

Forget differences

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MUIJIB'S MESSAGE TO INDIRA
 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has sent a message of "warmest regards" to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi whom he also says: "May I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to you and your government for arranging so speedily my journey from Dhaka to London."
SOVIET LEADERS WISHES SPEEDY RECOVERY

The Soviet Union today offers "best possible treatment" for Bangabandhu either in Dhaka or in the Soviet Union. This is communicated to Bangabandhu by the Soviet Ambassador to Bangladesh VP Popov through a message from the leaders of the Soviet Union.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad informs that the Soviet leaders in their message expressed their personal concern at Bangabandhu's illness and wished his speedy recovery.

SOURCES: July 27, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

No new int'l

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 course and rescinded the decision.

That measure had been seen as a move by Trump to put pressure on educational institutions that are adopting a cautious approach to reopening amid the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Trump is eager for schools at all levels to reopen with in-person classes as a sign of a return to normality as he fights an uphill battle for re-election in November.

He is pushing for this even though the virus is out of control in some states, with the US death toll a world-high of more than 144,000.

His administration is leaving it largely up to states themselves to figure out how to open schools safely.

There were more than one million international students in the US for the 2018-19 academic year, according to the Institute of International Education.

Many schools depend heavily on the tuition paid by those students.

Most US colleges and universities have not yet announced their plans for the fall semester but Harvard has said all its classes for the 2020-21 academic year will be conducted online, "with rare exceptions."

AL leader

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 After recording statements, the magistrate sent them to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj.

SM Miraj Al Mahmud, a CID inspector, lodged the case against the two brothers under the money laundering act with Kafrul Police Station on June 26.

On June 7, police arrested nine people, including Sajjad and Rubel, from different parts of Faridpur town for their alleged involvement in attacking a house of one Subal Chandra in the town's Goalchamat area on May 16.

According to the case statement, the two amassed huge amount of wealth after they won contracts from various government departments in the district, including LGED, BRTA, and roads and highways, through manipulation since 2010.

They were also allegedly involved in drug trading and land grabbing.

They own 23 buses, several trucks and a number of luxurious cars.

5 die

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 and breathing problems in the last two days.

The dead are Abul Bashar, 70, and Mir Hossain, 55, both from Cumilla's Monohorgonj upazila, and Ator Ali, 85, from Laksam upazila.

Hospital sources said the death toll from novel coronavirus-like symptoms at the hospital has crossed 200 since the pandemic hit the district in April.

In Patuakhali, two people died from coronavirus-like symptoms yesterday morning.

One of the deceased was Altab Mridha, 61, a resident of Tengrakhali village in Patuakhali Sadar upazila. He breathed his last at Patuakhali General Hospital at 10.15am.

Dr Abdul Matin, superintendent of the hospital, said Altaf was admitted to the hospital on Friday evening with Covid-19-like symptoms, including shortness of breath.

Samples were collected from his body before he was buried at his family graveyard in the afternoon.

In Baulal upazila, Sekandar Ali, 65, died at the upazila health complex around 9:15am, said Akhtaruzzaman, medical officer at the health complex.

The deceased was from Diyara Kachua village in the same upazila.

Sources at the health complex said Sekandar's relatives took him to the health complex around 9:00am. He was suffering from fever and shortness of breath.

Samples were collected from his body for Covid-19 testing.

According to statistics of Patuakhali civil surgeon's office, 27 people have died from novel coronavirus in the district so far.

[Our correspondents from Cumilla and Patuakhali contributed to this report.]



Labrador sniffing dog 'Lotta' is ordered by trainer Sina Knisel to search for a sample at the training site for sniffing dogs of German Army (Bundeswehr) in Daun, Germany, on Friday. The Bundeswehr sniffing dogs school and the veterinarian university of Hanover are developing a training programme to sniff out the coronavirus disease with dogs at airports, border crossings and other highly frequented places.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Public loses faith in govts

FROM PAGE 12
 prime minister's approval rating has shrunk from a positive seven percent to a neutral zero, the poll found.

People who participated in the survey -- 1,000 per country polled -- generally believed the coronavirus to be more widespread, and more deadly, than official figures show.

Nearly a third of the world's 15.8 million coronavirus infections have been registered since July 1, while the total death toll crossed 640,000.

The United States remains the hardest-hit nation, on Friday reporting its second straight day of more than 70,000 new cases and over 1,000 deaths as the virus takes hold in the country's south and west.

A similar resurgence in Europe has prompted the World Health Organization to sound the alarm over the spread, as Britain joined France, Germany and Austria in tightening rules on mask-wearing as well as

rolling out greater testing. 'WARTIME MODE' New outbreaks continue to wreak havoc elsewhere around the world, with fresh clusters emerging across Asia.

South Korea yesterday reported its highest infections figure in nearly four months, and in Vietnam the first locally-transmitted case in nearly 100 days was detected.

Authorities in China said Friday they would introduce a new wave of testing in the port city of Dalian, home to about six million people, after fresh infections were detected there.

The local government's health commission said the city must "enter wartime mode" to prevent any spread as it announced on-the-spot nucleic acid tests for people using the subway system and new lockdowns for some communities.

That did not prevent the Chinese Super League kicking off behind

closed doors yesterday with the players of Guangzhou Evergrande and Shanghai Shenhua holding a minute's silence for the victims of the pandemic.

However festivities were called off in Sao Paulo, the biggest city in hard-hit Brazil, which indefinitely postponed its 2021 carnival because of the pandemic.

Europe accounts for a fifth of the world's case count so far.

Outbreaks have been seen recently in the Spanish regions of Aragon and Catalonia where officials have reintroduced curbs on daily life and urged Barcelona residents only to leave home for essential trips.

'THE WORLD IS INFESTED' French Prime Minister Jean Castex said on-the-spot testing would be rolled out for travellers arriving in France from 16 high-risk countries.

Masks are now mandatory in enclosed spaces across the nation

and there are fears that the summer holiday season could see a new spike as people flock to beaches and tourist spots.

Britain on Friday also made it compulsory to wear a face covering in shopping centres, banks, takeaway outlets, sandwich shops and supermarkets.

Exceptions have been made, including for children under 11 or people with respiratory problems, but others who refuse to cover their nose and mouth in the UK risk a fine of up to £100 (\$130).

The virus has overwhelmed health systems in Latin America, with infected people sleeping in tents or cars outside hospitals in Peru's second largest city of Arequipa.

"The world is infested," said Raquel Barrera, a 28-year-old in El Salvador who has lost three brothers and both her parents to the disease in less than two months.

Children drowning, getting sick

FROM PAGE 12
 In Tangail, two children drowned in the floodwaters at Kalihat and Nagarpur upazilas of Tangail on Friday.

On the other hand, waterborne diseases, including diarrhoea, are spreading among children while extended immunisation programmes have been hampered in the affected areas of the district.

Many of them were living with their families, having taken shelter on streets and embankments, under the open sky. They have little access to nutritious food and pure drinking water.

Acknowledging the situation, Dr Mohammad Mohiuddin, upazila health and family planning officer in the worst-affected upazila in Tangail, Bhuapur, told The Daily Star that the number of child patients were

increasing at the upazila hospital.

In Jamalpur, at least 24 children have drowned in floodwaters this month, while over 250 children suffered from diarrhoea, according to local health authorities.

Besides, children living in shoal areas have been suffering from colds, cough, skin diseases and other waterborne diseases, said Dr Pronoy Kanti Das, district civil surgeon.

In Bogura, 100 families of Kanibari union under Sariakandi upazila, including 50 children, have been sheltering on a 200-metre dyke since June 26.

Nazrul Islam, 35, who has been living on the dyke, said, "Our children are suffering most. Before the pandemic and flood, they used to go to school. There was a vast char where they use to play. Now, they remain hungry most of the time.

The sanitation system is very poor and is creating an unhygienic environment all around. Most of the parents are also afraid of their children drowning in the floodwaters."

In Sirajganj, rural houses and fields went under floodwater, leaving children vulnerable to accidents when they are playing outside. A seven-year old boy drowned in floodwaters in Chauhali upazila last week.

In Thakurgaon and Panchagarh, at least 26 children have drowned in floodwaters in June and July.

Drowning has become common phenomenon in flood-hit areas so parents should be more careful at this time, said Thakurgaon civil surgeon Dr Mahfuzur Rahman Sarcar.

In Lalmonirhat, a schoolgirl in the first grade, seven-year-old Sinha Akhter, drowned in the floodwaters at Ambari village of Burimari union in

Patgram upazila yesterday.

The victim's father, Alam Hossain, alleged that a deep hole was created due to illegal lifting of stones using a dredger machine, in which stagnant floodwater had collected. His daughter drowned when she was crossing the knee-deep water to get to the road.

In Barishal, rampant erosion at many points of the river, is causing sufferings to people.

In Munshiganj, the Padma river was flowing 70 cm above the danger level at Bhagyakul point, inundating many areas.

Along with houses, a large amount of farmland and ponds have been submerged in the district.

Our correspondents from Nilphamari, Tangail, Bogura, Lalmonirhat, Thakurgaon, Pabna, and Barishal contributed to the story.

Race hots up for Indian vaccine

FROM PAGE 12
 with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV), will be tested at 12 hospitals -- including AIIMS, Delhi and Patna, and PGI Rohtak -- in 12 cities. The first phase will involve over 500 volunteers, all healthy and between the ages of 18 and 55 with no co-morbidities.

Testing of Zydus's candidate, ZyCoV-D, is currently limited to its research centre in Ahmedabad, but will be extended to multiple cities.

Covaxin trials have already begun in Hyderabad, Patna, Kancheepuram, Rohtak, and now Delhi, to be followed by Nagpur, Bhubaneswar, Belgaum, Gorakhpur, Kanpur, Goa and Visakhapatnam.

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi administered its first dose of Bharat Biotech's vaccine candidate to a 30-year-old healthy man on Friday as part of its combined phase 1 and 2 trials for the drug.

Dr Sanjay Rai, principal investigator

of the vaccine trial project at AIIMS, Delhi, told TOI, "We observed him (the 30-year-old subject) for two hours. There was no immediate side-effect." He said the volunteer has been allowed to go home for now and he will be examined again after two days. AIIMS Patna, which started human trials of Covaxin on 11 volunteers on July 15, has not encountered any major side-effects in volunteers. The results of the first dose are yet to come in.

The Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS) in Rohtak has readied 20 volunteers and administered the first dose to three people on July 17.

State nodal officer Dhruva Chaudhary said Rohtak's PGIMS and Patna's AIIMS have enrolled 20 subjects each so far.

"None of the 20 volunteers showed any adverse impact of the vaccine. We are planning to start the second phase of human trials soon," he added. Dr Savita Verma, the trial's principal investigator at the institute, said the

first batch is to be given a second dose on July 31.

Human trials at SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre in Kancheepuram, near Chennai, began on Thursday with two volunteers being administered 0.05 ml of the vaccine each. They will get the next dose on day 14.

Nagpur's Gillurkar Multispecialty Hospital and Research Centre, the only site for human trials of Covaxin in Maharashtra, is expected to start Phase 1 by "July-end or latest in the first week of August", said Dr Chandrashekar Gillurkar, the centre's director.

Bhubaneswar's Institute of Medical Sciences and Sum Hospital, a privately-run medical college, started screening prospective candidates on July 20. The actual administering of the vaccine will take some more days as the volunteer's blood samples are being sent to Delhi, said E Venkata Rao, principal investigator in the trial.

About 60 volunteers from West Bengal have applied for the Phase I

trial in Bhubaneswar, while a few have also applied for trials in AIIMS, New Delhi.

Clinical trials are yet to begin at Jeevan Rekha, a multispecialty hospital in Belgaum, about 450 km from Bengaluru, where Covaxin will be tested on around 200 healthy volunteers in and around Belgaum.

In Hyderabad, two young male volunteers aged below 30 years were given vaccine doses at the Nizam's Institute of Medical on Monday. A third volunteer (from at least 60) will be given a shot in the next two days.

Eleven volunteers from Goa received doses of Covaxin in Phase I starting at 10:00 am yesterday.

Gorakhpur's Rana Hospital and Trauma Centre is waiting for the vaccine to start human trials. "We are ready with volunteers but we have not yet confirmed how many vaccines are coming to us. We'll start as soon as the vaccine reaches us," the hospital's chief administrative officer, Venketesh Chaturvedi, said.

US unveils

FROM PAGE 12
 National Laboratory and the University of Chicago created a 52-mile (83-kilometre) "quantum loop" in the Chicago suburbs, establishing one of the longest land-based quantum networks in the nation.

The aim is to create a parallel, more secure network based on quantum "entanglement," or the transmission of sub-atomic particles.

"One of the hallmarks of quantum transmissions is that they are exceedingly difficult to eavesdrop on as information passes between locations," according to the Energy Department statement.

"Scientists plan to use that trait to make virtually unhackable networks."

The department said early adopters could include the banking and health services sectors, adding that there would be applications for national security and aircraft communications.

"Eventually, the use of quantum networking technology in mobile phones could have broad impacts on the lives of individuals around the world," the statement added.

The agency's 17 national laboratories will serve as the backbone of the coming quantum internet, which has initial government funding.

"The foundation of quantum networks rests on our ability to precisely synthesise and manipulate matter at the atomic scale, including the control of single photons," said David Awschalom, a professor at the University of Chicago and senior scientist at Argonne National Laboratory.

Dozens of prisoners escape from South African jail

AFP, Cape Town

Nearly 70 inmates staged a brazen escape from a detention centre in South Africa's wine-producing town of Malmesbury on Friday after overpowering guards, before most were re-arrested, the government said.

The inmates, who were awaiting trial, broke out around midday during routine physical exercise at the facility situated about 65 kilometres (40 miles) north of Cape Town, the Department of Correctional Services said in a statement.

"The escapees overpowered officials, took the keys and locked three officials in a cell and opened other cells before escaping through the main entrance and over the roof," it said.

Police immediately launched a manhunt and re-arrested 61 of the 69 escapees.

The centre was holding 451 offenders and there were 20 officials on duty at the time of the incident in the town surrounded by wheat and wine farms.

Int'l online scam group arrested in Serbia

AFP, Belgrade

Serbian police have arrested a group suspected of an online scam worth more than \$70 million following a joint investigation with the FBI, the interior ministry announced Friday.

Eleven people from Australia, Montenegro, the Philippines and Serbia were detained on charges that they "created, promoted and organised" 16 fake investment platforms.

They are suspected of swindling investors from all around the world who placed funds in international bank accounts connected to the group's organisers, a Serbian police statement said.

"After that, the group, on the order of the organisers, closed these fake investment platforms and after some time reopened new ones with the same practiced method," the statement said.

"There is a reasonable suspicion that the organisers and members of this group obtained illegal property worth more than \$70 million," the Serbian said.

The investigation was led by the Serbian Prosecutor's office for organised crime and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), since the group is suspected of scamming investors from Texas, among others.

Russia sending arms to Libya Claims US

AGENCIES

The United States military has said Russia appears to be sending more military equipment to its mercenaries in Libya, including in the flashpoint city of Sirte, in breach of an arms embargo.

The US military's Africa Command (AFRICOM) said on Friday there was mounting evidence from satellite photos of Moscow's military cargo planes, including IL-6s, bringing supplies to fighters from Russian private military contractor Wagner Group.

Twitter, Facebook block accounts of Bolsonaro allies

AFP, Rio De Janeiro

Twitter and Facebook suspended the accounts Friday of 16 allies of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro after a Supreme Court judge ordered them blocked as part of a probe into an alleged disinformation campaign.

Tension has been soaring between the far-right leader and the court,

which is investigating allegations that members of his inner circle ran a social media campaign to discredit the court, as well as slander and threaten its judges.

The two US social media giants are also facing increasing pressure to act more aggressively against hate speech and false information on their platforms.

Justice Alexandre de Moraes said

in his court order -- which enforced an earlier May ruling -- the accounts must be blocked to stop "the ongoing dissemination of fake news, slanderous accusations, threats and crimes" against the court.

The affected accounts include high-profile figures such as conservative former lawmaker Roberto Jefferson, business magnate Luciano Hang and

far-right activist Sara Winter.

Visitors to their Facebook and Twitter pages in Brazil, though not other countries, saw messages indicating they were blocked.

"This content isn't available right now," read their Facebook pages.

A Twitter notice explained: "Account withheld in Brazil in response to a legal demand".