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FIRST INDIAN TRAIN CARRYING CONTAINERS ARRIVE AT BENAPOLE
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INTEL ON POSSIBLE 'MILITANT ATTACK' New security alert before Eid

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The police have received intelligence that militant outfit "Neo JMB" could try to carry out attacks centring the Eid-ul-Azha.

The Police Headquarters has already instructed its various units to remain cautious about the Islamic State-inspired outfit and take necessary measures to prevent subversive acts.

The so-called IS has decided to announce formation of a new wing -- "Bengal Ulayat" -- ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha. Analysing data on militant activities at home and abroad, it was found that such a declaration is made through a subversive act, the PHQ said in its instructions.

"Neo JMB" could try to carry out subversive acts. All police units need to be on alert and take necessary measures, it noted.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Haider Ali Khan, additional deputy inspector general (intelligence and special affairs) at the PHQ, said, "We always take some preventive measures whenever there is any global development."

"The next month is August. In the past, militant outfits were found active in August. So we have stepped up security measures," he said.

The special units, including the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit, Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU) and Rab have been asked to be on alert, he said.

"We have adopted a policy of zero tolerance against militancy as per the prime minister's directives..."

According to intelligence, "Neo JMB" may choose embassies, religious institutions or police establishments as their targets.

Police officials have been instructed to beef up security, collect information on new tenants in cities, properly check identity of visitors to police installations, increase security in DMP's Diplomatic Division and religious establishments, and not to leave any police vehicles unattended, according to sources.

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Pedestrians on the footbridge near the capital's New Market jostle for space with shoppers, which makes social distancing measures to curb the spread of coronavirus near impossible. With Eid-ul-Azha approaching, hawkers have taken up space on the bridge to sell their wares. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Give drainage to Dhaka city corporations

TIB asks gov't; blames poor coordination, culture of blame for waterlogging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Waterlogging in Dhaka is turning into a severe problem due to the lack of coordination among the responsible government organisations, their unhealthy competitions and culture of blame, said Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB).

Last week, much of the capital was submerged following incessant rainfall. In many places, people were found walking in waist-deep water.

According to the anti-graft watchdog, there was a lack of coordination among the three organisations responsible, including the two city corporations and Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) in drain and waste management.

TIB asked the government to hand over the drainage

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BANGLADESH UPDATE

2,275 New cases in 24hrs

2,23,453 Total cases

2,928 Deaths

1,23,882 Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE

649,902 Deaths

16,291,257 Total cases

US AG reopens Bangabandhu killer Rashed's asylum case

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US has reopened a decades-old asylum case against Rashed Chowdhury, a convicted killer of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, keeping alive the prospect that he could be deported to Bangladesh where he has been sentenced in absentia to death.

The Politico, an American political magazine, on Friday reported that US Attorney General William Barr "quietly reopened" the case as he directed the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) on June 15 to send Rashed's case to him for review.

The document doesn't include Rashed's name, but refers to "the matter of A-M-R-C," using his full initials. A lawyer for Rashed shared the Department of Justice (DOJ) communications with Politico.

"Barr's move is the first step in a process that could result in Rashed losing asylum after more than a decade and potentially facing deportation," it says.

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No visible plan 4 months into outbreak

WASIM BIN HABIB and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Four months into the Covid-19 outbreak in the country, the government still appears to have no noticeable plan to contain the spread of the virus.

Since the first three cases were reported in the country early March, the government departments supposed to deal with the crisis have been displaying inefficiencies and lack of coordination by making the wrong decisions, often ignoring the recommendations from expert committees.

While the country is witnessing a gradual rise in the numbers of death and infection, the need to control the raging coronavirus apparently became a secondary concern for the government centring most of its activities around restructuring the health services following a series of coronavirus testing scandals.

At least 2,23,453 people in the country have tested positive for the virus, and 2,928 of them died, and the fatality rate is on rise for the last couple of days.

Against this backdrop, public health experts cautioned that the number of new cases will rise by a lot if strict and effective containment measures are not taken during the Eid-ul-Azha holidays.

The country cannot afford to repeat the mistakes made before the Eid-ul-Fitr when thousands of people left the cities for their hometowns in crammed vehicles, ignoring social distancing rules. The daily new cases spiked soon afterwards.

But things are not likely to change this time. The national technical advisory committee on Covid-19 had suggested not to let people leave Dhaka and three other major cities ahead of the three-day holiday from July 31-August 2.

But the government decided to let public transport operate, "maintaining" the health safety guidelines. In a circular issued on June 30, the cabinet division announced extending the duration of controlled movement and other restrictions until August 3.

Holidaymakers have already started leaving for their villages to celebrate the Eid with their loved ones and a massive rush is expected during the

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Another 54 die from Covid-19

Positivity rate still over 20pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The death toll from novel coronavirus infections continued to rise in the country as the health directorate reported 54 deaths yesterday.

This is the third highest single-day death toll so far.

On June 30, highest 64 Covid-19 patients died while the second highest figures were 55 on July 5 and 7.

With yesterday's figure, the death toll rose to 2,928, which is about 1.31 percent of all confirmed cases.

Like any other day, Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the Directorate General of Health Services, talked about the latest Covid-19 situation at a virtual briefing yesterday afternoon.

In the past 24 hours till

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He used power of media to build his empire

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Regent Group Chairman Md Shahed alias Shahed Karim had used the "power of media" to be on good terms with politicians, bureaucrats and law enforcers to build his criminal network, detectives said.

Shahed attended numerous talk shows on various television channels and also brought out a newspaper called "Dainik Natun Kagoj" from March 11, 2015. He needed this identity of a media person to cover up his criminal offences, they added.

Badruzaman Zillu, additional deputy commissioner of Detective Branch (DB) of police, told The Daily Star on July 21, "We did not find any godfather or political leader behind Shahed yet."

"Shahed has used his newspaper and the fame he earned by attending different talk shows to solve whatever crisis he faced."

Shahed used to visit the Secretariat regularly, and collected a press accreditation card showing his newspaper. He also managed access to various government programmes after arranging special security passes, investigators said.

Shahed established good relations with listed criminals

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Govt fixes lower rawhide prices this Eid

The government yesterday fixed the price of cattle rawhide treated with salt within Dhaka at Tk 35 to Tk 40 per square feet, down 29 per cent from last year. Outside of Dhaka, the price range is Tk 28 and Tk 32, which is 20 per cent less year-on-year. For processed skins of male goats, the price would be Tk 13 to Tk 15 (down 27 per cent), and for female goat's skins, the price would be Tk 10 to Tk 12 (down 23 per cent). The current international prices of leather and leather goods, the pandemic and the quality of rawhides were taken into consideration while fixing the prices, said Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi.

STORY ON B1



An elderly woman and her grandson navigate the flooded land on a raft fashioned out of banana trees after receiving government relief materials in Tangail's Nagarpur upazila yesterday. The recent floods that have beset many regions of the country also hit Tangail hard, with crops of over 11,000 hectares being inundated in the district.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Thousands of hectares of farmland damaged

STAR REPORT

The dreams of thousands of farmers in the flood-hit areas of northern Bangladesh have been shattered as their crops and seedbeds washed away by floodwater.

In Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts, around 40,000 farmers have been affected by the flood. Around 2,500 hectares of land have been damaged and about 20,000 hectares of arable land are still under floodwaters.

In Tangail, crops of over 11,000 hectares of land have been inundated by the flood. As a result, around 27,000 farmers will have to incur loss, agriculture department officials said.

Nurul Haque, a farmer of Salangka village in the district's Kalihati upazila, said he cultivated Aush paddy in around 22 bighas of land but all have been inundated.

Besides, seedbed of one mound of transplanted

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WALTON Smart Fridge

WORLD'S MOST SMART FEATURED REFRIGERATOR

Buying Fridge From Walton Plaza Laksm, Cumilla

Mr. Md. Yasir Miah, Father: Ali Azam, Son: Md. Arifur Rahman, South Khatun, Gata Road, Dhaka Cantonment

Buying Walton Fridge From Asa Electronics, Keranibhat, Salkania, Chattogram

Mr. Nigam Uddin, Father: Nur Ahmad, Son: Md. Arifur Rahman, South Khatun, Gata Road, Dhaka Cantonment

Buying Fridge From Walton Plaza Mirpur-10, Dhaka

Mr. Saikhan Rahman, Father: Md. Arifur Rahman, South Khatun, Gata Road, Dhaka Cantonment

Buying Walton Fridge From Sonyton Electronics, Khansama, Dinepur

Mr. Saigh Chandis Roy, Father: Hossain Roy, Kama, Malpura, Piganj, Thakurgaon

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Conditions:

- Have to complete product registration through QR code after buying Walton Fridge, Washing Machine & Microwave Oven
- This campaign is conducted by fully computerized system basis
- Digital campaign facilities will be used in case of more than 1 registration of fridge from the same mobile number in a year
- In case of cash payment, customer will be paid through cheque after deduction of 10% Tax at the rate determined by National Board of Revenue (NBR)
- The authority reserves the right to change the campaign anytime

This initiative is taken to ensure maximum customer facilities through research & development of products and digitalisation.

WALTON GROUP may be obligated for the best interest of customers.