

Rizvi criticises

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He claimed that the direct and indirect remarks of the writer about Khaleda has created a negative impression in the public mind.

"It is tantamount to yellow journalism and praising of the incumbent 'midnight government'," he said.

Rizvi also alleged that Anam's writing about the August 21 grenade attack reflected nothing but the prime minister's and her cabinet members' propaganda and falsehood.

"Vision and mission of his [Anam's] writing was to publish false and baseless stories against the BNP," he added.

The BNP leader said it seems the only target of Anam is to please the government.

The party alleged that Anam, along with some other civil society members, was engaged in a deep conspiracy to establish an unconstitutional 1/11 government, killing democracy. Rizvi said when the army-backed caretaker government assumed office, Anam wrote an article claiming his success in bringing in the then Fakhruddin government to office.

The Daily Star published articles welcoming the army-backed undemocratic and autocratic government, he said.

Rizvi alleged that Anam played an important role in creating grounds to arrest political leaders, publishing false and baseless reports against them.

"We think his article cries crocodile tears for democracy and is a new edition of yellow journalism," he said.

Edn boards

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Pradip said they would also discuss how to hold JSC and equivalent exams at schools.

About 13 lakhs students are expected to sit for HSC and its equivalent exams, which are supposed to be held at over 9,000 educational institutions under nine general, one madrasa, and one technical education boards.

The government closed down all educational institutions from March 17 and the shutdown was eventually extended until October 3.

Education Minister Dipu Moni on several occasions said that the government is considering cutting down exam days and subjects of the HSC and equivalent examinations.

She said the HSC exams would be taken 15 days after the coronavirus situation returns to normalcy.

Academic activities of about four crore students are being hampered due to the crisis posed by the Covid-19 outbreak.

LGED cancels

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He was cancelled and 13 more have been recommended for cancellation for the same reason, he added.

The total worth of the 25 construction projects was Tk 882,199,769, of which Tk 187,310,000 have been withdrawn by the construction companies, said LGED sources.

Among the 25 packages, 70 to 90 percent works have been completed for four projects but the works of 14 projects have not started yet, they added.

The LGED authorities sent two letters to the construction companies before cancelling the project contracts but those returned without any response.



Palestinians protesting against Jewish settlements and the normalisation of ties with two Arab states, scuffle with Israeli settlers in Asira al-Qibliya in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Ramp up efforts to get vaccine

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coronavirus cases and 22 deaths. With this, the number of cases rose to 345,805 and death toll to 4,881.

Bangladesh is all set to start the much-talked-about clinical trial of the Chinese shot by the end of this month.

The International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) will run the human trial of the potential vaccine, developed by China's Sinovac Life Sciences Co Ltd, on 4,200 healthcare professionals.

In yesterday's meeting, the experts discussed the government's Covid-19 tests, accommodation of medical professionals and awareness campaigns.

It also called upon the government to chalk out elaborate deployment plans on how to preserve and disseminate the vaccine.

It urged the government to keep

in mind during procurement that some vaccines require a temperature-controlled supply chain to store, manage and transport.

There should also be arrangements for follow-up of any adverse reactions to the vaccine, the committee said.

It recommended including appropriate and skilled government organisations in the vaccines' trial process along with icddr,b. Institutions like Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research could be involved, it said.

RAMP UP COVID-19 TESTING

The committee said the number of tests was inadequate because they were done through RT-PCR facilities only.

"The committee believes that carrying out simultaneous PCR, antigen and antibody tests will play an important role in tackling

the Covid-19 situation," said the committee.

"There is a possibility of detecting more infection if the number of Covid-19 tests is increased."

The NTAC urged the government to find the problems for which the number of tests has been falling recently. Increasing the testing facilities will give a clearer picture of the situation, it said.

The healthcare workers and their families are at risk of getting infected, it said, calling upon the government to arrange safe accommodation for the healthcare workers.

People seem to care little about maintaining health safety guidelines, it said and recommended intensifying awareness activities among people to ensure their active participation in the prevention of Covid-19.

The committee also advised the government to keep Durga Puja celebrations on a limited scale to

contain further spread of the virus and urged people to maintain the health guidelines properly during the celebrations.

NEW CASES

The Directorate General of Health Services on its online dashboard yesterday said 12,730 samples were tested across the country in 24 hours.

The death rate stood at 1.41 percent while the positivity rate was 12.11 percent.

However, the total positivity rate stands at 19.25 percent, it said.

Some 1,923 Covid-19 patients were reported recovered in 24 hours taking the total number of recoveries to 2,52,335 and the recovery rate to 72.97 percent.

Among those reported dead yesterday 16 were male and six were female. Two were aged between 41 and 50 years, eight between 51 and 60 and 12 were above 60 years old.

Kuwait court denies bail to MP Shahid

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He was accused of charging each foreign worker, mostly from Bangladesh, up to 3,000 dinars in exchange for taking them to Kuwait. Many of the workers, however, alleged they were not provided with the jobs or wages that were promised. Much of the wages they got was also appropriated by Papul's company.

Papul has confessed to bribing Kuwaiti officials with millions of dollars for recruiting Bangladeshi workers and getting contracts for his company.

Sources said Papul, who went to Kuwait nearly 30 years ago as a worker and later started business, earned a large amount black money. He had several companies, mostly cleaning, and had contracts with Kuwaiti government agencies.

Al Qabas reported that the Public Prosecution demanded maximum penalties for the accused in the case, confirming that it has strong evidence of the allegations made in the case.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) opened an inquiry into the allegation that Papul amassed Tk 1,400 crore by trafficking people into Kuwait and laundered the money to different countries.

The ACC said the inquiry was to look into the charges of loan forgery and money laundering by the NRB Commercial Bank director Shahid Islam Papul, his wife Selina, their daughter Kazi Wafa Islam and Selina's sister Jesmin.

On July 17, the ACC imposed a ban on the foreign travel by all of them saying that the embargo would

be implemented for Papul after his return to the country.

He had no involvement in politics back home before 2016.

Sources say he invested crores of taka to prevent other potential candidates in Laxmipur-2 constituency and became an independent MP in the 2018 elections. His wife Selina Islam also became an MP from women's reserved seat in the same manner.

KUWAIT GOVT REFUSES CONTRACT EXTENSION

Kuwait's Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) continues its refusal to extend contracts for the companies co-owned by Shahid Islam Papul.

Al Qabas reported that CAPT rejected a request by one of the ministries concerned with security to extend a contract for cleaning services and waste transportation at a value of

up to 600,000 dinars for six months.

The agency aims to close the file of Papul's company at the Public Authority for Manpower due to accusations against his companies. Four other contracts with Kuwaiti government departments related to cleaning services were also close to expiry and will not be extended.

Leaders of the Bangladesh community said nearly 10,000 Bangladeshi workers employed by the companies may lose jobs.

The government agencies for which Papul's company worked were, therefore, concerned as to how they would find alternative workers as a tendering process and hiring foreign workers required a lengthy process. Thus, the government buildings may remain without cleaning workers, Al Qabas reported.

UNROD chief

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OVER 8 LAKH TONNES FOOD GRAINS WILL ARRIVE BY NOV

UNROD Chief Victor B Umbricht calls on Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Gono Bhaban today. Talking to newsmen after his meeting with the prime minister, the UNROD chief says that he has discussed matters relating to the food situation and transport facilities with particular reference to shipping.

He further informs that 17 lakh tonnes of food grains have already arrived in Bangladesh by early September out of a total commitment of 27 lakh tonnes. Eight lakh tonnes of food grains will arrive by the end of November, he adds.

HIGH PRICE OF KEROSENE

Kerosene is being sold in the city at a very high price for the last week or so. The price of kerosene in the city shops varies between Tk 4 and Tk 6 per gallon against the government's fixed retail price of Tk 2.75.

Kerosene is also not available in the ration shops. When contacted, government sources deny any shortage in the supply of kerosene. According to them, the supply of kerosene in the last few months has been much more than the corresponding period in previous years.

DUTCH FOKKER ARRIVES

With the arrival of the first of two Fokker Friendship aircrafts presented by the government of the Netherlands at Dhaka Airport today, the fleet of Bangladesh Biman aircraft is raised to three. The Fokker Friendship is officially handed over to General MAG Osmany, minister for shipping, IWT and airways by CS Schneider, charge d'affaires of the government of the Netherlands in Bangladesh. The second Fokker Friendship from Amsterdam is expected to arrive in Dhaka by September 26.

SOURCES: September 20, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Man stabs wife

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members, police said Shila was married off to Swapan, a Saudi returnee, about six months ago.

Soon after the marriage, Shila came to know that Swapan was a drug addict and that he was married before, police said, adding that she went to her father's house as he started torturing her for dowry.

Contacted, Saidur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Mirzapur Police Station, told The Daily Star that Shila's uncle filed a case with the police station against Swapan yesterday.

He will produce before the court today, he added.

Taiwan

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US Undersecretary for Economic Affairs Keith Krach arrived in Taipei on Thursday for a three-day visit, the most senior State Department official to come to Taiwan in four decades - to which China had promised a "necessary response."

The US State Department has said Krach, who arrived in Taipei on Thursday afternoon, is in Taiwan for a memorial service today for former President Lee Teng-hui, who was revered by many on the island and internationally as the father of Taiwan's democracy.

But Beijing has watched with growing alarm the ever-closer relationship between Taipei and Washington, and has stepped up military exercises near the island, including two days of large-scale air and sea drills last week.

With a US presidential election looming in November, Sino-US relations are already under huge strain from a trade war, US digital security concerns and the coronavirus pandemic.

Taiwan said 18 Chinese aircraft were involved yesterday, far more than in previous such encounters.

"Sep. 18, two H-6 bombers, eight J-16 fighters, four J-10 fighters and four J-11 fighters crossed the midline of the Taiwan Strait and entered Taiwan's southwest ADIZ," the defence ministry said in an English-language tweet.

"ROCAF scrambled fighters, and deployed air defence missile system to monitor the activities." The ROCAF, Taiwan's air force, has scrambled frequently in recent months in response to Chinese intrusions.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who has led the Trump administration's rhetorical offensive against China, accused Beijing of bluster when asked about the Chinese activity.

"We sent the delegation to a funeral, and the Chinese have apparently responded by military blustering. I'll leave it at that," he told a news conference on a visit to Guyana.

The ministry showed a map of the flight paths of Chinese jets crossing the Taiwan Strait midline, which combat aircraft from both sides normally avoid passing through.

Taiwan's Liberty Times newspaper said Taiwanese jets had scrambled 17 times over four hours, warning China's air force to stay away.

It also showed a picture of missiles being loaded onto an F-16 fighter at the Hualien air base on Taiwan's east coast.

কমার্শিয়াল স্পেস ভাড়া

বাকামার নুরজাহান টাওয়ার, অভায়নিক ডেভেলপমেন্ট সহ ওক্স, ২বাং, বেশকিছু ডেজার ব্লক, রিসিডেন্স কালেক্টর সহ তাৎক্ষনিক ব্যবহার উপযোগী ১০০০ বর্গফুটের অফিস (৯ম তলা) ফোন নংঃ ০১৯১১৩৪৬২০

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Europe gears up for fresh

FROM PAGE 12

testing, it also shows alarming rates of transmission across the region," Kluge told an online news conference from Copenhagen.

Human

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Nefud Desert that shed new light on the routes our ancient ancestors took as they spread out of Africa.

Today, the Arabian Peninsula is characterised by vast, arid deserts that would have been inhospitable to early people and the animals they hunted down.

But research over the last decade has shown this wasn't always the case -- due to natural climate variation it experienced much greener and more humid conditions in a period known as the last interglacial.

"At certain times in the past, the deserts that dominate the interior of the peninsula transformed into expansive grasslands with permanent freshwater lakes and rivers," explained study co-author Richard Clark-Wilson of Royal Holloway.

FBI fears clashes as US polls

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protesting against police mistreatment of blacks in Kenosha.

And at the end of August in Portland, an activist aligned with the leftist Antifa movement shot dead a supporter of a far-right Patriot Prayer group during a protest.

The Antifa shooter, Michael Reinhoel, was killed by police days later.

Wray told lawmakers that, aside from "lone wolf" attackers inspired by foreign jihadist groups like Islamic State, white supremacists remain the biggest domestic terror threat.

"Within the domestic terrorism bucket as a whole, racially motivated violent extremism is, I think, the biggest bucket within that larger group," he told the committee.

"Within the racially motivated violent extremist bucket, people subscribing to some kind of white supremacist ideology is certainly the biggest chunk."

Wray did point out that while white supremacists have been responsible for most of the lethal terror attacks inside the United States in recent years, there has been a noteworthy shift this year, with attacks by "anti-government, anti-authority" actors.

That includes the May murder of two policemen in California by a follower of the extreme right, often heavily armed "Boogaloo Bois" movement.

In the same hearing, National Counterterrorism Center Director Christopher Miller confirmed that

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E-mail to: nsuhr@northsouth.edu