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GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM

SHAH CEMENT

Dhaka gets first tranche of \$1b Japanese loan

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh yesterday got the first tranche of the \$1 billion loan pledged by Japan to bounce back from economic whiplash brought on by the global coronavirus pandemic. Japan joins the likes of development partners such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank International Monetary Fund and the Islamic Development Bank in rallying behind Bangladesh.

The five multilateral development lenders have altogether provided about \$2 billion in Bangladesh's efforts for economic recovery.

Japan normally provides project aid to Bangladesh and now would call the planned support as budget aid, which came after Dhaka sought help following the outbreak of coronavirus in the country in March that necessitated a two-and-a-half month-long general shutdown.

While the virus could not be snuffed out, the shutdown caused great damages to the economy.

The pandemic stands to wipe off the gains made in poverty reduction in the past decade, according to the World Bank; and as per estimates, more than 1.5 million of the poor and the vulnerable have lost their livelihoods for the shutdown.

This means the need to spend substantially on social safety net programmes and job creation has become imperative. At the same time, its purse strings have been tightened for the near-collapse of economic activities.

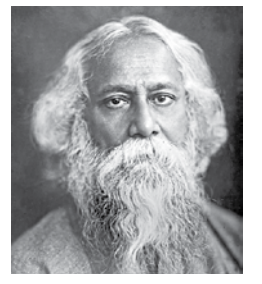
"So, Japan has committed \$1 billion to aid in economic recovery," said an official of the Economic Relations Divisions involved in the proceedings.

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What used to be a canal has become a pit of floating garbage in Nandipara of the capital's Khilgaon. Waste from a nearby kitchen market and floodwaters have been making their way into the water body for years now, turning it into a perfect breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes and more.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



Tagore's 79th anniversary of death today

BSS, Dhaka

The nation is observing the 79th death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore today recalling the great poet who did not leave any human emotion untouched in his works, especially poems and songs.

The day is being observed with limited programmes amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Rabindranath died at the age of 80 on August 7 in 1941, according to the Gregorian calendar. But his death anniversary is observed in Bangladesh on Sraban 22 of the Bangla calendar.

To mark the day, Bangla Academy, Shilpakala

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Erosion hits 10 districts as flood water recedes

STAR REPORT

With flood water receding, erosion has become devastating in 10 districts, devouring homesteads, croplands, educational institutions and other structures.

Many rendered homeless by river erosion have taken shelter on roads, dykes and other safe places for survival.

Officials of Water Development Board (WDB) said they were trying to prevent river erosion by dumping geo-bags.

Over 55 lakh people of 162 upazilas under 33 districts have so far been affected by floods, said the latest report of National Disaster Response Coordination Centre (NDRCC)

In Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, at least 4,000 homesteads and vast stretches of arable land with standing crops, orchards and bamboo clusters have so far been eroded by flood water in the last week or so.

Local WDB have identified at least a hundred spots in the two districts that witnessed serious erosion.

Meher Ali, 62, of Balapra village under Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila, said, "Our homesteads on around 12 decimal of land along with another three bighas of arable land were eroded by the Teesta on Eid

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangabandhu worried over floods

August 6, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S TALK WITH OFFICIALS

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today holds important discussions with Bangladeshi officials in London. What is discussed in the meeting cannot be ascertained but sources close to the prime minister inform that the flood situation and food problem are among the important topics. The sources say that the prime minister is very worried about the flood in Bangladesh and he has been keeping in touch with acting Prime Minister Syed Nazrul Islam and other ministers to know details and the measures that have been taken to tackle the situation.

As for Bangabandhu's health condition, the stitches from his gallbladder stone operation are likely to be removed in a couple of days, informs Bangabandhu's personal physician Dr Nurul Islam. "His condition is very good," he adds. Dr Islam hopes that Bangabandhu may leave the clinic in two to three days.

TAJUDDIN'S CALL TO CHINA

Finance and Planning Minister Tajuddin Ahmad calls upon the People's Republic of China to recognise the reality of Bangladesh. He says that China had made a mistake by not supporting the liberation struggle. "Even then, we don't hold any grudge against them," he adds.

On aid from capitalistic countries the minister says it is advisable that Bangladesh takes it as less as possible. The finance minister

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KL to deport Bangladeshi worker over TV interview

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi expatriate Rayhan Kabir will be deported by Malaysia over the country's attorney general's chambers completes looking into the investigation papers of the case, Malaysia's Immigration Department Director General Khairul Dzaimie Daud said yesterday.

He said the department was made to understand that the investigation papers regarding Rayhan's case had been handed to the AGC, reported The Star.

"Once the AGC is done, we will deport him to Bangladesh.

"And he will never step foot in Malaysia again as he will be blacklisted," he said at a press conference.

Asked how soon it would take to send Rayhan back to Bangladesh, Khairul said the

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AI helps doctors fight Covid in Brazil



AFP, Sao Paulo

Doctors in Brazil, the country with the second-highest number of cases and deaths in the coronavirus pandemic, have a new tool in their fight against Covid-19: artificial intelligence to detect infections.

Under-testing remains a huge problem in the sprawling South American country, but AI is helping fill the gap, thanks to a system called RadVid-19 developed using algorithms from German company Siemens and Chinese firm Huawei.

Brazil has been hit harder by the pandemic than any country except the United States, with nearly 2.8 million infections and 95,000 deaths.

Experts say the numbers would be much higher if there were more widespread testing.

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3 schoolgirls raped in Ctg

Two arrested, sent to jail
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A metropolitan magistrate court in Chattogram yesterday sent two men to jail on charges of raping three schoolgirls in the town's Khulshi area.

The accused are Mohammed Liton, 37, of Noakhali, and Sohel Rana Raju, 28, of Cumilla, said police.

Pranab Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Khulshi Police Station, said the duo kept the girls confined at a house in Khulshi area on July 29 and raped them overnight.

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 6

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-47 8-15
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

The wait of centuries is over

Says Modi as temple construction begins in Ayodhya

REUTERS, Ayodhya

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday launched the construction of a Hindu temple on a site that has been contested by Muslims for decades in a dispute that has sparked some of country's most bloody communal violence.

The Supreme Court ruled last year that Hindus, who believe the site in the northern town of Ayodhya is the birthplace of Lord Ram, a physical incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu, be allowed to build a temple there, ending years of litigation.

Modi, whose Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) campaigned for more than three decades for the temple, unveiled a plaque at the site in an elaborate ceremony to inaugurate construction.

"The whole country is thrilled, the wait of

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Phool Khatun, 70, tries to have a roof over her head again after the mighty Jamuna devoured her house on Char Chunduni in Tangail's Bhuapur upazila. After her husband died many years ago, she had already been struggling to make ends meet because of floods, and now river erosion has only added to her woes.

PHOTO: SHEIKH ENAMUL HAQ

Global Covid deaths top 700,000

Data shows one person dying in every 15 seconds as hotspots see record cases

AGENCIES

The global death toll from the coronavirus surpassed 700,000 yesterday, according to AFP and Reuters tallies, with the United States, Brazil, India and Mexico leading the rise in fatalities.

Nearly 5,900 people are dying every 24 hours from COVID-19 on average, according to Reuters calculations based on data from the past two weeks.

That equates to 247 people per hour, or one person every 15 seconds.

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 701,112 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to AFP. At least 18,572,720 cases of coronavirus have been registered in 196 countries and territories. Of these, at least 10,917,200 are now considered recovered.

On Tuesday, 6,784 new deaths and 252,972 new cases were recorded worldwide.

Based on latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were United States with 1,302 new deaths, followed by Brazil with 1,154, and Mexico with 857.

The United States is the worst-hit country with 156,830 deaths from 4,771,846 cases. After the US, the hardest-hit countries are Brazil with 95,819 deaths from 2,801,921 cases, Mexico with 48,869 deaths from 449,961 cases, Britain with 46,299 deaths from 306,293 cases, and India with 39,795 deaths from 1,908,254 cases.

Despite the consistent death toll, US President Donald

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