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Your Right to Know



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**BANGLADESH UPDATE**

**2,611**  
New cases in 24hrs

**2,55,113**  
Total cases

**3,365**  
Deaths

**1,46,604**  
Recoveries

**725,863**  
Deaths

**19,636,484**  
Total cases

ONLINE CLASSES BY PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

## Many students out of the frame

Poor internet coverage, lack of access to digital devices, floods are to blame

STAR REPORT

Most of the major public universities are taking online classes with only half or even fewer students mostly because of poor internet coverage in rural areas and people not having access to a digital device.

Besides, attending an online class is probably not the first thing in the mind of many who lost almost all of their belongings in the flood over the last few weeks.

As if to make matters worse, mobile data has become more expensive with the new taxes. Internet service providers said the students who spent Tk 1,000 for the internet two months ago, now have to pay Tk 1,300-Tk 1,400 for the same volume of data.

Bokhtiar Ahmed, associate professor

of anthropology at Rajshahi University, said the problem of digital divide has just become more pressing since the classes moved online.

Dhaka University (DU) started online classes from July.

At its masters programme, the university's public administration department saw an average attendance of 50 percent, officials said.

Fourth year philosophy classes, which have over 150 students, were attended on an average by 60 students. And only one fourth of the students attend the master classes of Islamic studies department.

Meanwhile, students in large parts of the country are faced with more pressing problems.

"There is water everywhere in my village

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A woman standing on her rooftop watches people on a boat pass by what should be her back yard. Everything downstairs is soaking wet as floodwater ravages the neighbourhood in Makkahnagar area of Savar. Thousands of villages have gone under water and millions have lost everything over the past few weeks. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

She helped change the political history

Says PM *Fazilatunnesa Mujib*

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangamata Sheikh



Fazilatunnesa Mujib's decision to reject Bangabandhu's release on parole changed the course of the country's political history.

"The most desirable thing regarding my mother's contributions to the political arena was that my mother had taken correct decisions at the right time. But I'm sorry to say many big leaders had failed to do it or approached the wrong decision at that time," she said.

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CASE AGAINST SHIPRA

## Two witnesses 'forced' to sign on blank papers

MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAT, Cox's Bazar

Witnesses in a narcotic case, filed against Stamford University student Shipra Debnath, claimed they were forced to sign on blank papers.

Shipra and two other students of Stamford University -- Shahedul Islam Sifat and Tahsin Rifat Nur -- had gone to a cottage with slain ex-army major Sinha Mohammad Rashed Khan. Police arrested Shipra and Rifat from Nilima Resort on August 1, recovered liquor and marijuana and filed a narcotics case against them.

Meanwhile, police and witnesses appear to be at variance over what was seized from the cottage that night.

According to the First Information Report, filed by Sub-Inspector (SI) Shafiqul Islam of Himcharai police outpost, they recovered five bottles of foreign liquor, one litre of local liquor and a small pack of marijuana from the D-1 building of Nilima Resort around 12:45am on August 1.

Md Lokman Khan, caretaker of the resort and a witness, on the other hand, said police also seized Tk 2 lakh cash, a

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ADP IMPLEMENTATION IN 6 YRS

## Health ministry fares badly

REZAUL KARIM BYRON and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Calls pour in to increase budget for the health sector but the health ministry, despite being a top recipient of the government's development expenditure, could not even reach the national average of ADP implementation rate in the last six years.

As a result, the allocation to the sector go down in the revised Annual Development Programme (ADP) every year. Still, the ministry fails to meet its expenditure target.

Experts see a lack of capacity to run projects as planned, skilled manpower and corruption as other reasons behind the situation. They said the health sector was already in a fragile state with systemic weaknesses and the Covid-19 pandemic only exposed it.

Until the fiscal 2016-17, Annual Development Programme (ADP) was allocated to the Health and Family Welfare Ministry as one unit. After that, the development fund has been allocated separately to two divisions of the ministry -- Health Service Division (HSD) and Medical Education and Family Welfare Division.

The HSD was the seventh highest ADP recipient among all ministries and divisions in the last fiscal year, but it was a low performer among 15 top ADP-recipient ministries and divisions, show relevant documents.

When the average ADP implementation rate was 80.45 percent in the just-concluded fiscal year, the progress of HSD was only 73.96 percent. For the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division, it was 64.19 percent.

Of the 15 ministries and divisions, three ministries -- Railways (57.39 percent), Primary and Mass Education (71.89 percent) and Housing and Public Works (70.51 percent) -- performed even more poorly, show ADP

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Relations with Delhi, Beijing must not be compared

Says foreign minister *UNB, Meherpur*

Mentioning that Bangladesh emphasizes on its development through cooperation and collaboration, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said the country's relations with India and China should not be compared.

"Bangladesh's relations with India is rock-solid and

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## No alternative to healthcare reform

Say speakers at an online discussion, blast govt for its handling of the pandemic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Covid-19 outbreak has exposed the ineffectiveness of the country's healthcare system which needs reforms, experts said at a discussion yesterday.

By imposing liability on the people for not maintaining health safety rules, the government has attempted to avoid its responsibility, they said at the online discussion.

The event titled "Health Rights During Corona" was organised by Committee for

the Protection of Fundamental Rights.

Speaking at the discussion, eminent jurist Shahdeen Malik said, "Coronavirus has shown us how bad is the condition of our healthcare system. Although there is a huge lacking [in the system], the government is trying."

Criticising the role of the Awami League as the ruling party, he said, "If this health minister [Zahid Maleque] is the fittest health minister, then it proves that Awami League as a party is in a very bad situation."

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The locked gate of Muroichhara village in Moulvibazar's Kulaura. By strictly following the coronavirus restrictions, residents of most of the 90 such indigenous villages in the region have managed to control the infections. Researchers in many countries found that indigenous peoples are at higher risk from infectious diseases like Covid-19. Today is the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

Competition stiff for getting into reputed colleges

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

A tough competition awaits students who are seeking admission in class-XI at reputed colleges in the capital while many educational institutions in rural areas might struggle to get students.

The first phase of online form collection for admission begins today amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Meritorious students with good grades from across the country usually come to Dhaka and try to get enrolled in renowned colleges in the capital.

Form distribution for admission at

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## Examples worth following

How 90 indigenous villages in Sylhet region keep coronavirus at bay

MINTU DESHWARA


No Covid-19 patients have been found so far in 90 punjis (villages) in Sylhet, with each completely isolating itself from outsiders and following strict hygiene protocols.

In the rest of the division, 8,497 Covid-19 cases were reported and 153 patients died as of yesterday.


Dr Anisur Rahman, assistant director of the health department in Sylhet division, told this correspondent that there have been no Covid-19 cases so far in the punjis unlike the rest of division.

He termed the complete lockdown and hygiene protocols being

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Bangladesh Bank  
Head Office  
Dhaka



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**For further queries, please contact**  
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