

residents, as many areas went under water. On Tuesday, Chattogram Met Office recorded 33.6 mm rainfall in 24 hours till 3pm, said Ujjal Kanti Paul, assistant meteorologist of the office, and forecast more rain in the next 48 hours.

The Chattogram Port was advised to hoist signal-3, he said.

Coupled with tidal surge, rainwater submerged most low-lying areas including Bakalia, Chawkbazar, Rahattarpool, Bahaddarhat, Muradpur, Bibirhat, Chandgaon, Sholashahar, Shulakbahar, Badurtala, Agrabad and Halishahar.

People were seen wading through filthy water to go to their destinations. Some were busy protecting their homes and shops from water while others were trying to drain and scoop water out.

"This is the second time this week rainwater entered my house," said Mina Barua, a resident of Rahattarpool area. "It's the same old story every year... seems like there's no end to our sufferings," she said while scooping out water.

Locals said canals and drains remain filled up with garbage and fail to contain rainwater, which overflows onto the road and enters their residences.

I don't understand what the authorities are doing. Can't they see we are suffering?" said a frustrated Mina Barua.

Due to incessant rain, very few vehicles plied the roads and a handful of rickshaws areas during Tuesday's rain, he said rain and three-wheelers were seen carrying passengers -- that too at exorbitant fares. Around 3pm on Tuesday on KB Aman Ali Road, a worried Sultan Ahmed was seen standing in knee-deep water and searching for a ride to take his son, who had a cut

injury in his right arm, to a hospital. He said he had been waiting for a

while for a vehicle. "I cannot wait any longer; I have to take him to a dispensary to bandage his arm," he said as he started walking towards a pharmacy with his 10-year-old son.

Near Bakalia DC Road area, Trishna Acharjee had to wait for almost an hour to get a rickshaw to go to Chawkbazar Gulzar Intersection for an emergency.

"It gets very difficult to survive during the rainy season. Years go by but the authorities concerned remain indifferent to our miseries," she added.

Like her, many city dwellers expressed their frustration over the authorities' failure to address the waterlogging problem.

Contacted, Mohammad Shamsuddauha, chief executive officer of CCC, said they are maintaining the smaller drain, with a width under three feet.

Chattogram Development "The Authority has been implementing a mega project to reduce waterlogging in the port city. All the canals and large drains are supposed to be cleaned and expanded as part of the project," he said.

Asked, Lt Col Md Shah Ali, CDA project director, said, "People are already being benefited for their project works. Many areas, which went under waist-deep water during the rainy season last year, are free from waterlogging this year."

Asked about waterlogging in many coupled with tidal water submerged the areas but water drained out quickly as soon as tidal water receded. "It should not be a problem as we are installing regulators at the mouth of canals to regulate tidal water," he assured.

Covid-19 cases on UN WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME Germany provides rise in Rangpur city \$4.5m for Rohingyas 1,060 test positive, 18 die as of Tuesday

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

The Germany government has contributed a new USD 4.5 million funding to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to support the Rohingya community in Bangladesh. With the latest contribution, Germany has provided WFP Bangladesh with a total of USD 30 million since the onset of the refugee crisis in 2017, said a WFP press release issued yesterday. Donated through German Federal Foreign Office, the new funding will be used for food support and telecommunications services for the community, the release said Welcoming the new funding, WFP said the support will help towards the critical work for Rohingya families and their host communities in Cox's Bazar. "At a time when Covid-19 is exacerbating inequalities and severely impacting communities in Bangladesh and also around the world, we are especially grateful for such an act of solidarity and generosity from Germany," said Richard Ragan, WFP country director in Bangladesh.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This contribution will support the Bangladesh government to meet its

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

The number of Covid-19 patients is increasing alarmingly in Rangpur city, as the residents are not aware enough of using masks and maintaining social distance.

However, the figure is comparatively low in the upazila areas under the district.

According to data from the civil surgeon office, 1,515 people were infected with Covid-19 in the entire Rangpur as of Tuesday. Of them, 1,060 alone tested positive in the city. The rest 455 are in the eight upazilas.

In Rangpur city, 18 people died from the coronavirus, 253 persons are undergoing treatment and 788 fully recovered, it said.

Outside the city, 34 people tested positive in Sadar upazila; among them, 27 recovered and seven people are receiving treatment. No death was reported there.

Fifty-six people were infected in Kaunia upazila; 30 of them recovered, and 26 are being treated. In Pirgachha upazila, 56 persons tested positive, two persons died and 44 recovered. Ten people are receiving treatment.

Seventy-four were infected in Gangachara upazila; of them, 40 recovered while 34 are undergoing treatment. In Taraganj upazila, 29 persons were infected and all of them recovered.

In Badarganj upazila, 50 persons tested positive for Covid-19 and 31 of them recovered. In Mithapukur, 88 persons tested positive; of them, 65 got cured and two died.

In Pirganj, 68 persons were infected, four people died and 23 recovered while 41 are undergoing treatment.

So far, 26 people died in entire Rangpur. Among them, 18 deaths were reported in the city; four in Pirganj, and two each in Mithapukur and SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

yesterday announced to plant one lakh trees in DSCC, to increase forestation and protect the environment of the city.

Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh

DSCC to plant

one lakh trees

Says mayor Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City

Corporation mayor

He made the announcement while inaugurating a tree plantation programme at Nagar Bhaban premises. He said Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina has intended to plant one crore trees across the country, and DSCC wants to be a part of that initiative. The mayor planted three Krishnochura and two

Radhachura trees at Nagar Bhaban premises.

Among others, chief executive office Shah Md Imdadul Haque, chief waste management officer Md Badrul Amin and

secretary Akramuzzaman were present at the event.



Braving rain and waterlogged road, family members take a wheelchair-bound woman to a hospital on an auto-rickshaw from Prabartak intersection in port city.

## Shahed accused in NRB Bank scam case STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against chairman of Regent Hospital Mohammad Shahed and three others for misappropriating about Tk 1.51 crore of NRB Bank.

Other accused are, Regent Hospital Managing Editor Ibrahim Khalil; former vice-president at SME Division of NRB Bank Wahid-bin-Ahmed, and former principal officer of the bank Sohanur Rahman.

ACC's Assistant Director Sirajul Hoque filed the case against them as the antigraft body has primarily found their involvement in misappropriation of about Tk 1.51 crore between November 2014 and January 2018.

Shahed came under the limelight after he was SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Heavy waterlogging in the capital has brought misery for the whole city, even animals. These street dogs at Moghbazar's Wireless area have been stranded on small spaces that are still above the water, as the entire area is waterlogged after three days of rain.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# 12 Nigerians, one Bangladeshi held for duping people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) claimed to have arrested 13 persons, including 12 Nigerian nationals, on Tuesday from Dhaka's Pallabi area on charge of duping people out of crores of taka. The arrestees used to impersonate customs officials while talking to the victims online, said Sheikh Md Rezaul Haider, additional deputy inspector general of CID.

At a press briefing at CID headquarters yesterday, the official said they carried out the raid based on a complaint from a victim who lost Tk 3.73 lakh to the gang's scam. Of the 12 arrested Nigerian, only three have their passports but do not have visas, he said.

CID also arrested Rahat Ara Khanam alias Farzana Mohiuddin (27), a Bangladeshi national, who used to identify herself as a customs officer, said Rezaul.

About the process of the scam, CID officials said the arrestees are members of an organised racket, who allegedly swindle money from people in name of developing friendship on social media and alluring them with expensive gifts.

Rezaul said the arrestees first befriends a target by pretending to be citizens of countries like the US or UK on social media.

In case of the victim who filed the complaint, a Facebook user named "Katherine Cullen Sophia" first connected SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

## **RHD** engineers asked to stay at work during Eid STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All engineers of Roads and Department Highways (RHD) have been asked to stay at workplaces during Eid-ul-Azha vacation to ensure hasslefree movement of Eid holidaymakers.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader gave the directive yesterday while talking at SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

#### Happy 1st Birthday to Faaris



With Love Family & friends

## Roads &

FROM PAGE 3

and suspended operation of most of the public transport from March 26 to contain the spread of Covid-19. Most RHD projects remained suspended for over two months.

RHD resumed the work in May and is trying to accelerate the process since the government lifted the shutdown from May 31. IT is now implementing some 180 development projects.

#### THE DEAL

Under the deal, a joint venture firm of Chinese company CR24B and Bangladeshi company Spectra Ltd will build 13 bridges within two years at the cost Tk 427.66 crore

On the other hand, Concord-Pragatee Construction Ltd will build eight bridges within two years at the cost of Tk 222 crore, the project documents show.

The government in October 2015 took the WBBIP to build 61 bridges in 26 western districts aiming for safe, efficient transportation for people and goods.

Funded by JICA, the project was scheduled to be completed under five packages between October 2015 and June 2020 at the cost of Tk 2,911.75 crore.

But last year, 21 more bridges were added in the project, extending its duration till June 2022, a project official said. However, the project cost remains same as the construction of one major bridge in Narsingdi was halted, and its budget was repurposed for 21 smaller bridges.

"Now, the 21 bridges would be built under package-6," he said under anonymity.

Of the total 82 bridges, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated 25 in Khulna, Barishal and Gopalganj zones on March 12, which were under package 3, 4 and 5, he said. Work of package 1 and 2 is now undergoing, he added.

## 12 Nigerians

FROM PAGE 3 with the victim and befriended him through chats over a period of month.The "foreigner" at one stage offered to send him costly gift from abroad and lured him, saying the package would contain million dollar worth of items and asked him to receive the parcel from the customs office at Chattogram Airport, they said.

Then, the Bangladeshi member of the group, Rahat Ara Khanam alias Farzana -- impersonating a customs officer called and asked him to deposit Tk 4.5 lakh in several bank accounts for customs clearance of the so-called parcel. Otherwise, legal steps would be taken, she threatened. He then deposited Tk 3.73 lakh to bank accounts specified by the gang. As the gang then discontinued communication, he realised that he was cheated and made the complaint, said the CID official.

The gang made at least Tk 5 crore in last two months through scams, the CID official said.

Despite law enforcement agencies repeatedly busting such gangs, the country continues to witness similar cybercrimes. On July 2, CID arrested three Nigerians for cheating people on social media.CID officials requested people to inform law enforcers if they receive such strange offers online.

## Charges pressed FROM PAGE 3

and Saiful were earlier arrested and they are now in jail in connection with the case filed with Sutrapur Police Station on September 25 last year. Shahidul, Rashidul, Merajul and Pavel are on the run.

The IO showed Shahidul, Rashidul, Merajul and Pavel fugitive in the charge sheet and appealed to the court to issue arrest warrant against them. Enamul and Rupon were arrested on January 13 at a house in South Keraniganj. They went into hiding after law enforcers launched a crackdown on illegal casinos, bars, spas and graft last year.

The two brothers have 20 houses, 128 flats, 25 kathas of land in the capital, five cars, and Tk 19.11 crore in 91 bank accounts frozen by the Bangladesh Bank, according to the charge sheet.

## CITY

found involved in issuing fake Covid-19

THREE ACCUSED IN BASIC BANK

Meanwhile, ACC filed another case

embezzling Tk 9 crore from Basic Bank.

The accused are Titan Apparels'

managing director Hasibur Rahman

and director Arshia Atik and manager

Alam filed the case with its Integrated

ACC's Assistant Director Mahbubul

According to the case statement, the

accused collaborated to misappropriate Tk

Around Tk 4,500 crore was siphoned

out of the state-run bank between 2009-

Yet investigators could not finish

probing the 56 cases filed in 2015 over

On July 14, 2014, BB sent a report

embezzled from that bank through fake

former finance minister AMA Muhith in

involved in the scams at Basic Bank and

On February 24, 2016, he told the

House audit firms appointed by BB and

that 27 bank officials, 56 organisations

Bacchu in granting irregular loans, adding

and eight surveyor firms were involved in

Basic Bank detected involvement of

companies and dubious accounts. Besides,

parliament on several occasions expressed

anger as he could not take steps against all

another state-run institution, Sonali Bank.

misappropriation of Tk 2,036 crore.

to ACC, detailing how money was

(dismissed) of BASIC Bank Gulshan

yesterday against three people for

EMBEZZLEMENT CASE

Branch S Asif Ahmed.

District Office in Dhaka.

8.96 crore between 2008-2012.

test reports following a Rab raid at Regent

He was arrested from Satkhira on July 15.

Shahed

FROM PAGE 3

Hospital.

### **RHD** engineers FROM PAGE 3

an Eid preparatory meeting of top RHD engineers through video conference from his residence in Dhaka.

The minister said apart from the risk of Covid-19 transmission, heavy rain and flood in different parts of the country are challenges during Eid journey.

He also emphasised on keeping exit points of Dhaka city and Tongi-Gazipur, Kaliakoir-Chandra and Nabinagar-Chandra corridors free of traffic jam.

Roads and highways are in better shape this year but highways can be damaged due to the continuous rain, he said, directing RHD engineers to repair those roads immediately.

He also asked them to be more careful about old and risky bridges, as they might be affected by the flood, heavy rain and additional pressure of vehicles during the Eid rush

RHD Chief Engineer Quazi Shahriar Hossain presided over the meeting.

## Germany provides

2013 when Abdul Hye Bacchu chaired its board, found a Bangladesh Bank inquiry.

commitment to the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals and their host communities, said Md Mohsin, secretary of disaster management and relief ministry.

He said lifesaving assistance is particularly important now amid the ongoing pandemic and heavy monsoon rain, both of which are posing great risks to vulnerable families.

"As a longstanding partner to the government of Bangladesh and WFP, we are pleased to know that our contribution is helping humanitarian workers in the frontline continue their lifesaving work for some of the most vulnerable people during such trying times," said Peter Fahrenholtz, Germany ambassador to Bangladesh.

The entire population of about 8,59,000 Rohingyas living across the camps in Cox's Bazar relies on WFP for food, said the release.

In addition, WFP provides nutrition and livelihood support to the host communities to improve their longterm food security outlook, it said.

#### FROM PAGE 3 Pirgachha upazilas. No death was reported in five other upazilas.

Covid-19 cases

Civil Surgeon Dr Roy said the Hirambo of number Covid-19 patients in Rangpur City Corporation areas is higher than rural areas, as the city is more crowded.

Moreover, city residents are not aware enough. Most of them do not use mask and hardly maintain social distancing, he said.

Although the Deputy Commissioner office in Rangpur issued a set of health directives for the authorities of markets and shopping malls in the city to slow down the infection rate, they are not paying proper attention to the guidelines, said locals.

In Rangpur city, people depend on battery-run three-wheelers to commute to their destinations every day. During the pandemic, city the corporation authorities asked the drivers to carry only three passengers. But both the drivers and passengers are violating the rule.

Khandakar Fakhrul Anam, convener of Protection Coronavirus Committee in Rangpur, said nonchalance towards health directives is behind the high infection rate.

## Malaysia spares

#### FROM PAGE 12

does not recognise refugees, has recently turned away boats and detained hundreds of Rohingya, saying it cannot take in more migrants because of a struggling economy as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Alor Setar High Court, in Kedah state, set aside the caning penalty after reviewing the cases against 27 Rohingya men, said Collin Andrew, the refugees' lawyer.

In its review, the court decided caning would be inhumane as the men were refugees and did not have any prior history of crime or violence, Andrew said in a statement

"Today's decision is laudable as it demonstrates the promotion and protection of human rights by the High Court," he said.

Under Malaysia's Immigration Act, anyone who illegally enters the country can face a 10,000 ringgit (\$2,345) fine, up to five years' jail as well as six strokes of a cane.

In the past, courts have normally opted for caning when accused had committed an act of violence, a repeat offence, or threatened public order, Andrew said.

Several rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch had urged Malaysia not to cane the refugees.

The court also ordered for six Rohingya teenagers, who had been convicted as adults and sentenced to seven months' jail, to be released to the UN refugee agency UNHCR following the completion of their detention on Monday, Andrew said.

Sabrina JKG convener

#### 3 killed FROM PAGE 12

Two firearms, some bullets and yaba pills were found at the scene, the officer said.

the Basic Bank loan scams.

A Rab man was "hurt" during the so-called gunfight, but Rab didn't say whether he got shot. In Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar, Rashidullah, a 27-year-

old Rohingya, was killed in a "gunfight" with Rab. He was the member of a gang of robbers known as

"Khalek Group", Rab said.

He lived in a Rohingya camp in Leda, our Cox's Bazar correspondent reports.

Two Rab members were injured during the gunfight in the hilly area of Domdomia Jahajghat, said Operation Commander Bimol Chandra Karmakar of Rab-15 and gave an account of the gunfight strikingly similar to the one given by the officer in the capital.

In Bogura, police claimed a suspect was killed in a gunfight between two gangs.

Al-Amin Sheikh, 37, was a resident of Sultanganj Para area of the town, reports our correspondent.

Sonaton Chakroborty, additional superintendent of police, said a police team led by himself went to Nishindhara Ckokorpara area after the incident and found the bullet-hit man.

Police took him to Bogura Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead, the ASP said.

Al-Amin was accused in seven cases including for murder, and possession of illegal arms and drugs, and attempted murder.

Police found a firearm, two bullets and three empty shells at the spot, the officer claimed.

Al-Amin was released from jail and on bail before the

coronavirus outbreak, said Sonaton.

## Tidal surges hamper life

#### FROM PAGE 12

"For about two months, the deluge of tidal water has ruined vegetable fields, fish enclosures and damaged fences. Many houses have collapsed," he said.

Abdul's income, too, has come down from about Tk 600 to Tk 150 per day, as he can hardly drive his van over the dilapidated, flooded road.

Besides, those villagers, who would go to Koyra Sadar frequently to sell fish, no longer do so, after losing their fish enclosures to the water, he said.

People in these six villages including Kathmarchar, Dighirpar, Gazipara, Kashirhatkhola are mostly dependent on fish farming and farm or day labour, he added.

Now most of them left home and took shelter in nearby cyclone centres, dry parts of roads or at relatives' residences.

Annotun Nesa from Kathmarchar is living with her daughter at a relative's abandoned house, after hers got washed away along with two of her goats and half of her eight fowls.

The 35-year-old woman, whose husband left 13 years ago, used to work as a farm labourer.

With the whole village submerged, Annatun is now jobless.

Moiful Begum of Dighirpar village has been living with her family of four in a makeshift shack, made of bamboo and polythene, on a higher ground that belongs

district's Gabura union's Moddho Beel area. But Aila washed away their house in 2009, so they moved to Koyra.

"Look at the irony; we had to leave our current home for the same reason," she said.

Though Salauddin Yusuf of the same village did not have to leave his house on higher grounds, he lost his livelihood to the double trouble of Amphan and the pandemic.

"My three fishing enclosures on 19 bighas of land, where I invested Tk 13 lakh, are now under the Kopotakkho.

"I cultivated 240 maunds of rice this year but I could not even save that because of the waterlogging," he said.

Due to the economic impact of the pandemic, Salauddin also lost his NGO job recently.

Though his house is pucca, it gets flooded during high tide.

Salauddin is always worried about his three-year-old daughter, who does not know swimming. "We try to keep her asleep most of the time during high tides.

According to the Water Development Board, at least 21 spots in about 40km of the 121km embankments that surround Koyra were broken during Amphan. Around 68 villages of four unions were flooded.

Though water slowly receded from most of the villages, some areas in Uttor Bedkashi remained waterlogged.

situation for three years after Aila

completely destroyed 60km of the dams on

are repaired, there's no respite from

This time too until the embankments

People of Koyra had faced a similar

May 25, 2009.

slogans led to clashes. In the second incident, a crowd armed with sticks and iron rods attacked a procession of the Rab-Siraj

group of Chattra League, who were proceeding towards Shaheed Minar to

Hundred

scientific socialism. The

slogans and counter-

FROM PAGE 12

take oath. AFRICAN COUNTRIES FAVOURABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS BANGLADESH Indian External Affairs

Minister Swaran Singh says today in Delhi that the emergence of Bangladesh

as an independent and sovereign republic has been favourably accepted in the countries of Africa he visited recently.

SOURCES: July 24, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

JKG chairman. But we found documents where it showed her as the convener,"

Abdul Baten, additional commissioner of DB, told a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday. JKG Health Care, a sister concern of

Oval Group, started its journey in 2015 as a non-profit organisation.

An official order issued by Oval Group on June 13 and signed by its CEO Ariful Chaudhury, said Sabrina and three others were no longer a part of the group. The letter stated Sabrina as the chairman of Oval Group.

After her arrest on July 12, the health ministry suspended Sabrina from her post as registrar (cardiac surgery) at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases for holding a position at a private organisation while being a government employee.

One month after the Covid-19 outbreak began the country in March, JKG got the approval from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) on April 6 and started collecting samples for free at their 44 kiosks installed in Dhaka, Narayanganj and other places.

However, the scam surfaced on June 24 after Tejgaon police arrested six employees of Oval Group, including the CEO Ariful Chaudhury, over their alleged involvement in issuing fake Covid-19 test reports.

It was found during police investigation that the organisation started collecting samples from homes in exchange for money despite having no trade licence or the permission to do so. The test results of the samples collected from homes were found to be fake, police said.

documents where it said Sabrina was the collecting samples for Covid-19 at their testing booths back in April, the DGHS didn't check for its licence.

When IKG had gotten the job of

Just a week before the fake test report scam surfaced, JKG Health Care got a trade licence from Dhaka North City Corporation on June 16 under the business category of health services and consultancy, the police probe found.

DB yesterday went to the DGHS to verify information and documents regarding JKG Health Care. There, they spoke to Prof Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the DGHS and Aminul Hasan, the outgoing director (hospital and clinic) over the issue. The DB stayed there from 1:30pm to 4:30pm.

"We went there [DGHS] to verify the information we obtained from Sabrina and Arif, and also the JKG documents,' said a DB official, preferring anonymity.

Prof Nasima said the DB team wanted to know about JKG's documents. "We provided the information they needed ... They wanted documents we have with JKG," she said.

DB officials further said that Dr Nasima told them that she had informed the director general of DGHS about the JKG issue but he did not take any action in this regard, adding that they would call the recently resigned DG to their office for further information on JKG

#### Giant meteor FROM PAGE 12

impact craters of meteor strikes created before 600 million years ago have been erased by aeons of erosion and other geological processes.

## Unprecedented

FROM PAGE 12

In another statement, the State Department said China has engaged in massive spying and influence operations throughout the United States for years.

#### Brave cop saves lives FROM PAGE 12

police would recommend Atik's nomination for a national reward.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Atik, 30, described Monday's events.

One of the rescued boys was Mahadi, 11, son of Atik's colleague constable Zakir Hossain. The others were Rubel, 10, son of Yanus Ali, a farmer, and Shachchha, 10, son of Aynal Haque, a college teacher.

Atik works as a driver of Durgapur police station and lives with his family at a rented house near the police station, which is situated by the Hoja river.

At 10:00 am on Monday, Atik was sleeping after having returned home from night duty.

His wife Sharmin Begum woke him up. In a terrified voice, she told him that the boys had fallen into the river, the water of which had risen recently because of the floods.

The boys, who were playing on a submerged bridge, were swept away many yards away by the strong currents.

"I saw hundreds of people standing on the riverbanks. Some were taking photographs and shooting videos. None were trying to save them," Atik said.

Sharmin gave him a bamboo pole, which she ordinarily uses to hang washed clothes. Taking the pole, he jumped into the river.

"I needed the pole to save the boys, otherwise I would have drowned myself under their weights," he said.

Rescuing Mahadi was easy for him as he was near the shore.

But Rubel and Shachchha were floating away in the middle of the river.

Atik pushed the bamboo pole towards the boys and asked them to grab on to it.

When they got to the pole, Atik swam to them and took them to shore one by one, he said.

"The boys had become weak fighting the river currents. They were hardly able to hold onto the pole. They could have been washed away in minutes," he said.

All the boys are now safe with their parents, he said.

Atik said his memory of saving his own brother from drowning 13 years ago helped him take the split-second decisions that proved crucial in saving the boys.

In 2007, his brother Zayed Rahman, who was then four years old, was drowning in a pond at their village home in Pabna's Sujanagar upazila, he said.

"Many villagers were there around the pond then, but none to save my brother," said Atik, then an intermediate student.

"I saw the face of my little brother in the boys and attempted to save them," he said.

"In times of need, there are only humans for other humans. We cannot just ignore them and watch someone die when there is a way to save them," Atik added.

Atik said him not owning a smartphone also helped.

"If I had a smartphone, I feel that I could have become one of the spectators of the boys' possible deaths, instead of a rescuer," he said.

to another villager.

Pointing to an inundated area, she said, "I have a house there, which gets submerged in chest-deep water at high tide. Though the water recedes a little during the ebb current, it returns in 12 hours."

Moiful said they used to live in Satkhira waterlogging, locals say.

## Floodwater inundates

FROM PAGE 12

pressure of bitter current on the river. "However, water cannot enter through the damaged portion right now as the houses opposite side of it are high. Now, we are

dumping GEO bags to another crack created nearby as water can enter through it," he added.

Sirajul Islam, executive engineer of WDB in Tangail, told The Daily Star that cracks were created on several places on the embankment at Gala union after increasing water level of the Pungli river.

"We are dumping necessary GEO bags as emergency measures to protect the embankment," he said.

"The flood situation may deteriorate within the next few days and we are remained vigilance to protect important flood protection embankments in the district," he added.

Ataul Gani, deputy commissioner in Tangail, along with the WDB officials, already visited the embankment. The DC told journalists that necessary measures were taken as the floodwater cannot enter the district town after collapsing the embankment anyhow.

"We have also kept our eyes for 24 hours

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Bangladesh Limited

Based on Islamic Shari'ah

on the important embankment in the district as these cannot collapse despite of further deterioration of the flood situation," he added.

In Sirajganj, many new areas have been flooded as the Jamuna river was flowing above the danger level.

Around 3.38 lakh people in six upazilas are still marooned. The victims are fearing further deterioration of the situation.

The river was flowing 61 cm above the danger level at the hard point, said AKM Rafikul Islam, sub divisional engineer of Sirajganj water development board (WDB).

In Munshiganj, ferry services on Shimulia-Kathalbari route were disrupted for last few days due to huge current on the Padma.

Only five ferries operated among 14 yesterday. More than 300 vehicles were waiting for the crossing and passengers are in trouble due to the disruption of ferry services

The Padma was flowing 75 cm above the danger mark at Bhaggyakul point yesterday. Around 20,000 families in 104 villages are suffering for flood.

Our Tangail and Pabna correspondents contributed to this report.

**Operations Wing** Engineering Division Procurement of Computer Hardware And Accessories Department 20 Dilkusha C/A (9th Floor), Dhaka-1000.

## Tender Notice

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited by Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited from reputed Manufacturers / Local Agents / Companies / Dealers / Distributors for supplying, installing & commissioning of 01 (one ) unit Hardware Security Module (HSM) with required hardware and software for the own ATM network of Islami Bank Bangladesh limited under the following terms and conditions

The intending Bidders have to apply in their letter head pad for purchasing tender document for supplying, installing & commissioning of 01 (one ) unit Hardware Security Module (HSM) for IBBL as mentioned above and the tender document will be sold upon payment of Tk.2,000.00 only in cash (non refundable) from 26.07.2020 to 12.08.2020 during office hours. Tender will be received at the office of the undersigned during Office hours up to 3:00 PM on 13.08.2019. Technical offer(s) will be opened at 3:15 PM on the same date virtually in presence of the Bidder(s) or their representatives (who may like to attend). Details information relating to the Tender are available at Bank's website: www.islamibankbd.com or in the form of hard copy at the office of the undersigned.

FAVP & Head of Department

World Health Organization Bangladesh VACANCY NOTICE World Health Organization (WHO) invites applications from the interested and

- National Consultant - Health Care Waste Management (HCWM), SSA 8

For further details on the terms of reference and deadline for applications, please visit our website:

https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/employment

Qualified female candidates are highly encouraged to apply

WHO has a smoke-free environment and does not recruit smokers or other tobacco users.



## COUNTRY



A flood-ravaged road in Dahagram union under Lalmonirhat's Patgram upazila.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Flood devastates Dahagram, again

A large area of the enclave being eroded by the Teesta every year

#### **OUR CORRESPONDENT**, Lalmonirhat

A large area of Patgram upazila's Dahagram union, a Bangladeshi enclave surrounded by Indian territory on three sides and the Teesta river on the other, is experiencing severe erosion due to floods

So far, 300 families lost homes and agricultural land after the Teesta, that enters Bangladesh through Dahagram, suddenly flooded most parts of the union on July 12. Locals said that at around 8:00pm that night, all floodgates of Gajaldoba Barrage in India were opened.

A flood control embankment along the Teesta can only save the farming community from further devastation, said the residents of Dahagram, which is connected with mainland Bangladesh only through the infamous Tin

#### Bigha Corridor.

As the onrush of floodwaters swelled the Teesta and crossed the danger level, the authorities of Teesta Barrage -- constructed to divert water of the river as part of the largest irrigation project in Bangladesh -- were forced to hoist red alert in and around the barrage and opened all its gates on the night of July 12.

Hundreds of inhabitants of Dahagram have taken shelter on high land after the floodwaters toppled over electric poles and washed away roads, farmlands and dwellings.

"I never saw such a flood in the last 30 years... was beyond my imagination that the Teesta would destroy all my belongings including my house," said Azizul Islam, an elderly resident of Dahagram village.

Another flood victim, Delwar Hossain, 75,

said, "We don't want any relief or any assistance for rebuilding our damaged houses from our prime minister; we only want an embankment. It's the only way Dahagram can be saved from disappearing."

Dahagram Union Parishad Chairman Kamal Hossain said the union is getting smaller in area due to recurring floods every year.

Unless effective measures are taken to protect it from the erosion of the Teesta, there may come a time when Dahagram would cease to exist in the map of Bangladesh, he added.

Contacted, Mizanur Rahman, executive engineer of Water Development Board (WDB), said the decision of building a levee along the Teesta to protect Dahagram lies with the highups in the government as the union shares its border with a foreign land.



## Ropa Aman farming in full swing in Jhenidah

About 1,04,125 hectares of land have been brought under cultivation this year

#### OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Hundreds of farmers in the district have started planting Ropa Aman paddy with the hope of getting fair prices. The growers are eager to start Aman farming earlier to get high yield.

In the last Boro season, the growers got good prices. Due to this, farmers have started planting Ropa Aman earlier this year to get fair prices.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Jhenidah, 10,1250 hectares of land in six upazilas of the district were brought under Ropa Aman cultivation in 2018-2019 and 10,4125 hectares in 2019-2020. Meanwhile, 104125 hectares of land have been brought under the paddy cultivation in 2020-2021.

In 2020-2021, the target of Aman cultivation in Sadar upazila is 31380 hectares, 24885 hectares in Shailakupa, 20150 hectares in Harinakundo, 21140 hectares in Moheshpur, 6120 hectares in Kotchandpur and 18550 hectares in Kaliganj upazila.

Farmer Arman Ali of Enavetpur village in Kaliganj upazila said he cultivated Boro paddy on two bighas of land in the last season and got 36 maunds and sold Tk 1000 per maund.

This year, he will plant Ropa Aman on more four bighas of land to get fair prices, he said

Another grower Altaf Hossain of Taherhuda village in Harinakundo upazila said he got fair prices by selling Boro paddy last year.

He will plant Ropa Aman on three bighas of land this season as the market price of the paddy remains satisfactory, said Altaf.

Deputy Director Kripangshu Biswas of Jhenidah DAE said the farmers got fair prices by selling Boro paddy in the last season. The target will be exceeded this year as the farmers are planting Ropa Aman spontaneously with the hope of getting fair prices.



## Farmers plant Ropa Aman paddy at a field in Bejpara village of

PHOTO **STAR** 

Jhenidah's Kaliganj upazila.

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

যশোর-৭৪০৮, বাংলাদেশ

জিভি-১১৮০

Memo No: LGED/UE/HATI/NOA/2020/560



## Office of the Registrar

Jashore University of Science and Technology Jashore-7408, Bangladesh

স্মারক নং-যবিপ্রবি/১০০২/রাজস্ব জনবল (নিয়োগ বিজঞ্জি)/পার্ট-৫/১৯-১৪১০ তারিশঃ ২২/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ



Without maintaining health guidelines and social distancing amid the Covid-19 pandemic, buyers and sellers crowd carelessly at Karenthaat cattle market in Dinaipur Sadar upazila. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

on Sunday, using mobile tracking technology. Tangail Senior Judicial Magistrate Shamsul Alam recorded Sagar's statement under Section 164. Friday, police On recovered bodies of Osman

Gani, 52, his wife Tajiron, 38, son Tajel, 18, and PHOTO: daughter Sadia, 9, from STAR their Masterpara residence.

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির সংশোধনী স্মারক নং-যবিহাবি/১০০২/রাজস্ব জনবল (নিয়োগ বিরুষ্টি)/পার্ট-৫/১৯-১২৮৭, তারিখাঃ ০৪/০৭/২০২০খ্রিঃ মোতাবেক প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞান্তিকে কম্পিউটার বিজ্ঞান ও প্রকৌশল বিভাগ এর প্রভাষক পদের শিক্ষাগত

যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতায় "In the Engineering Department B.Sc. Engg. or equivalent degree may also apply for the post of Lecturer." বাক্যটি পরিহার করা হলো। প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য বিষয় অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

স্বাঃ/

প্রকৌশলী মোঃ আহসান হাবীব রেজিস্ট্রার যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Executive Engineer LGED, Madaripur www.lged.gov.bd



Date: 21/07/2020

Memo No. 46.02.5400.001.07.002.17(Part-3)-2312

## e-Tender Notice Tender No. e-Tender Notice: 2020-21/03

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works:

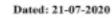
Location	T-ID /method	Name of the work	Tender closing	Remarks
SHIBCHAR	480245 (OSTETM)	CBU-100/Purto-95 Construction of 54.0m long RCC Girder Bridge on UZR-4, Shannayshirchar UP office to Banderkhola UP office via Riaz Uddin Mathborkandi GPS & Pallimongol GPS road at Ch. 3740m (Road ID No. 354873040).	-Aug-2020 within 12:30pm	
MADARIPUR SADAR	456156 (OSTETM)	20-Aug-2020 within 12:30pm	Due to e-GP system problem tender publish again newly in the newspaper.	
will be accepte	d.	e only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Po		
	wnloading the	e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Po		

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk. (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) and also from e-mail: xen.madaripur@lged.gov.bd or call to 0661-62445.

Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

	Md. Babul Akhter Executive Engineer LGED, Madaripur Tel: 0661-62445 (Off)
GD-1176	e-mail: xen.madaripur@lged.gov.bd

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Upazila Engineer Upazila: Hatiya, District: Noakhali www.lged.gov.bd



100 a

পেশ হাসিনার মূলনীতি

গ্ৰাম শহরে উন্নতি"

#### e-Tender Notice No: 01/2020-2021

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.procure.gov.bd) for the procurement of works mention below under LGED, Upazila : Hatiya, District : Noakhali.

SI No	Package No	Tender ID No	Description of Works	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)	Method		
01	01 e-Tender/NBIDNNGPS/ NOA/HAT/2018-2019/ W1.02536		NOA/HAT/2018-2019/		Construction of class room of HAJI LAL MIAH Government primary school under NBIDNNGPS Project-1	25/08/2020 12.00 pm	25/08/2020 12.00 pm	OSTETM
02	e-Tender/NBIDGPS/ NOA/HAT/2019-20/ W1.06018	415465	Construction of Paschim channdi GPS	25/08/2020 12.00 pm	25/08/2020 12.00 pm	OSTETM		

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eqrocure.gov.bd) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents form the national e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branches up to 12:00 pm on 25/08/2020.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and form e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

eapon 21.07.2020 Tapan Chandra Deb Nath Upazila Engineer Phone: 03224-56076 E-mail: ue.hatiya@lged.gov.bd

GD- 1177

## INTERNATIONAL

## Airborne coronavirus infectious: scientists

AFP, Washington

Scientists have known for several months the new coronavirus can become suspended in microdroplets expelled by patients when they speak and breathe, but until now there was no proof that these tiny particles are infectious.

A new study by scientists at the University of Nebraska that was uploaded to a medical preprint site this week has shown for the first time that SARS-CoV-2 taken from microdroplets, defined as under five microns, can replicate in lab conditions.

This boosts the hypothesis that normal speaking and breathing, not just coughing and sneezing, are responsible for spreading COVID-19 -- and that infectious doses of the virus can travel distances far greater than the six feet (two meters) urged by social distancing guidelines.

The results are still considered preliminary and have not yet appeared in a peer-reviewed journal, which would lend more credibility to the methods devised by the scientists.

The scientists took air samples from five rooms of bedridden patients, at a height of about a foot (30 centimeters) over the foot of their beds.

The patients were talking, which produces microdroplets that become suspended in the air for several hours in what is referred to as an "aerosol," and some were coughing. The team managed to collect microdroplets as small as

one micron in diameter. They then placed these samples into a culture to make

them grow, finding that three of the 18 samples tested were able to replicate.

That means, the study says, the virus can spread through the tiny droplets.

Global coronavirus infections surged past 15 million

yesterday, with the pandemic gathering pace even as

The top five countries with the most cases is rounded

out by Brazil, India, Russia and South Africa. But, a

Reuters tally shows the disease is accelerating the fastest

in the Americas, which account for more than half the

Trump conceding the pandemic crisis will get worse, as

record infections in Australia underscored second-wave

nationwide death toll in weeks of nearly 1,000, Trump

gets better," the president told reporters during his first

formal pandemic briefing for nearly three months.

The death toll in the US has spiked again with Donald

With authorities reporting Tuesday the highest daily

"It will probably, unfortunately get worse before it

Despites an escalating row with China, U Trump

"We're willing to work with anybody that is going

expressed a willingness on Tuesday to work with Being

to bring a successful coronavirus vaccine to the United

to get us a good result," Trump said, when asked if

world's infections and half its deaths.

dilemmas globally.

States.

adopted a newly serious tone.

countries remain divided in their response to the crisis.



Protesters hold placards and raise their fists during a demonstration against the presence of federal law enforcement officers and racial inequality in Portland, Oregon, US, on Tuesday. Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden accused the Trump administration on Tuesday of "egregious tactics" in cracking down on protests in Portland, Oregon, saying the response by federal agents was stoking divisions in the country.

**NEWS**IN brief

## Global cases exceed 15 millions Trump says pandemic to 'get worse'; Australia sees record infections

## Syria's ruling party wins majority in polls

AFP, Beirut

Syria's ruling Baath party and its allies have won a majority in parliamentary elections held across government-held areas of the war-torn country, results announced yesterday showed. In a widely expected victory in a vote labelled a "farce" by the exiled opposition, President Bashar al-Assad's party and allied candidates took 177 seats out of 250 in Sunday's polls.

#### US seeking arrest of Venezuela top judge

#### **REUTERS**, Washington

The US on Tuesday imposed sanctions on Venezuelan Chief Justice Maikel Moreno and announced a \$5 million reward for information leading to his arrest or conviction for allegedly participating in transnational organized crime.

#### Maria Ressa pleads

## CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Almost a quarter of Delhi has had coronavirus: study

Trump willing to work with China on vaccine for US

#### Pompeo says WHO's handling of pandemic led to 'dead Britons'

the administration would collaborate with China on a vaccine for Americans, whether China is first to develop one or not.

Trump has long blamed China for mishandling the deadly coronavirus pandemic, which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan and charged across the United States, killing more than 140,000 Americans and raising the stakes for a quick and viable vaccine.

Other nations, which had eased crippling lockdowns after the virus had appeared to fade, are struggling to combat second waves.

Australia yesterday reported more than 500 infections in a day, posting a record high nearly four months after cases appeared to have peaked. In Melbourne, Australia's second-biggest city where most of the new infections have occurred, wearing face masks will be mandatory from today.

Second wave fears were also growing in Japan's capital, with hundreds of new cases reported each day over the past week, promoting authorities to urge people to stay home during an upcoming national holiday. Hong Kong reported 113 new infections yesterday, a new daily record as a sudden surge in cases shows no signs of slowing despite ramped up social distancing rules.

Countries with fragile health systems have yet to enjoy even a brief reprieve from the virus, with Mexico on Tuesday passing 40,000 deaths -- the pandemic's fourth-highest national toll.

Fresh data from a study in India also suggested that the virus was spreading much further than charted, and that official figures were far lower than reality. The study said nearly one quarter of the population in New Delhi, India's capital, had contracted the virus. This would equate to roughly five million infections in New Delhi versus the official data showing 125,000 confirmed cases.

The pandemic has killed more than 617,000 people worldwide since it surfaced in China late last year.

## No evidence of Russian meddling in Brexit vote

There is no evidence of Russian meddling in the 2016 Brexit referendum and Britain's spies did not take their eyes off the ball on

Russia, British Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said yesterday. The British parliament's intelligence and security committee said in a report published on Tuesday that Russia had interfered in the 2014 Scottish independence referendum but it had not seen hard evidence of Russian meddling in the Brexit vote. While the lawmakers noted allegations of meddling in Brexit, and some studies pointed to Russian attempts to influence the campaign, they said the British government and intelligence

agencies had not sought out evidence of Russian interference. "There needs to be some evidence that there's an issue there - which there isn't," Shapps told Sky when asked if there should be a further investigation of possible Russian meddling in the European Union

referendum.

## NY, Chicago to sue if Trump sends in federal agents

The mayors of New York City and Chicago said on Tuesday they would take President Donald Trump to court if he sent unidentified US government agents to police their cities, pushing back on a threat that has sparked widespread controversy over the use of federal force. Lightfoot and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio spoke a day after Trump said he

would send law enforcement to several cities including Baltimore, Chicago, New York and Philadelphia to crack down on protests against racism and police brutality ignited by George Floyd's death in Minneapolis police custody on May 25. Federal agents last week were dispatched to counter protests in Portland, Oregon, where protesters have complained of agents making arrests without identifying themselves and using unmarked rental cars. Trump has sought to make a crackdown a campaign issue, taking the spotlight off his response to the coronavirus pandemic, a weak point for him in the polls.

## Thousands granted Kuwaiti visas in exchange for bribes

Thousands of Pakistanis, Syrians, and Iraqis were granted Kuwaiti visas in exchange for bribes, a report said yesterday. About 5,000 Pakistanis entered Kuwait on family and visit visas between 2014 and 2018, despite strict rules on issuing visas to people from five countries -- Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq -- since 2011, Al Qabas reported citing officials. The report also said that authorities found that at least one thousand

Iraqis during the time period exploiting loopholes in the country's immigration system. It reported that the citizens of these countries were granted visas for working in "made-up" companies. The fees charged for the visas ranged between 800 and 2,500 dinars, depending on nationality.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Student files first climate change lawsuit against Australia REUTERS, Sydney commitment for net zero carbon emissions

A 23-year-old student has filed a lawsuit against Australia's government alleging it has failed to disclose climate changerelated risks to investors in the country's sovereign bonds, in the first such action. According to the litigation filed yesterday, Kathleen O'Donnell claims investors who buy Australian government bonds should be made aware of the risks due to climate change that might make it difficult for Australia to pay back its debt.

## not guilty in tax case

AFP, Manila

**Embattled Philippine** journalist Maria Ressa pleaded not guilty yesterday to tax evasion, as President Rodrigo Duterte's government faced growing calls to drop all charges against the veteran reporter. Ressa, 56, and her news site Rappler, have been the target of a series of criminal charges and probes after publishing stories critical of Duterte's policies -including his drug war that has killed thousands.

Israelis protest against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government's response to the financial fallout of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) crisis outside Netanyahu's residence in Jerusalem, late on Tuesday.

A spokeswoman for Australia's Treasurer told Reuters the government was aware of the lawsuit.

"Legal representatives are considering the matter. As it concerns current court proceedings the government will not make any comment," the spokeswoman said.

The litigation comes amid a global call for a "green" recovery in the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic and as many large investment managers pledge their button issue in Australia, becoming even more so since last summer when intense wildfires raged for about four months across large parts of the country, killing 33 people and millions of animals.

Climate change has long been a hot

by 2050 across their entire portfolio.

"Australia is materially exposed and susceptible" to climate change risks, according to the statement filed with the Federal Court of Australia in Victoria state.

O'Donnell is seeking declaration that the government breached its duty of disclosure and an injunction restraining further promotion of e-AGBs until it complies.

Australia has more than A\$600 billion (\$428 billion) of sovereign bonds on issue, enjoying a coveted 'AAA' rating from all three major ratings agencies.

The country contributes only 1.3% of the world's carbon emissions but is the secondlargest emitter per capita behind the United States and is a leading exporter of coal.

## Invitation for Tender

	and line.	
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education.
2	Agency	Jahangimagar University.
3	Procuring entity name	Department of Chemistry, JU.
4	Procuring entity code	N/A.
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6	Invitation for	Laboratory Chemicals, Equipments/Equipments parts and Glasswares.
7	Date	19.07.2020
KEY	INFORMATION	* 
8	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).
FUN	DING INFORMATION	
9	Budget and source of funds	Revenue fund.
PAR	TICULAR INFORMATION	
10	Tender publication date	23.07.2020.
11	Tender last selling date	09.08.2020.
12	Tender closing date and time	10.08.2020 at 12.00 Noon.
13	Tender opening date and time	10.08.2020 at 12.15pm.
14	Selling tender documents	Office of the Chairman of the Department of Chemistry, Jahangimagar University, Savar, Dhaka.
INFO	RMATION FOR TENDERER	
15	Price of tender document	Tk 1,000.00 (one thousand).
16	Tender security amount	Tk 19,000 (nineteen thousand).
17	Eligibility of tenderer	<ol> <li>Technically sound, financially solvent and experienced local firms/importers.</li> <li>Should have up-to-date trade licence, VAT and income tax certificate.</li> </ol>
PRO	CURING ENTITY DETAILS	
18	Name of official inviting tender	Prof. Dr. Md. Nurul Abser.
19	Designation of official inviting tender	Chairman.
20	Address of official inviting tender	Dept. of Chemistry, Jahangimagar University.
21	Contact details of official inviting tender	02-7791045-51, Ext. 1437, 1792, 01818458321
22	Special instruction	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject of any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.
GD-	1171	Chairman Department of Chemistry Jahangimegar University Savar, Dhaka

## Abducted Pak journo freed

REUTERS, Islamabad

A Pakistani journalist, who has been a vocal critic of the powerful military and government, was released late Tuesday hours after the government confirmed he had been abducted, his family said.

"My husband was abducted this morning outside the school (in the capital Islamabad) where I work," Kaneez Sughra, the wife of 51-year-old Matiullah Jan, told Reuters. "Thank God, he's back," Sughra said. He was left at the capital's outskirts after around 12 hours' captivity.

She said school security camera footage showed Jan, who had arrived to collect his wife from work, had been bundled into a car after being cornered by five vehicles - three of them unmarked, one with police markings and the other an ambulance. The military's public relations wing did not respond to a request for comment. The Committee to Protect Journalists

to Protect Journalists demanding Jan's release said he was among the journalists the army accused of sharing anti-state remarks on social media in 2018.

GD-1178

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Upazila Engineer

Local Government Engineering Department

Durgapur, Netrakona

"উন্নয়নের গণতন্ত্র শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র"

Date: 22-07-2020

Memo No. 46.02.7218.000.001.01.2020-235

## e-Tender Notice: 01/2020-21

www.lged.gov.bd

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<u>http://www.eprocure.gov.bd</u>) for 05 (five) Package e-Tender/PEDP4/NTK/DUR/2019-2020/W1.00747, e-Tender/PEDP4/NTK/DUR/2019-2020/W2.01622, e-Tender/PEDP4/NTK/DUR/2019-2020/W1.00746, e-Tender/PEDP4/NTK/DUR/2019-2020/W2.01621 & e-Tender/PEDP4/NTK/DUR/2019-2020/W2.01620 for this upazila.

SI. No.	Tender ID	Name of work	Last selling date &	Closing	Opening date &			
			time	date & time	time			
01	456578	Construction of Additional classroom of	12-Aug-2020 12:00	12-Aug-2020	12-Aug-2020			
		Hariaund under PEDP4 Durgapur Netrakona		14:00	14:00			
02	456576	Construction of Additional classroom of Birisiri	12-Aug-2020 12:00	12-Aug-2020	12-Aug-2020			
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This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the e-GP System Portal (<u>http://www.eprocure.gov.bd</u>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to 12-Aug-2020 12:00. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (<u>helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd</u>).

Md. Abdul Alim Liton
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Rizia Rahman, an

antidote to apathy

# BOOKS Mangoes, lychees, and childhood memories in 'Amar Chelebela' ELITA KARIM

For me, Amar Chelebela (1991) by Humayun Ahmed would not only be a summer read but also a comfort read, a holiday retreat, a walking tour of a Bangladesh unheard of today, and also a sneak-peak into the daily bustle of a family who redefined literature, science fiction, caricatures, humour and so much more. It is a book that I have read numerous times over the years—while stuck in traffic, on flights, at home over tea and just last week, on the balcony while it was raining outside (the best way to read it for sure!)

I absolutely love the book, because it travels from Bangladesh in the early '40s and '50s all the way to postliberation days and back to when Ahmed was just a child, roaming about the streets without a care in the world.

He talks about how life as a toddler for him began away from his young mother, growing up with his aunt, at his grandmother's. His mother Ayesha Khatun was suffering from typhoid and had lost a year or two from her memories because of the illness. Humayun Ahmed's description of his mother regaining her memory and suddenly remembering her baby boy would have the reader smile and cry at the same time. Because his father Foyzur Rahman Ahmed was in the police, his never-ending transfers would have the family travel all over the country. Each district and city would hold mysteries and adventures.

There are many stories that I look forward to reading when I pick up this book. One is of the family's annual Eid vacations. I wonder in awe at his

descriptions of the long train rides to his *nanar bari*; the cups of steaming tea early in the winter morning during station breaks, and how Ahmed's nanar *bari* was a tad bit louder than his *dadar bari*—reserved, religious, yet breaking

Interestingly, most kids back then would grow up with two or three different names. Young parents could suddenly change the name of their 4-year-old to that of a beloved relative character from a book they have read.

Even though these chapters follow the stages in his life, travels, and personalities, the text speaks of everything and anything that probably came to Ahmed's mind while he was writing. Sometimes, his topics overlap.

Now that I have established the fact that Amar Chelebela is for all seasons and can be enjoyed the year round, I would however recommend it for the scorching heat of the Bengali summer—whether reading it for the first time or the 100th. Summers in Bangladesh are incomplete without mangoes, lychees, jackfruits and black plums (jaam). Believe it or not, so are the stories in Amaar Chelebela! While some of them will fill you with laughter, others will bring tears to your eyes, for instance when he writes about his father and his honesty, his eccentricities and finally when he was killed during the war. Humayun Ahmed's reflections of the world he grew up in and the many experiences that shaped him are all filled with passion, wit and the urge to return to childhood and relive life again.

sometimes?

Elita Karim is Editor, Arts & Entertainment and Star Youth. She tweets @elitakarim.

who has recently passed away, or a Humayun Ahmed had at one point been Kajol and at another, Shamsur Rahman! In many of the chapters he refers to himself as Kajol, as do the others around him.

Isn't that what many of us yearn for,

Before my mother bought me a copy of Sarat Shahitya

TOWRIN ZAMAN

Samagra (2003) one fateful summer back in high school, my exposure to Bangla literature had been limited to Feluda and whatever my textbooks offered. But the literature of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay opened a whole new world to me. As an angst ridden teenager, I was enticed by his grim and melodramatic storytelling but soon I began to appreciate the social commentary, the wit, and the subtle humour infused into his writing.

Sarat Chandra's stories dwell upon caste politics, feudal exploitation, religious dogmatism, child marriage, widows' rights, adultery, and more. His writing is rich in pathos; it is neither mild nor light-hearted. Likewise, one doesn't think of summer as a "mild" season. Not on this side of the world. Here in Bangladesh, summer is a season of extremes with a scorching sun and sweltering heat. Perhaps that is why I have come to associate summers with Sarat Chandra's writing.

He never shied away from addressing bigotry in society. Yet unlike contemporaries who also challenged the caste and religious orthodoxy, Sarat Chandra took a more relatable approach to highlighting class inequalities and the dichotomy between the Brahmin and Hindu communities. Equally awe-inspiring were his strong women characters, against whom his weak-willed, orthodox male protagonists almost always paled in comparison.

Just as Sarat Chandra made me cry during Devdas (1917), he inspired laughter with Nishikriti (1917), an entertaining tale about familial politics. Srikanta (1933), a semiautobiographical novel regarded as his best work, portrayed a bohemian soul who transforms from a morally upright male chauvinist into a self-aware individual after meeting various strong women on his journeys. These stories aren't "breezy", nor the characters mere caricatures. They tend to be as idle as one likes to be on a warm summer day, but the feelings they evoke with their nuance and complexity are no less potent than the

aftertaste of the hottest day of summerdifficult to forget. I can still remember reading Parineeta (1914) that first summer I was introduced to Sarat Chandra and being shocked at how cowardly and selfish the male protagonist Shekhar

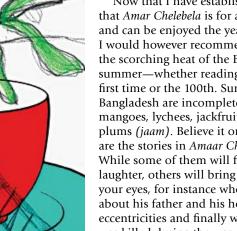
PHOTO COLLAGE: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

was as compared to his Bollywood adaptation, whom I had watched and loved. This was my first experience with reading a romance hero so un-hero-like. Neither was he an anti-hero. I remember feeling frustrated and enraged. And yet I could not bring myself to hate Shekhar. I discovered for the first time that summer my preference for imperfect and raw characters over flawless ones. It was from Parineeta that I became aware of intricacies related to the caste system.

Even the secondary characters in Sarat Chandra's novels have an impactful presence. The domineering Bilash

COLLAGE ILLUSTRATION: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

age-old barriers.



Bibhutibhushan, an unlikely

adventurer

**MONEESHA R KALAMDER** 

Sarat Chandra

#### SLATED BY MUHAMMAD **MUTIUL MUHAIMIN**

For lovers of short story collections, Rizia Rahman's Char Doshoker Golpo (2011) can be great company on lazy afternoons. Rahman is undoubtedly among the finest writers of literature in Bangladesh, yet her craft goes unnoticed by many from the younger generations today. Seldom has any facet of life or society gone untouched by the light of her smooth and free-flowing language.

First published in 2008, her story "Shonar Horin Chai" depicts the life and struggles of a Bengali Muslim living in the United States. We read about Bengali students living inhumane lives in hopes of being granted immigrant status, their struggles with food and daily life, and being profiled as terrorists simply for having "Muhammad" as part of their names-all of which still feel relevant today.

In 2006, while paying her sister a visit in the States, Rahman meets a Black housekeeper named Donna Walker. From Donna's life story, Rahman is able to relate first hand with the violence perpetrated against African-Americans by White supremacy. The author compares these instances with the situations that domestic workers have to bear in Bangladesh. Small differences creep up in her mind-despite being a minority, Donna works in a healthy environment, is still paid for working overtime, and still drives to work albeit in an old car. The plights of the working class of Bangladesh would be unimaginable to even the poor in America. Even then, Rahman's thoughts on Donna and her husband losing jobs, being accused of theft, and facing ceaseless harassment because of their skin colour resonate with those of us still reeling from

George Floyd's death in Minneapolis this year.

In "Shamne Juddho" first published in 1986, Rahman tells us the story of 10-year-old newspaper hawker Amin, who lives with an NGO-worker and their family. Amin reads the newspaper every day to educate himself about the ways of the world. When he is arrested and released on bail with the help of his guardian, Amin delivers a monologue and cites the example of Nelson Mandela, who is also serving time in jail. Is Mandela, then, also a criminal? Amin has seen many Mandelas in the jail he just left behind.



ILLUSTRATION: ELMA HOSSAIN/ JUST.ELMO.DRAWS

This story was published while Bangladesh was living under an autocracy and yet Rahman manages to convey so much without outrightly addressing politics. Such are her lucidity and finesse as a writer.

Unlike the wars, pandemics, and natural disasters of history, our current crisis prevents humankind from standing beside each other in solidarity. Isolated from each other, we are forced to offer greater strength to ourselves, fight for ourselves. As the world burns in the heat of this unique summer, literature-Rizia Rahman's literature in particular-feels like a tall drink of water that cools the body and the mind. Her words teach us that humankind has indeed lost repeatedly at different points of time, but it hasn't remained stagnant.

Humayra Ali is an author and voracious reader of Bangla literature, who has taught Bangla in classrooms for 30 years. She has taken her writing to @humayra363 on Instagram and Tobuo Jibon by Humayra Ali on Facebook.

Muhammad Mutiul Muhaimin is an aspiring engineer who blogs about social reforms. He writes because he finds it therapeutic. LinkedIn: Mutiul Muhaimin

For anyone sitting through heat-stricken afternoons on forever-long summer days, reprieve can come in the form of escape into a fictional world, and Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay is a master at offering it. He is a magician with words, luring the reader in from the get-go. While early 20th century Bangla literature focused on domestic life and socio-political struggles, boasting work from luminaries such as Manik Bandyopadhyay (Putul Nacher Itikatha, Padma Nadir Majhi) and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay (Srikanta, Parineeta), Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay broke away from the norm and placed some of his protagonists right in the core of untamed nature.

Two of my personal favourites are Chander Pahar (1937), often categorised as a young adult novel but perfect for anyone who loves a good adventurethriller, and Aranyak (1939), a story about a metropolitan man falling in love with the wild, discovering innumerable facets of life in the process. The former is set in the beginning of the 20th century, before World War I. The protagonist Shankar, in search of excitement beyond his lacklustre job in West Bengal, ends up as a stationmaster at a remote railway station in Uganda. Through a chance encounter he embarks on a danger-laden journey into the unknown heart of the Richtersveld mountains in search of a fabled diamond mine. What appears to be a nerve-wracking adventure on the surface is a story essentially about resilience and an indomitable spirit, compelling the reader to reflect on their own desires and their pursuit of it.

Aranyak, more relaxed in tone and pace, is set in the 1920s. A city man through and through, the protagonist leaves urban life for the forests of Bihar to manage the zamindari estate of a friend. He becomes enticed by the beauty of the wild—the woods, the animals, and the people. The novel thenpaints the picture of a man becoming one with the forest, and in great irony, ultimately becoming instrumental in its destruction and its way of life. The poetic language and rich descriptions of nature offer an insight into the lives of locals who coexist with their landscapethe poor Brahmins, Gangots, Santals, the rich Rajput overlords, and legends of the gods of the forest who carefully guard their realm. The god Tarbaro protects wild



COLLAGE ILLUSTRATION: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

bison from being hunted in these jungles, and the protagonist laments the absence of the god when bison are trapped in city slaughterhouses. Perhaps the gods lose their powers when removed from their homes.

There is something about the nostalgia these books evoke for a time that no longer exists and neither do the places, in the way they used to. Both these novels also serve as a commentary on our ideas of civilisation and propriety, inherited from our colonisers, questioning the ethics of imposing such ideas on cultures that have survived for thousands of years on their own. Bandyopadhyay's strongest attributes are his vivid descriptions and flowing language. The reader is entirely transported into the world where the events of his stories occur, and there is never a dull moment. During a summer such as this when we must stay confined to the spaces of our homes, we could make use of delving into these classic Bangla masterpieces where our minds can roam free on the desert mountains of Africa or the long-gone forests of Bihar.

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from Datta (1918)-a love story between a Hindu and a Brahmin-provoked in me the strongest urge to enter the pages and commit violence. Perhaps the blistering heat of the summer while I was reading the book played a part in heightening my annoyance. But it is the mastery of Sarat Chandra's storytelling that led me, by the end of the story, to an understanding of and muted respect for the character.

Sarat Chandra relied on the humane actions or lack thereof of his characters to create conflict. They invite suffering for themselves with their own cowardice, indecisiveness and obstinacy-all layered complexitiesbut the ease with which one can empathise with them is testament to the author's prowess.

While the social issues explored in his works are everrelevant, there is also a sense of nostalgia brought by reading about a bygone era. The emotions his works invoke are timeless—perfect for a summer read.

Towrin Zaman is a research consultant who writes in her spare time.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

## The Bengali summer read

Come June, the season of light reading arrives with the promise of filling lazy afternoons freed from school work or, for adults who can't manage a vacation, escape in the form of relaxing books. Summer reading means something different for each of us—unwinding with a frothy romance, channeling the weather's warmth to face a horror or a thriller, or finally make time for that 1,400 page classic that always goes unfinished. But this summer is different; it's one we have hardly experienced as we try to lock ourselves away from a contagious virus. And so it calls for some good ol' and healthy nostalgia. We asked some of our contributors what books they associate with the Bengali summer we are missing out on this year. Their answers took us down labyrinths of memory lanes. We hope you'll enjoy this 'summer issue' of Daily Star Books.

> Sarah Anjum Bari In-Charge, Daily Star Books

**EDITORIAL** 



DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 23, 2020, SRABAN 8, 1427 BS

## Resignation of DG a rare step in the right direction

The health ministry and health directorate still require radical reforms

VER the past two weeks, the rift between the health ministry and the health directorate over Regent Hospital, which has been at the centre of the Covid-19 testing scam, has dominated headlines. In the midst of the ministry and the DGHS shifting blame onto each other and attempting to evade responsibility regarding the authorisation of Regent as a dedicated Covid-19 hospital (despite its expired license), the resignation of Prof Abul Kalam Azad, the director general of the DGHS, is a step in the right direction. It is a rare instance to see an official quitting in the face of criticism, although his official resignation letter cited health grounds for stepping down.

However, the investigations into the scandals that have plagued the health sector in recent months cannot come to a stop simply because the DG has stepped down. The revelations of Regent Hospital issuing fake Covid-19 certificates and embezzling government funds, or that of JKG Health Care which conducted coronavirus tests in exchange for money without any trade license or permission to do so, are only the tip of the iceberg.

Over the past few weeks, various reports in this paper have revealed the ineptitude of our health authorities in dealing with the pandemic, as well as the overall mismanagement and corruption plaguing our health sector-fake N95 masks being provided to medical personnel at BSMMU; unauthorised Covid-19 tests and forged reports from other institutions; more than five lakh Covid-19 testing kits lying in the warehouses of several companies in the capital instead of being delivered to testing centres; contractors who had misappropriated over Tk 100 crore from various government medical colleges and hospitals being blacklisted only recently, despite being under investigation for a much longer period; and the almost unbelievable statistics showing that two-thirds of the country's private clinics and diagnostic centres are operating without valid licences since 2018.

All of these reports show that arresting those responsible after certain crimes are exposed, or stepping down as a show of accountability, are not enough to deal with these problems. The bureaucratic deadweight at the heart of the health ministry and health directorate, not to mention the corruption, mismanagement and inefficiencies, require radical reforms. Going after a few individuals and officials, without dismantling the system that enables and sustains them, will never uproot corruption and mismanagement from the health sector.

## Prolonged floods will prolong people's miseries

## Affected people need immediate relief and shelter

E are worried to learn that this year's flood is likely to continue till mid-August which may eventually worsen the sufferings of more than 25 lakh people in the affected districts. Already more than a third of the country has been affected by severe flooding. Experts fear that this flood is going to be one of the worst the country has experienced in recent memory as it may outlast the 1998 flood. According to the Department of Disaster Management, since June 26, floods have claimed 24 lives, damaged thousands of houses, crops, roads and embankments in at least 90 upazilas of the 24 affected districts Flood-hit people in northern and north-western regions have been going through immense sufferings for lack of adequate supply of food, pure drinking water and shelter. Waterborne diseases have become a major concern in the affected areas while flood shelters were submerged in many areas forcing people to take shelter under the open sky. In many severely affected remote areas, there is no flood shelter and the government's relief assistance does not also reach there. Absence of toilet and sanitation facilities has become a big issue for women. This flood has also come as a big blow for the country's food production as, according to our report, crops worth nearly Tk 350 crore have already been damaged. Under the circumstances, the government should take immediate measures to reduce the sufferings of the floodhit people by building more flood shelters, providing them with pure drinking water and food, and ensuring healthcare services in the shelters and affected areas. Special care needs to be taken for the children so they do not get infected with waterborne diseases. Also, plans should be in place to provide the farmers with seedlings immediately after the floodwater recedes and to compensate them for the crop loss. All the government agencies concerned need to work together to lessen people's sufferings and better manage the overall flood situation.

# Crafting image in an age of electronic globalisation

#### Mizan R Khan

ECENTLY, quite a number of reports have been published in both national R and foreign media outlets about how two healthcare providers in Bangladesh issued fake Covid-19 certificates. Obviously, the negative coverage has tarnished the image of our nation abroad. We have had reports that the foreign minister had chaired a high-level, inter-ministerial meeting to discuss the immediate ramifications of these acts on our expatriate workers who are now staying abroad or planning to go back there after a few months of being in Bangladesh. The foreign ministry has also sent a letter to the Prime Minister's Office urging action in this regard so that those returning or planning to return to their work abroad can do so with authentic Covid-19 negative certificates.

Except for some isolated events, the last two decades moved mostly in a positive direction as far as the image of our nation is concerned. One may recall that during the post-war years, a smear campaign was unleashed by Kissinger, the then US foreign secretary, who could not reconcile with the defeat of his geopolitical vision in Asia. But Bangladesh, particularly since the 1990s, started turning around from a povertystricken country to a dynamic, rapidly growing one, acclaimed far and wide.

In the 1990s, as a regular newspaper reader in the US when I was a graduate student, I used to come across references of Bangladesh in the print media there. Out of curiosity, I started keeping a log of such references. Within a few years, the number crossed several hundred. After a quick analysis, I found around two-thirds of those references as negative, while one-third presented Bangladesh in a positive light.

Three issues then were highlighted as positive developments in Bangladesh: a) success in population control in a lowincome country, which invalidated the Western concept of demographic transition that family size depends on income level; b) the microcredit system spearheaded by Dr Yunus' Grameen Bank in a country with huge poverty that also innovated some social engineering to provide people relief from extreme poverty. Finally, the resilience of the Bangladeshi people who, despite being badly battered by recurring climate disasters, can build back quickly. This trait of Bangladeshis earned commendation from the US press.

Now about two decades later, the basket of such positives has grown much bigger. Quite a number of our achievements in social and economic sectors are highly acclaimed the world over, touting Bangladesh as the newly emerging tiger in Asia. Our disaster management model, highlighted recently (after Amphan) in a column of The Guardian written by no other than Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is emulated by many countries, both developed and developing. Bangladesh now

like—not what it is really like. So, we act the way the world appears to us, not necessarily the way it actually is.
 This mutual reading of nations is important in the international system.
 The terms "image" and "perception" are sometimes used interchangeably, but

perception can be interpreted as wider than image, which can be viewed as the product of perception. The image theorists argue that the consciousness of shared events and experiences in a nation is of vital importance. Our fight for independence against Pakistan, constantly remembered through ritual

Image Theory. Economist Kenneth Boulding

defined image as what we think the world is



Surrounded by RAB officials, Regent Hospital owner Md Shahed, in blue vest, is being taken to the RAB Headquarters after he was flown back to Dhaka on July 15, 2020.

sends the highest number of peacekeepers in the world. The huge sacrifices—social, economic and environmental—that accompanied the sheltering of a million Rohingya refugees earned great accolades for the country. Also Bangladesh, being one of the countries that are most vulnerable to increasing climate impacts, is turning itself as a model of adaptation and learning for the world. This is being observed and commended globally.

Let me raise two pertinent questions here: why does the "image" of a nation really matter? How is it crafted in this age of electronic globalisation? There is a body of knowledge in International Relations called observances and the historical memory of people, is such a great shared event that gives constant inspiration for our march forward. Likewise, the US Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address crystallise the national image in a form that is transmitted across generations. The historic 7th March speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971, declared as a global knowledge heritage by the UNESCO, will be passed on to generations.

FILE PHOTO:

COLLECTED

Thus, images are paramount in diplomacy, as they justify a nation's desired reaction or treatment toward another nation. Obviously, a positive image of a state is a major factor in determining whether and how easily the state can realise its goal. Thus a desired image can often be of greater value than a significant increase in military and economic power. We may recall that colonial powers used to try to change their "imperialist" image into a "spreader of civilisation" image. The institutions like the British Council, the Goethe Institut, the Confucius Institute, student scholarships/ fellowships and different exchange programmes are all meant for building positive images of the countries concerned.

However, until recently, the postures from top leaders and decision makers played the leading role in crafting the desired image. Now in the age of electronic globalisation, the postures of the masses are becoming more effective. Public diplomacy and people-to-people interactions are proving to be efficient tools in shaping the desired image. With rapid development of internet-based social networks, domestic developments and governance process are electronically transmitted in split seconds beyond borders, bypassing the official sources of information and communication. So, the difference between image and reality is getting more and more blurred. Obviously, image building is no more the responsibility or exclusive preserve of diplomats. I will argue that our diplomats are rather *aide de camp*—the camp being the whole of Bangladesh, where the behaviour of each individual, each leader and each institution, both within and without, matters, where astute diplomats actually serve as spokespersons on behalf of Bangladesh.

Against this backdrop, the behaviour of those unscrupulous caregivers—JKG or Regent Hospital—does not augur well for the country. The news of these negative developments spread like wild fire. The health minister's response to the question of his presence in an agreement-signing ceremony between his ministry and Regent does not add to our cherished image. Such indifferent responses from a minister in addressing a mortal threat like Covid-19 cannot be swept under the rug. A wired world makes no difference between an ostrich and a whistleblower.

Mizan R Khan is Deputy Director, ICCCAD, and Program Director, LDC Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC).

# China's Self-Defeating Uyghur Policy

#### Ali Ahmed Ziauddin

I N recent times, the entire western mainstream media and their affiliated outlets have regularly reported China's alleged ill-treatment of the Muslim Uyghurs. Having previously extended their support for Afghan, Iraq and other destructive policies of the US, the credibility of the some light on this issue. It offers a deeper perspective. Perhaps one of the key reasons for the failure of most of the subsequent communist movements, including the Bolsheviks, was their unwillingness to discern religion in this light.

Marx was aware of the historic role of religion in the evolution of civilisation. His frequently quoted "religion is the opium of the masses" is repeatedly referred out of context. The preceding sentence—"religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and soul of soulless conditions" (1844 journal Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher)-is hardly cited. Faith was a solace to the Hebrew slaves in Egypt just as Christianity was to the downtrodden of the Roman Empire. German peasants held on to the Protestant faith in their struggle against the oppressive feudal order, as did the Chinese peasantry for centuries by taking refuge in various folk religions outside the official/structured ones developed far more relevant civil and criminal laws replacing most of the religious ones that were related to governance. Third, in early times religion and state were inseparable. But modernity has in most cases separated them. The revolution has freed China from these two areas of religious control. If any faith-based community, whether Muslim, Confucian, Buddhist or

Yes, there are elements in Muslim societies exposed to the Wahabi/Salafi extremism but to treat an entire ethnic people with suspicion is a sure recipe for alienation. It's the last thing expected of a communist party. For long, the socialists/ communists were accused of all sorts of sin under the sun, but not racism.



#### **Discard waste properly** A few days ago, I was very surprised to see my friend,

a university student, throwing waste through the window. I warned him about what he was doing only to realise that he actually does not care. It is common for many educated people to throw waste like plastic bags, and bottles on the street. At the end of the day, these discarded materials cause various problems like clogging of the sewerage especially during the monsoon, amongst others.

It's a shame that educated people remain unaware of the seriousness of this issue. How can we then expect the uneducated people to abide by the rules? I believe the government needs to take some strict measures to curb the irresponsible discarding of waste materials. It should be considered a crime and those who commit it must be punished or fined. There is no other way.

Tanbin Khan, by email

media lies tattered. They portray countries they consider enemies in a negative light, and manipulate opinion to build consent for wars. So it's hard to trust their reports. But China itself has said it holds an indefinite number of Uyghurs in training camps. I wonder why?

The existence of such camps was reported during the Cultural Revolution. These were called correctional facilities and served the purpose of reeducation to reintegrate the enemies of the revolution. The great French Revolution massacred more than a hundred thousand people, as did Stalin. The English and American civil wars were no less bloody. The Uyghurs have not been dispatched to that fate but are segregated for reeducation. Are they enemies of the Chinese revolution? How so? Have they threatened the Chinese state in any way? If so, how? As reported by the Chinese press, these camps are providing "technical skills" for the Uyghurs, especially their youth to help them seek jobs in other parts of China. The second intent is to keep the Islamic extremist returnees from Taliban/ISIS battlefields. Both intents are understandable. Yet, there is something that doesn't quite add up. Ambiguous explanations from the authorities sow seeds of mistrust.

There are no such camps for the larger Han community, and if an entire ethnic community, no matter how big or small, is suspected of Islamic extremism because they are Muslims by faith, it's no different from the racist Islamophobia of the west. Or does it stem from the usual hostility of communists against religion? If so, it's more like Stalinist purges than "socialism with Chinese characteristic". Either way, it's indefensible. It's true that earlier Uyghurs had collaborated with the hated Mongol and Manchu invaders centuries ago (China, A History, John Keay), but if the Han people still harbour that grudge against their descendants, it's simply inexcusable and also inhuman.

Yes, there are elements in Muslim societies exposed to the Wahabi/Salafi extremism but to treat an entire ethnic people with suspicion is a sure recipe for alienation. It's the last thing expected of a communist party. For long, the socialists/ communists were accused of all sorts of sin under the sun, but not racism. The mechanistic praxis of Marx's theory led many communist parties astray. Marxism isn't a religion; rather it's a scientific methodology that can and needs to evolve in view of century-old experiments across the world. Or else, it may become a dogma and like other dogmas will cease to have practical applications and eventually fade away. Marx's early views on religion, which he didn't seem to have changed, may draw

Christian, intrudes in the state's handling of these two areas of religion, the state reserves the right to intervene, but it cannot trample the spiritual quest or the cultural practices emanating from them.

All faiths bequeathed many cultural attributes to each society. Though they have religious roots, they are, however, celebrated more as culture. A vast majority of Europeans have long ceased to go to Church to pray but that doesn't stop them from celebrating Christmas. The Chinese New Year celebration, at least in part, honours the heavenly Jade Emperor. Similarly, all



#### A Chinese police officer takes his position by the road near what is officially called a vocational education centre in Yining in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China, on September 4, 2018.

although they had elements of all (*History of Religion*, Sergei Tokarev). All other religions played a similar role at the early stages of their evolution.

They played three distinct roles blended into one. Since humans began to think, the mysteries of creation made them curious. Religion provided answers to that spiritual quest; so long as it remains a mystery, the thirst to explore cannot be quenched. It may be counterproductive to use force to try to stamp it out. The Bolsheviks tried and failed, as did most other communist parties. Such experiences left a negative legacy. This could and should be an empirical lesson for the present and future practitioners of a scientific methodology. The best policy would be to leave it alone.

The second role of religion was to support governance. Every religion presented laws to govern the society where it originated or had influence. Initially, they were mostly egalitarian, but once religions gained political power, by whatever means, the moral content gave way to decadence. Eventually, it became a handy tool of the status quo. Over time mankind has other faith-based communities have their religio-cultural practices. If these do not interfere with the secular administration of the Chinese state, they should be celebrated and not stamped out.

But if the suspicion about the Uyghurs is influenced by Islamophobia, it's far more baffling. In brief, it's a derivative of orientalism, a European school of thought. It degrades all Afro-Asian people and their religio-cultural practices as uncivilised. To put it bluntly, they are considered lesser humans, needing patronisation or reform, but never treated as equals. This was at the heart of the colonial project. It dehumanised the colonial people and took away their dignity. Racism is a logical sequence of that outlook. All the colonies and a great number of people across the world still suffer immensely under its aegis. CCP and other communist or nationalist parties fought steadily against this curse and presumably defeated it for good via successful revolutions. But has it recently crept back into CCP's lexicon somehow? No nation is free of the disease of majoritarian chauvinism. Some deny it and ask the ethnic or other minorities in their societies to assimilate, some hide it with tact while some take pride in it, yet some try to get over it. China's friends would like to see it in the last group. A communist party is supposed to pursue the most advanced consciousness of its time free from all regressive socio-cultural prejudices.

China is a beacon of hope for the entire developing world. The CCP has lifted more than a billion people out of poverty in 70 years. It took the developed nations 200 years to do the same for far fewer numbersthat too by colonial plunder, massacring the natives, and slavery. The BRI Initiative is now helping others to develop. But these remarkable achievements might suffer immeasurably if key but delicate policy matters are not handled with care among which religion is one. The indescribable tragedy will be if CCP suffers the Bolshevik fate-not only for China but for the world in general and the developing world in particular. A multipolar world is in the interest of all concerned except the imperial centre and its partners. To avoid that fate, the CCP needs to introspect. Without regular debates on theory and practice among the rank and file, any communist party will run the risk of becoming fossilised. And hopefully, CCP doesn't intend to recreate a modern-day Middle Kingdom.

The US and its allies are bent on noosing China because it has upturned their longheld total control over the world. And to face that challenge, China needs to solve avoidable frictions at home and abroad, especially in its vicinity. Humane treatment of the Uyghurs and all other minorities will surely enhance China's influence. Improving its relation with India and ASEAN states is imperative. Building trust and solidarity across Asia, Africa, and Latin America may keep them from joining the US-led imperial forces in any possible future conflict.

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FILE PHOTO: whic REUTERS trage

#### OPINION



EARLY half a century after the 1971 War of Liberation, it is perhaps difficult to produce or come across startlingly original ideas about Tajuddin Ahmad. But

it is always instructive to study the existing literature on his political career, primarily because of the lessons it provides, but also because it helps us see the history of our independence struggle in a broader context in terms of its relation to other forces and influences that were at play. Tajuddin's active life was a relatively short one, marked by momentous changes both in this region and around the world. To understand Tajuddin is to understand the interplay of these changes in which he was both a keen observer and an active participant.

As history shows us, Tajuddin's career took off at a time when the world was in constant flux. He saw the painful birth of India and Pakistan through an ill-conceived Partition orchestrated by the British. Globally, the imperialists were on the run. Between 1945 and 1960, about three dozen new states in Asia and Africa achieved autonomy or outright independence from their colonial rulers. The creation of so many new countries within this short period coincided with the new Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States, which would both influence and be influenced by these developments, altering the composition of the global geopolitical scene and deepening the political complexity of nearly every region in the world. Bangladesh's independence in 1971, of which Tajuddin was one of the chief architects, cannot be seen in isolation from these developments.

Tajuddin's role, until that point, was that of a grassroots organiser and strategist. As general secretary of Awami League and a close confidante of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, he would get Bangabandhu's approval for all policy decisions and strategies while Bangabandhu would engage with the public to get them

behind those decisions. They were a perfect team—one carrying the torch of independence and the other, averse to publicity, providing him with backstage support. However, after the brutal crackdown of Pakistan on innocent Bengali civilians on March 25, followed by Bangabandhu's arrest, Tajuddin found himself suddenly alone. He soon realised that it was now up to him to carry that torch forward and lead the strenuous task of organising the lines of defence from the ground up, legitimising the rightful demand of his people for self-determination through forming a government by their elected representatives, and mobilising international support for their cause.

We get a good glimpse of his activities in the next nine months from the authoritative book of Muyeedul Hasan titled "Muldhara: 71". The book details the many challenges he faced after the April 17 oath-taking ceremony of the provisional "Mujibnagar" government (so called because of the name of the place where the ceremony was held). The government-in-exile in Kolkata, the legal basis of which was provided by the Proclamation of Independence issued on April 10-just 15 days into the Pakistani clampdown-was divided into 15 ministries and divisions. Its quick formation, besides the obvious reasons for which it was set up, also helped Awami League avert a leadership crisis in the absence of Bangabandhu. Many Bengali diplomats and members of the Civil Service of Pakistan also defected to the newly established government headed by Tajuddin Ahmad, its prime minister.

Tajuddin and his cabinet colleagues quickly set the administration on the path of achieving a number of short and long-term goals. Foremost among them: training and securing arms for the freedom fighters, building a regular army, advancing the resistance fight through both conventional and irregular warfare, rehabilitating the refugees in India, securing recognition from the international community, building an effective line of communication, freeing Bangabandhu from the Pakistani prison etc.

Muyeedul Hasan's exhaustive analysis of subsequent developments shows how the war was as much a physical one as a political one. Tajuddin was quick to

realise that for any pushback against the Pakistani occupation to be successful in the long run, it was important to secure international support without which it would be viewed as an anti-Pakistani plot of India. His grasp of geopolitical issues, especially the complex ways in which global powers function, afforded him an insight into their inner workings. Each power that had a stake in the future of this conflict would have its own reason for its intervention or lack thereof. It was also vital to secure unstinted support from all political parties of Bangladesh for which a more inclusive approach of governance would be needed, which was no easy task. There were also internal divisions within



the refugee crisis.

The much-needed commitment of

Gandhi met with top Soviet leaders in

Moscow and both sides released a joint

statement expressing their solidarity for

the Bengali cause (Moscow had earlier

described the US' interference as a move

towards "Vietnamisation of East Bengal

conflict"). This meeting is regarded as a

major turning point in the history of the

war as it meant that India could, with

more boldly. Meanwhile, China proved

the Soviet Union at its side, now act

to be an unreliable ally for Pakistan

although it had been supplying arms

to it since the beginning. The US plan

to get China to keep India on a short

leash by creating tensions at their shared

support came on September 28-29,

when Indian Prime Minister Indira

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (left) and Tajuddin Ahmad.

the exiled Awami League leadership and resistance to his own authority as prime minister. Addressing all these challenges successfully would require extraordinary political foresight and extensive

diplomatic effort. For India, which gave shelter to millions of refugees from Bangladesh fleeing the war and provided training and military support in different phases, there were ostensibly three reasons for supporting the cause of liberation, according to Muyeedul. First, its continued hostile relations with Pakistan and prior support for the Bengali demand for autonomy. Second, the ideological proximity between Awami League and the ruling Congress Party, especially on issues of parliamentary democracy and

non-communalism. The third reason was a humanitarian one, ignited by the Pakistani brutalities targeting innocent civilians. But there were also risks to consider: any direct military intervention from India could be used by Pakistan to turn its "civil war" into an Indo-Pak war which could pave the way for military intervention from the US and China. The US, ignoring world opinion and the plight of the persecuted Bengalis, was already playing a very active role in Pakistan's favour. In terms of powerful allies, India still had none. So without securing support from the Soviet Union to tip the scales in its favour, it couldn't risk getting involved militarily even if it meant prolonging

borders never really materialised.

The Bally Star | 9

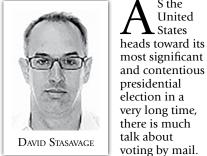
Tajuddin followed these developments closely and aided, when necessary, the Indian bid to counterbalance the US threat. His realistic appraisal of the situation was vital to the government's international engagement efforts as well as adopting supportive policies. Despite the many challenges on multiple fronts, limited resources and the constraints of having to work on the soil of another country, the Mujibnagar government was successful in putting together a civil administration which worked with remarkable efficiency given the situation. Tajuddin also had to act decisively to keep the administration nonpartisan. Besides organising the whole military and political response to the emerging situations, he and those involved with the government also successfully ensured effective coordination of various activities and kept the momentum alive both for the trainees and freedom fighters back home. By December, the Pakistani confidence was largely shattered and their military position considerably weakened. Finally, when the Indian army officially entered the war on December 3, victory for the joint forces was only a matter of time.

The independence came through the efforts and sacrifices of countless people both at home and outside. Tajuddin's extraordinary leadership along with the fearless efforts of his administration and comrades was the glue that held them all together and channelled their efforts to secure independence finally.

There are many things to learn from Tajuddin's short yet illustrious career: his organisational acumen, political and diplomatic wisdom, and his quiet work as a nation builder, which suggest a blend of vision and pragmatism inherent to great leaders. But his most glorious moment is indeed his role during the war. In short, the art of being Tajuddin Ahmad in 1971 is the art of navigating a complex landscape of conflicting geopolitical priorities and meeting extraordinary challenges with equally extraordinary courage and foresight, while never losing hope in the potential of his people.

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## **PROJECT** SYNDICATE Trump's Ancient Ballot Lie



#### an election. United

S the

States

nost significant

By custom, all free male inhabitants of a county had the right to participate, proposed method of addressing the while women were excluded. Some of heads toward its these elections were no doubt rowdy and undisciplined—as democracy often is—but they allowed for much greater (male) participation than would soon be the case.

electoral process was in danger.

But the parliamentarians' perceived problem betrayed their true notivation. They called for the county

40-shilling rule was an anachronism. But then a new twist to the story brought about a feature of voting that we view as sacred today. Some

of citizenship. States have also limited turnout by reducing the number of polling stations.

The clear effect of these measures

DAVID STASAVAGE

Some see this option as necessary to ensure ballot access for all amid the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly blue-collar workers and minority groups, who have disproportionately high infection rates. But others, including President Donald Trump, vociferously oppose mail-in ballots, pointing to a purported risk of fraud.

Their argument is bogus—and not exactly new. For the last six centuries, those seeking to limit the franchise have sought to achieve their goals by citing the need to maintain the "integrity" of the electoral system.

Consider England in the early fifteenth century. At that time, each English county sent two "knights of the shire" as representatives to parliament. And because there was no formal law governing how these knights (a largely honorific term) would be selected, it fell to each county's sheriff to organise

In 1429, members of the House of Commons petitioned King Henry VI to agree to a new law ostensibly intended

to those who owned land with an annual return of at least 40 shillings, a significant sum at the time.

election franchise to be restricted

The root cause of the problem, as the law's supporters saw it, was "the too great and excessive numbers of

*In the US debate over voting by mail—a measure* supported by a large majority of American adults—opponents of broad electoral participation are once again raising the spectre of fraud and corruption to pursue narrow partisan goals. Without citing any evidence, they claim that this new voting system is somehow subject to greater irregularities than traditional in-person voting.

to ensure that county elections to parliament proceeded peacefully. The petition stated that without this new law, "homicides, riots, assaults, and divisions will most probably arise and occur." In other words, the law's backers claimed, the integrity of the

people" who had been participating in elections. The 40-shilling rule became law in England in 1430, and would not be repealed until parliament passed the Great Reform Act of 1832.

With that act, parliament had finally come around to the idea that the

members of parliament advocated not only expanding the franchise, but also making the ballot for elections to the House of Commons secret. Since time immemorial, voting in county elections had taken place in public, enabling people with means to intimidate or bribe others to vote as instructed.

But it would be another 40 years before parliament finally adopted the 1872 Ballot Act. One of the main reasons for the delay in introducing secret balloting was that opponents argued—once again—that it would jeopardise the integrity of the electoral process. Some MPs had proposed a secret ballot as early as 1830, but others argued then that such a measure would result in "eternal suspicion and hypocrisy." In 1862, another opponent of secret ballots said much the same thing, claiming that, "instead of being a check on bribery, it would facilitate it by preventing detection in many cases."

Sadly, such arguments are being echoed today in the US, which has entered a new era of voting restrictions that recalls its past disenfranchisement of African-Americans. In recent years, 25 US states have passed laws that make it more difficult to vote, such as by requiring a photo ID or even proof

s to tilt the playing field agains low-income and minority groups. Much like in England 600 years ago, the stated objective—preserving the integrity of the electoral process—is just a convenient smokescreen.

In the US debate over voting by mail—a measure supported by a large majority of American adults-opponents of broad electoral participation are once again raising the spectre of fraud and corruption to pursue narrow partisan goals. Without citing any evidence, they claim that this new voting system is somehow subject to greater irregularities than traditional in-person voting.

But the real fear of Trump and others is that mail-in voting will boost turnout and aid Democratic candidates, even though it is not even certain that such an effect exists in states that already allow it. We can only hope that the advocates of expanded suffrage will eventually resume their winning streak.

David Stasavage is Dean for the Social Sciences at New York University and author of The Decline and Rise of Democracy: A Global History from Antiquity to Today (Princeton University Press 2020).

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ON THIS DAY <b>IN HISTORY</b>	CROSS ACROSS 1 Martian feature	NORD BY THOMAS 27 Online icon 29 Fling	5 JOSEPH 7 Romantic sort 8 Parrot	1 11 13 15 17	2 3	4	5	6	7 12 14		9	10		E BAILE
<b>JULY 23, 1952</b> Egyptian monarchy toppled by coup	7 Told tales 11 Sermon 12 Old Atlanta arena 13 Like some mushrooms 14" – Las Vegas" 15 Pet store buys 16 Doled (out)	33 Submerged 34 Number after cuatro 35 Do copy work 36 Patrol boat 37 Celtic letter 38 Suave 39 Went 90 40 Small frog	9 Completely enclose 10 Small crown 16 Complete, as business 18 College study 20 Sipping aid 22 Set an earlier time for	25 27 33 35 37 39	22 2	3 28 28 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4		36 38 40	24	21 4 9 30	31	32	5/19	
On this day in 1952, the Free Officers, a nationalistic military group led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, engineered a coup that overthrew King Farouk I of Egypt, ending the monarchy and bringing	17 Shoelace problem 18 Esprit de corps 19 Pronto, in memos 21 Huck's pal 22 Southern drink 25 Heir, often 26 Tug-of-war need	DOWN 1 Look into 2 Flying reptile of movies 3 Baja buddy 4 Like Sherpas 5 Pipe bends 6 Reuben base	23 Straight 24 Beatles classic 25 Cavalry weapons 28 Lugged 30 Like bar beer 31 Play part 32 More ticked off 34 Make sound 36 Recipe unit	S E C E D E T E A R	A R A I A I A R L E	L A S M P B E S U E F A L A P	D E S P A I R			A W B I E D S O E R C A S T O C A S T	I E D A D O R	P O W E	BABY	
Nasser to power.		R US. SEND US YOUR OPINIO dsopinion@gmail.com		U P	_	C U E P	T S		_		E D	R S		-

**BY MORT WALKER** IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL NEED CLEANSING NG MY PALATE ANOTHER SIX-PACK BETWEEN COURSES



# Star NOVOZ



#### GRAPE VINE



Pori Moni has recently signed up for a government grant film. The film, titled *Lekhok*, received a government grant for the 2019-2020 financial year, but will be renamed as *Mukhosh*. The film will be directed by Iftekhar Shuvo, who has also written the story and screenplay. Pori Moni said, "I liked the story of the film very much, and agreed to be a part of it immediately. I hope the project will go well. The shooting is not set to begin until the end of the year due to the pandemic." Pori Moni is currently awaiting the release of the film *Bishwa Shundori*, which has been directed by Chayanika Chowdhury.

Shreya Shomoyeeta



## First Bangladeshi film in Locarno

Promising Bangladeshi filmmaker in the international short film scene, Mahde Hasan, has yet again become a pride for our country. His sixteen-minute-long short film, *A Boring Film*, is the first film from Bangladesh to compete in the prestigious *Locarno Film Festival*. The film has been selected in the *Pardi di domani International Competition of Locarno Film Festival 2020*. It has been produced by Mahajabin Khan and Muhammad Anwar Hossain. Aside from working for the cinematography, editing and sound, Mahde has also acted in the film. From 2,200 films only 45 short films, from 32 countries, have been selected for the short film category of the *Locarno Film Festival*. The festival will be held online from 5-15 August, 2020. Previously, Mahde's first feature film, *Sand City*, currently in development, was selected for *La Fabrique Cinema at the Cannes Film Festival 2019*.

XYS

Talented singers, Armeen Musa and Tashfia Sui Tashfee, have adapted to the changes the pandemic has brought to the music industry. Even though their plans for this year has altered, both of them have found ways to spread their music and be committed to their love for singing. In this interview, the singers shared their works during pandemic and plans for the post pandemic scenario.

## **Armeen Musa**

*How is your choir practising during the pandemic?* We are not practising during the pandemic. We have months and months of practice from the time before the pandemic, so we made two songs while staying at home. The songs we made were *Shadhinota Tomake Niye* by Happy and Lucky Akhand, and *Mon Shudhu Mon*, which was a tribute to the band Souls. We had practised these songs several times before the pandemic, and we learnt how to record the music at home. Then we each recorded our parts and mixed it together. We also made videos of us recording at home.

Aside from the 'Ghaashphoring Choir', do you have any project the readers should look forward to? The pandemic has really affected a lot of plans I had for this year. I was planning to go on a tour abroad this summer, but the pandemic caused it to get cancelled. I'm a fulltime musician, and I realised that I needed to find an alternative source of earning money as the pandemic is not letting me perform. So, from the second month of quarantine, I started taking online classes for music theory. I also set up a home studio so I can



record jingles or voice-overs from home. In the first few months of the pandemic, I had to get used to shifting all my work to home, and now that I am fully adjusted to this setting, I am thinking about releasing an album I have been working on forever. I made this album with international artists from seven or eight countries. It was never my main project, so it was put on hold a lot. It isn't finished yet, but I hope to release it this year.

# Tashfia Sui Tashfee

## How are you doing music during quarantine?

It's no news that performance arts took a big hit because of the pandemic. However, I try to think positively. I've done some collaborations with some of the most incredible musicians during quarantine and decided to be productive and start working on my originals that I've been planning on, for the longest time. I bought my own small home recording setup because of the pandemic and I've been working from home ever since.

Are you planning on covering new songs? Maybe. I have plans to sing some of the classic rock songs I grew up listening to. However, at the moment, I've been extremely busy with the original songs I plan to release this year. I'm very excited for those. But, if I get tired of them, I just might do a cover very soon to change the air.

## How did you feel about being featured in 'The Telegraph'?

It was a pleasant surprise! I really didn't see it coming. It's amazing to see my growing fanbase in Kolkata, India. It truly makes me happy to see them appreciate my art. It was really nice talking about me and my journey, and about my upcoming collaboration with Ritaprabha Ray.

How did it feel to collaborate with Ritaprabha Ray? Can you talk about your collaboration? Ritaprabha is a Mumbai-based composer and guitar player who approached me to do a quarantine collaboration. We did Eto Koshto Keno Bhalobashay by Hasan. It was such an amazing experience to work with him. We had an unbelievable musical chemistry. So, despite the fact that he is in Mumbai and I'm in Dhaka, it was no issue and the cover came out great and was very well appreciated. That's why we decided to collaborate with an original song this time. The song is called Jodi Tumi. I can't say much about it since it's still work in progress, but I can't wait to release it soon.

## Do you have anything new planned for your music?

Apart from *Jodi Tumi*, I am currently working on my EP. However, I plan to release the songs one by one as singles. There are also many collaborations going on with Bangladeshi and international artists from India and Singapore. I am also particularly excited about one song with Fuad Almuqtadir in his next project which will be published from *TM Records*.

## Will you continue doing live shows after the pandemic is over?

One thing I realised during the pandemic is that you can never take anything for granted. I used to do very limited shows, but I have made a promise to myself that after the pandemic, I will do more live shows and make more music. Anything can change anytime and you should just do what you love to do in life.

And for me, it's music. So, yes, I will definitely do more shows after the pandemic is over. I can't wait for those days to come!

> Amina Hossain

## **CENTRE STAGE**



The Ministry of Information has announced the films for the financial year 2019-2020. One of them is the movie, *Daymukti*, which will be directed by Komol Sarker. The shooting for the film is set to begin after Eid-ul-Azha, and it will star Symon Sadik and Mou Khan, alongside Syed Hasan Imam and Dilara Zaman, among others. Symon says, "The story of the film is mainly based around old age homes, and it was truly touching. I believe that this government financed film will certainly turn out to be something great."

Shreya Shomoyeeta

## Do you have any live show planned when the pandemic is over?

I'm not sure if I can still do the tour I was planning to do once all of this is over, but I do plan on doing an online show when I release this album. I have been considering selling tickets for it and doing private shows. But, to do that, I have to make sure that the streaming quality is top-notch, and I also need to have the proper sound equipment for that.

#### What are your post-pandemic plans?

I haven't thought about something so far ahead, but I think I will do what I wanted to spend this year doing, and that is spreading my music to people around the world.

How have you been spending your time indoors? I am currently registered for a bunch of classes where they teach Nazrul Sangeet and Rabindra Sangeet. I also have a group of online friends, and we work-out together five days a week. I also sit together with a group of friends who are all writers or poets, and we fix a time every week where we sit and work together. We work on our own projects, and then we show it to each other. But, the thing that consumes my time the most is teaching music theory online. I teach staff notation, and that is something most musicians in Bangladesh don't even know. I think that there are only around twelve people who teach this. My course is designed to enable a musician to express themselves through staff notation. I would say that it's a shorter course designed for musicians.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub



# POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.

Here are



## **Unsolved Mysteries**

Unsolved Mysteries is a true-crime docuseries based on the experiences of ordinary people who had to go through the unimaginable in hopes to find answers from the viewers. It was directed by Marcus A. Clarke, Clay Jeter and Jim Goldblum, written by Charles Olivier, produced under the banners of 21 Laps Entertainment and Inexplicable Pictures, and stars Pistol Black, Jane Green and Anne-Sophie Martin, among others. It was first released on July 1, 2020.

## **PALASA 1978**

Palasa 1978 is an Indian Telugu-language action film. It has been written and directed by Karuna Kumar, produced by Dhyan Atluri, under the banner of *Suresh Productions*, and stars Rakshith, Nakshatra and Raghu Kunche, among others. The film revolves around the battle between different castes through politics. It was initially released on March 6, 2020.





## ATHLETE A

Athlete A is a documentary film on Netflix. It has been directed by Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk, and produced by Serin Marshall, Jen Sey and Julie Parker Benello, under the banner of Actual Films. It revolves around a team of reporters and their investigation as they expose Dr. Larry Nassar for sexually assaulting young girls training at USA Gymnastics. It was released on June 24, 2020.

Shreya Shomoyeeta & Amina Hossain

#### **GUESS THE CELEBRITY**

Guess who the celebrity is? HINT: I LOVE YOU 3000



ANSWER FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE: "ANGELINA JOLIE"

e-mail: sports@thedailystar.net DHAKA THURSDAY JULY 23, 2020, *SRABAN 8, 1427 BS* 

**SERIE A Ten 2 Udinese v Juventus** Live from 11:30pm Lazio v Cagliari Live from 1:45am (Friday)



AC Milan forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic lets out a roar after scoring one of his two goals during their 2-1 win over Sassuolo on Tuesday. The 38-year-old Swede has scored seven goals and recorded four assists in 15 appearances since joining the Rossoneri on a free transfer from LA Galaxy in January and has helped revive the club's fortunes. PHOTO: AC MILAN

# Ibra driving Milan resurgence

#### AFP, Milan



Muriel struck just after an hour as Atalanta extended their unbeaten run to 15 games to move six points behind Juventus, and two ahead of third-placed Inter Milan.

Swedish star Zlatan Ibrahimovic turned back the clock with a double as AC Milan beat 10-man 2-1 Sassuolo to move fifth ahead of Roma and Napoli and into the Europa League berths.

Atalanta had won six successive games since the league resumed after the coronavirus lockdown before drawing 2-2 with Juventus, and were held 1-1 at Verona last time out.

The Bergamo side have 74 points let's talk about the match.

SERIE A STANDINGS (TOP FIVE)										
TEAM	P	w	D	L L	G/D	PTS				
JUVENTUS	34	25	5	4	36	80				
ATALANTA	35	22	8	5	51	74				
INTER	34	21	9	4	38	72				
LAZIO	34	21	6	7	32	69				
MILAN	35	17	8	10	11	59				
• •										

overtaking their previous best haul of 72 during the 2016-17 season. Atalanta coach Gian Piero Gasperini was banished from the sidelines after a spat with counterpart Sinisa Mihajlovic before the break, with the Bologna boss receiving a yellow card.

It was the second red card in recent weeks for Gasperini who has been showing signs of frayed nerves before his side meet Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League last eight next month. "I didn't deserve to be expelled,"

fumed Gasperini afterwards. "But

on the pitch, then we'll have 12 days later to choose what kind of work to do to prepare for the Champions

League. Bologna, in tenth, battled after their 5-1 defeat against AC Milan last time out with Musa Barrow missing a double chance against his parent side.

SERIE A TOP FIVE SCORERS								
Cristiano Ronaldo	(Juventus)	30						
Ciro Immobile	(Lazio)	30						
Romelu Lukaku	(InterMilan)	21						
Francesco Caputo	(Sassuolo)	19						
Joao Pedro	(Cagliari)	18						

Muriel came off the bench after the break and picked up a cross from fellow Colombian Duvan before the break. Zapata to score his 18th goal this season and 11th off the bench.

win over 16th-placed Udinese, but more than one goal in a Serie A it depends on Inter Milan, who are game for the first time in eight

failing to beat Fiorentina at the San Siro on Wednesday.

Outside the Champions League places, Stefano Pioli's Milan extended their unbeaten run since the return with a seventh win in nine games.

"I was already seeing the team improve before the lockdown, then we grew a lot," said Pioli, who has been given a two-year contract extension until June 2022

"We're doing good things, but it is not over yet," added Ibrahimovic. "We are still in the running to reach our goal. Fifth place is what we want, but the qualifiers are fine too.'

Ibrahimovic nodded in Hakan Calhanoglu's cross after 19 minutes and added a second just

The 38-year-old, who helped Milan to their last Serie A title Juventus can seal the title with a back in 2011, savoured scoring

# Time for Tigers to start stirring?

**WHAT TO WATCH** 

NABID YEASIN

Since the postponement of the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) in mid-March in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, uncertainty is all that has swirled around Bangladesh cricket.

From the postponements of five bilateral series to cricketers being holed up in their homes, everything had come to an unprecedented standstill.

There have however been developments in the past few days with a number of cricketers resuming individual training -- a test run being monitored by the BCB -- following the board's decision to make training facilities available for interested cricketers. The ray of hope for resumption brightened on Monday, when BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury cleared the order of priorities regarding possible upcoming tours and series.

Will Bangladesh be able to return to the field this year? Nothing is yet certain, but going by what the BCB said, a return to cricket now seems more imminent and the players can at least now see a clearer picture, if not having a specific set target in mind while training.

"Actually, we do not have much time if we plan to resume cricket this year. There are a few steps. A few cricketers have already started practising individually. So, the next major step will involve how we can bring all the players or at least the national cricketers back to the field," Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, who worked at the BCB in many capacities before resigning last year, said.

"It may not be possible to immediately start playing cricket, but if we can get players together then they can do fitness work like running and practising batting and bowling by rotation. The next challenge would be creating a secure environment for players who return to training and enabling them to do skills training or play practice matches, maintaining safety measures," said Fahim.

Even though the cricketers had been maintaining fitness on their own or by following the BCB-made workout plans at their homes for the past few months, the biggest concern for players has been their skills training that they missed out on during the enforced break.

Experienced cricket coach Mohammad Salahuddin said the most important thing for the players now is to return to proper training and for the board to ensure a safe

"Players never forget their skills. They may however take some time to regain their rhythm. It has been a long time since everything was halted. The most important thing now is to return to full-fledged training. I believe that the BCB is capable of maintaining everything and of creating a bio-secure environment for at least the national players. And I think there is no point being afraid anymore as players need to adapt to the situation and get back to training. So, there is no point in waiting anymore," said Salahuddin.

Even national selector Habibul Bashar asked the players not to dwell on the negatives and to just return to playing whenever the opportunity of playing a series or tournament arrives.

"It is now just important to start playing. don't want to ponder on the negatives like not having proper preparation or not playing cricket for a long time. If we get the chance to play then that will be the biggest positive for us. I think we should be positive about it and start playing whenever we get the opportunity," said Bashar.

With the BCB now actively thinking about resuming cricket and given the hurried nature in which developments may occur amid the pandemic, the one certainty amid all the ambiguity is that the players have to start thinking about training as if matches are just around the corner.



Mbappe commits future to PSG

## Day seeks a glimpse into booters' psyche

#### Anisur Rahman



in mid-March and players, especially those in the national team, have been adhering strictly to the training schedule set by national team coach Jamie Day following the announcement of the resumption of joint qualifiers for 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup.

Footballers have been

confined to their respective

homes for four months since

the coronavirus outbreak

The booters have been regularly posting videos and photographs to a WhatsApp group closely monitored by Day. Ahead of the start of national camp from August 7 at the Sara Resorts in Gazipur, Day last week asked all national players to fill up a form containing numerous questions, including

what they believe their weaknesses strengths, and motivations to be alongside family and other information.

The players submitted their answers by the July 17 deadline as Day was very eager to get information. The 40-yearold discussed how to fill up the forms with his players and requested them to communicate with local coach Masud

Parvez Kaiser if anyone had trouble.

"It was interesting for me to answer those questions," Tapu Barman told The Daily Star. "I think the coach will analyse our mental strength, weaknesses and the weakness towards our family because we have to stay away from our family for four months due to the World Cup Qualifiers. Jamie wants to know everything before the start of training so that he can take proper steps player-by-player during the training camp.

The centre-back informed that a proper mindset, tactical knowledge, compassion, control over body and ball, long throws, long passes and headerswere his strengths while laziness, physical

fitness, impatience and a short temper were his weakness.

The lad from Narayanganj also mentioned his motivation for playing football, citing self-determination, family inspiration, public expectations, internal impetus and the achievements of many successful footballers.

However, goalkeeper Ashraful Islam Rana provided three answers for every questions.

"I think the mental power, self-confidence and hard work are my major strengths while operating with my left foot, judging crosses and desserts are my weaknesses.

Rana's motivation for playing is to become a member of a SAFF Championshipwinning team, helping the national team rise up in the FIFA rankings to between 150 and 160 and seeing the country's football

> become the most popular sport within his playing career.

Like Tapu and Rana, all other players answered the questions and Jamie now has all the necessary information and he can identify the areas he need to emphasise.

"We spoke to the players so we could assess how they were feeling and what their aspirations are for the future," Jamie told

The Daily Star about the questionnaire's purpose. "We can set targets for each player throughout the year which will hopefully help them improve," said Jamie.

Assistant coach Masud Parvez Kaiser explained further: "It is part of team building. It also has a psychological aspect. We believe the players filled it up after thinking a lot. So when they wrote down their strongest as well as weakest points, they must remember to improve their weakest points in the future. This initiative will boost up the players to overcome their respective weaknesses and become stronger," Kaiser said, adding that another reason behind it was to keep the players' focus on football.



Paris Saint-Germain captain Thiago Silva waves to the adoring crowd prior to his last appearance for the French champions at the Parc des Princes in a friendly match against Celtic on Tuesday. The 35-year-old Brazilian is expected to leave the club soon and end a 12-year journey with Le Parisiens. PHOTO: REUTERS

#### AFP, Paris

Kylian Mbappe said on Tuesday he would remain 00 with French champions Paris Saint-Germain next season "whatever happens" despite constant LIGUE 1 speculation over his future.

"I'm here. I'm part of the project for a fourth year," Mbappe, 21, told BeIn Sport during half-time of PSG's 4-0 win over Celtic in a friendly played in front of around 5,000 fans at the Parc des Princes. "The club's 50-year anniversary is an important one in the eyes of the club, the supporters, of everyone, so I will be here whatever happens.

"I'm going to try and bring back trophies with the team and give the best of myself," added Mbappe.

'Kylian has a contract with us, we're not ready to sell him. He is super important, he's a key player, our player. It's a gift to work with him," said PSG coach Thomas Tuchel.

"It's super. There's a really nice connection between him and Neymar. It makes it fun for everyone. It's a real strength for PSG. It's great like that."

Mbappe opened the scoring for PSG against the Scottish champions in the first minute after he was played in behind by Neymar. The Brazil added a second with on 25 minutes in PSG's final tune-up ahead of the French Cup final against Saint-Etienne on Friday. Ander Herrera made it 3-0 shortly after half-time and Pablo Sarabia grabbed a fourth with a sweetly-struck volley from Marco Verratti's lofted pass.

## 'The whole spectacle made me uneasy'

Archer's agony over ban and backlash

Agencies



Pacer Jofra Archer has been cleared to return to the England camp after his biosecure bubble breach, but admitted he has struggled to find motivation and lashed out at the attention his transgression has received.

Archer was ruled out of the second Test against the West Indies on the morning of the match after it was revealed he had breached England's strict biosecurity protocols by travelling to his home between the first and second Tests.

"We knew we had to go to Manchester via certain points. I didn't. To me, home is home. A safe place. I picked some stuff up, dropped some stuff off. It was no big deal," Archer wrote in his column with UK tabloid The Daily Mail.

Archer spent five days in isolation -- allowed out of his hotel room only for solitary fitness sessions -- but has rejoined the squad after twice testing negative for Covid-19.

"This whole week has been extremely tough



and to spend five days in isolation has given me a lot of thinking time on where I am at.

"To be stuck in a hotel room in Manchester was hard. You know you cannot focus on the game being played on the other side of the bedroom curtains and it was frustrating not being able make an impact on the field.

"I found I was struggling for motivation in the circumstances when it came to returning to bowling in the nets.

"When I walked outside of my room for the first time since being placed into self-isolation .. I heard the cameras clicking with every single step I took.

The whole spectacle made me feel uneasy ... I haven't committed a crime and I want to start feeling myself again."

Archer's comments come as England head coach Chris Silverwood ponders a headache for the deciding Test against the West Indies. England levelled the three-Test series 1-1 with a 113-run win at Old Trafford, with the third Test to be played at the same venue starting Saturday.

Silverwood now has a fully fit contingent of fast bowlers to choose from for the deciding Test, with Archer seen as a likely starter, creating a squeeze between Jimmy Anderson and Stuart Broad, while Mark Wood, Chris Woakes and Sam Curran have all staked claims over the two Tests

"It's never easy, and you're always going to get push back, but you try to be as honest as possible," Silverwood said.



The Daily Star

SHAF



# **Tidal surges** hamper life in 6 villages

The coastal areas in Khulna's Koyra upazila remain waterlogged since

Amphan hit two months ago

#### DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Even two months after the cyclone Amphan, some six villages in Khulna's Koyra upazila are still under three to four feet of water, preventing villagers from returning to their homes and livelihoods.

Last week, this correspondent visited some of these villages in Uttor Bedkashi union, situated about 12 kilometres from Koyra Sadar union.

The lone road that connects the two unions is totally broken, so an alternative 20km route had to be used.

Showing the water on the inundated road, Abdul Satter, a local van driver, said daily tidal surge pushes saline water through the broken parts of the embankments along the rivers.

In some places, the three to five feet tidal waves spill over the embankments that have eroded over the years to a height of just two feet.

The villages become inundated in chest-deep salt water, which gets trapped and can hardly recede before the next high tide.

Roads and homesteads are slowly eroding, as the soil loses its compactness due to the waterlogging. "This has been going on every day during high and low tide since Amphan.'



DER

**GUINNESS** 

RECOGNIZES

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A woman eats her meal, sitting on a stool on the flooded floor of her home, while her son eats on the bed. Due to poor drainage, rainwater has seeped inside many homes in Dakshin Rayerbag in the capital, causing immense sufferings to the residents. The photo was taken yesterday.

рното

AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Floodwater inundates more areas

**Erosion hits Tangail** protection dam

#### STAR REPORT

Flood water has triggered erosion in some places, while fresh areas have been inundated in few regions intensifying public sufferings.

In Tangail, erosion hit on the Tangail town protection embankment at several spots in Sadar upazila due to huge current on the Pungli river, a branch of Jamuna.

About 20 meters stretch of the important embankment at Pachh Bethoir

## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES Hundred injured in city clashes

July 23, 1972

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Shamsuddoza Sajen

#### PM ADVISED GALLBLADDER **OPERATION**

A medical investigation reveals that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

has been suffering from a stone in the gallbladder, according to a health bulletin issued today by the personal physician of the prime minister. To prevent recurrence of the pain owing to the stone, it has been advised that an operation should be undertaken at an early date. The prime minister, whose general health condition is absolutely normal, is quite fit for an operation, adds the bulletin. BCL INFIGHTING FOLLOWING ANNUAL CONFERENCE About 100 persons are injured in two separate clashes in the today. The first clash took place at noon in the stadium area and the second one near Curzon Hall at about 6:00pm. Prominent among those who were injured are organising secretary of Bangladesh Awami League Abdur Razzaque MCA, former vice president of Ducsu ASM Abdur Rab and former central secretary of Ducsu Abdul Quddus Makhan. Three journalists, including two press photographers, were assaulted while covering the clash.

## Malaysia spares 27 Rohingyas from caning AFP, Kuala Lumpur

A Malaysian high court yesterday spared 27 Rohingya Muslim refugees from Myanmar from caning, their lawyer said, setting aside a lower court's sentence following an outcry from human rights activists.

The Rohingya men were among 40 refugees convicted last month by a magistrates court on the northwestern islan

## Giant meteor shower 'hit Earth and Moon' 800m yrs ago



A giant meteor shower bombarded Earth and the

Moon 800 million years ago with more than 30

times the force of the asteroid strike that killed the

by the Kaguya lunar orbiter and found that an

enormous asteroid -- at least 100 kilometres (60

miles) in diameter -- broke up and plunged into

the Earth-Moon System, having a profound impact

Earth is roughly once in 100 million years, and

The probability of an asteroid that size hitting

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Japanese scientists examined images taken

dinosaurs, new research showed Tuesday.

## Brave cop saves lives of 3 kids

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi On Monday

morning, police constable Atikur Rahman single -

handedly saved three boys from drowning in the Hoja river of Rajshahi's Durgapur upazila.

For setting the 'rare humanity example of and bravery', Rajshahi Superintendent of Police Md Shahidullah (SP) rewarded Atik with a certificate and Tk 30,000 in cash at a simple function at the district SP's office yesterday.

Atik alone volunteered to rescue, while hundreds of people were watching the boys struggle in the strong currents, the SP said.

"We are proud of him; he has brightened our faces. We expect all police members to think like him and volunteer to establish humane societies across the country," the SP said, adding that the district SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Sabrina JKG convener, not chairman Say detectives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday found JKG Health Care documents which showed that Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury was the convener of the organisation and not its chairman.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police, which is now investigating the case, said they will submit the charge sheet very soon in JKG's Covid-19 test report scam case.

We did not find any SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

area under Gala union in Sadar upazila was damaged on Tuesday morning. Cracks were also created at several other places on the embankment.

If the important embankment is collapsed anyhow, the district town and a part of the adjacent Basail upazila will be flooded.

While visiting the spot, this correspondent saw the Water Development Board was trying to check the erosion on the embankment dumping GEO bags.

Imdadul Haque, a sub-divisional engineer of WDB in Tangail, who was supervising the works, told The Daily Star that the embankment was damaged due to SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Bangladesh Chattra League today brought out a rally from Suhrawardy Uddyan as part of their programme of the three-day annual conference. The rally was passing through Bangabandhu Avenue with full-throated slogans in favour of Mujibbad and against foreign 'isms'. The Rab-Siraj group of Chattra League at that time was holding a discussion at Paltan Maidan. The activists from Paltan pandal raised slogan against Mujibbad and in favour of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

of Langkawi for entering Malaysia by boat without a valid permit. All 40 were also sentenced to seven months' jail.

AFP, Paris

on life on our planet.

Muslim-majority Malaysia has long been a favoured destination for Rohingya seeking a better life after escaping a 2017 military crackdown in Myanmar and, more recently, refugee camps in Bangladesh. But Malaysia, which

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



**PRAYER TIMING JULY 23** Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esh AZAN 4-15 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-15 JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58

#### SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDAT

## 3 killed in 'gunfights' with law enforcers

#### STAR REPORT

Three suspects were killed in what law enforcers said were gunfights in the capital, Cox's bazar and Bogura early yesterday.

Company Commander Salauddin of Rab-1 said drug peddler Ripon Hawlader, 35, was shot dead during a "shootout" between gang members and officers in the capital's Dakshin Khan area around 1:30am.

Tipped off about the presence of suspects at Asian City Gate-2, Rab men raided the area and got shot at by the suspects.

The officers then retaliated, causing a "gunfight", Salauddin added.

Ripon got shot while the others fled, he said, adding that doctors declared him dead when he was taken to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

Ripon was accused in at least 16 cases, Salauddin claimed.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Trucks are parked on the road in front of Jatrabari fish wholesale market in the capital, hampering traffic movement. The drivers park their vehicles there, even though it is not a designated parking area, and the authorities apparently could not care less. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## 'Unprecedented escalation' in **US-China row**

Beijing fumes as Washington abruptly orders it to close consulate in Houston

AGENCIES

Beijing yesterday reacted strongly after Washington abruptly ordered China to close its consulate in Houston and accused it of ramping up spying operations, dramatically escalating diplomatic tensions between the feuding superpowers.

China quickly vowed to retaliate as the two countries squabble over a slew of issues ranging from trade to the coronavirus pandemic -- and China's policies in Hong Kong, Xinjiang and the South China Sea.

Washington "abruptly demanded" closure of the Houston consulate on Tuesday, China's foreign ministry said, calling the move an "unprecedented escalation." The editor of an official Chinese media outlet said China had been given 72 hours to do so. A source said Beijing was considering shutting the US consulate in Wuhan in retaliation.

'We have directed the closure of PRC Consulate General Houston in order to protect American intellectual property and Americans' private information," State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus told reporters during a visit by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to Denmark.

She added that under the Vienna Convention, states "have a duty not to interfere in the internal affairs" of the receiving state, but there were no further details about the reasons behind the decision.

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