

BANGLADESH UPDATE



1,383
New cases in 24hrs



3,56,767
Total cases



5,093
Deaths



2,67,024
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE



989,055
Deaths



32,498,682
Total cases

Gear up diplomacy to expand trade

PM asks diplomats at virtual discussion commemorating Bangabandhu's historic Bangla speech at UNGA in 1974

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked Bangladesh's diplomats to reinforce economic diplomacy for expanding trade and business to achieve economic self-reliance for the country.

"Diplomacy has transformed into almost economic diplomacy. Now we need to see how we should expand trade and business to achieve economic self-reliance by maintaining good relations with all, to achieve development, and bring peace through collaborating with one another. We will have to carry out diplomacy in such a way," she said.

The PM was addressing a discussion virtually from the Gono Bhavan.

The discussion was arranged by the foreign ministry at the Foreign Service Academy in the city commemorating the historic Bangla speech by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the United Nations General Assembly in 1974.

"In today's world, the responsibility of our diplomatic missions has also changed. Now it is rather economic diplomacy, not only political diplomacy," said the premier.

She said diplomats should join the Bangladeshi missions abroad after having proper training at the Foreign Service Academy.

"I would expect those who are going to join work in our diplomatic missions to receive proper training here," she said, adding that not only diplomats but also all staff of the missions and their spouses should be given training at the academy.

Referring to the contributions of Bangladesh to the United Nations peacekeeping missions, Hasina said Bangladesh is always ready to establish peace.

"Since we are dependent on each other, we expect cooperation from all. We are also ready to cooperate with anyone, if needed. Bangladesh always wants peace to prevail across the world."

She said the Bangladesh forces, including army and police, have been playing a special role in the UN peacekeeping missions to check conflicts in various countries, sacrificing lives in some cases.

Hasina said Bangladesh won the

membership of the United Nations in a short time after its independence, which was a big success in the diplomacy of Bangabandhu. Bangladesh became a member of almost all international organisations, including the UN and the Commonwealth during his tenure.

Mentioning that the maiden speech of Bangabandhu in the UNGA is still relevant, she said, "If we review the speech the Father of the Nation delivered in the UN on September 25, 1974 [also on Friday], we would see we're still dealing with the same issues in the international arena."

In his speech, Bangabandhu had focused on the environment, how to prevent damages caused by natural disasters, changing the fate of the poor, ensuring human rights, justice and socio-economic development, Hasina said, adding that he had called upon the whole world to protect the people from diseases.

Talking about the Covid-19 pandemic, she said her government has placed the highest importance on food production as famine may be seen in the world due to the novel coronavirus.

She said the government had been making efforts to produce food as much as possible and distribute the foods properly, provide food assistance to the poor and overall maintain the food security.

At the function, Hasina also opened the newly constructed Foreign Service Academy Building digitally in Sugandha on Bailey Road in the capital.

The PM unveiled the covers of two books titled "Bangabandhu, Sheikh Hasina and the United Nations: Bangladesh at the World Stage" and "Bangabandhu: The People's Hero" published by the foreign ministry on the occasion of the Mujib Borsho (Mujib Year).

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen and UN Resident Coordinator in Dhaka Mia Seppo spoke at the discussion meeting.

Sugandha was the first Gono Bhavan after the country's independence, from where the Father of the Nation had led his government and used to formulate and conduct foreign policy matters, among other important issues.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opens the newly constructed Foreign Service Academy Building on Bailey Road in the capital yesterday. The premier inaugurated the building virtually from the Gono Bhavan, marking the historic Bangla speech by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the United Nations General Assembly in 1974.

PHOTO: PID

Cox's Bazar police

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Meanwhile, Nur Mohammad, former inspector general of police (IGP), told The Daily Star yesterday that such decisions of transferring a huge number of police members are usually made when police personnel of a particular area are either found involved or feared to have been involved in crimes.

"But it is not possible to change [their] character only through transfer orders," he observed.

Their supervisors, including the superintendent of police (SP), the additional SP and the deputy inspector general concerned, must perform their duties with utmost professionalism, he said.

"The supervisors need to be vigilant. They have to oversee and take information round the clock about what is happening. Only then the real change will come," added the former IGP.

In another development, the police administration has already come up with posting orders for 1,507 police members – from the ranks of inspector to constable – against the posts which fell vacant following the transfers.

The police members have started to join work in Cox's Bazar, said PHQ sources.

According to the relevant wing of the PHQ, 43 inspectors, 10 traffic inspectors, 193 SIs, eight sergeants, five TSIs, 183 ASIs, 19 ATIs, 46 nayeaks and 1,000 constables will join police in the district in phases.

Till yesterday, around 1,340 police personnel, including eight officers-in-charge, 29 inspectors and constables have reported to the Chattogram Range Deputy Inspector General's office for joining work in Cox's Bazar.

The police personnel were posted in different districts, including Dhaka. They were sent to Cox's Bazar in 15 police vans, Anwar Hossain, DIG of Chattogram range police, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Among the newly appointed eight OCs of the district, Sheikh Munir-Ul Gias is going from Satkhira, Md Hafizur Rahman from Sirajganj, Ahmed Sanjur Morshed from Sunamganj, Mohammad Abdul Hai from Naogaon, Shaker Mohammad Jobaer from Gopalganj, KM Azmuzzaman from Nilphamari, Mohammad Saifur Rahman Mazumdar from Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Mohammad Jalal Uddin from Moulvibazar.

Talking to this newspaper yesterday evening, Md Hasanuzzaman, superintendent of police of Cox's Bazar, said they received around 400 police officials till 5:00pm.

"We hope that all the 1,340 police officials will arrive within midnight. They will take charge immediately after reaching here," he added.

Earlier, the home ministry and the PHQ in separate orders had transferred the previous superintendent of police, additional superintendent of police and assistant superintendent of police of the district.

Besides, the Chattogram Range DIG and commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police were also transferred.

All these developments came in the last couple of weeks.

Sources said the authorities would transfer the officials of eight other districts under Chattogram range in phases as a part of the "correction campaign".

Protect our planet

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Thanking the UN secretary-general for his concern regarding the impacts of climate change, Hasina pointed out that Bangladesh has some ideas and experiences to share on adaptation and resilience.

"We have prepared Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 to deal with the challenges of climate change and water management."

The PM said the government has built 4,291 cyclone shelters and 523 flood shelters in the country, while 56,000 volunteers are available to facilitate preparation prior to any cyclone.

"That's why we have joined the 'REAP' [Risk-informed Early Action Partnership] initiative which aims to make one billion people around the

world safer from disasters by 2025," she added.

In this context, she mentioned Bangladesh is the current chair of Climate Vulnerable Forum, while Global Centre of Adaptation's regional office was set up in Dhaka recently.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres convened the event and it was moderated by British journalist Femi Oke. Guterres delivered the introductory remarks at the 90-minute programme.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Canadian PM Justin Trudeau, Italian PM Giuseppe Conte, President of Chile Sebastian Pineria Echenique, Nigerian President Mahamadou Issoufou, Fijian PM Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, President of the European Commission Ursula von

der Leyen, and Bhutanese PM Lotay Tshering spoke at the high-level event.

HASINA TO ADDRESS UNGA TODAY

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will address virtually the 75th UNGA in New York today.

"The prime minister is scheduled to deliver her pre-recorded country statement at the UNGA general debate in the UN Headquarters approximately at 10:00am New York time [Bangladesh time 8:00pm] tomorrow [today]," PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told BSS.

Hasina will deliver the speech in Bangla like she did in the past following the footsteps of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, he added.

None will be left behind

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workers are very high at this stage and we are working very closely with the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh to start increasing the number of scheduled flights."

The Saudia Airlines boss said they would start operating flights for the returnee migrant workers from October 1.

But they are yet to fix the number of flights, he said, adding that it would be made public when the flight schedules are finalised.

Tariq refuted the allegation circulated in different media outlets that Saudia airlines were selling tickets at high prices and through the black market.

"I would like to emphasise that Saudia is maintaining fares which are reflected in the airlines' reservation system," he said.

He also denied the allegation of charging additional fees for re-issuance

of return tickets to the migrant workers.

Home to more than 22 lakh Bangladeshis, Saudi Arabia is also the prime destination of Bangladeshi migrant workers and the biggest remittance-generating country for Bangladesh.

Many Bangladeshi expatriates came to the country on vacation from Saudi Arabia before the closure of flights amid the pandemic.

They remained stranded as only a few chartered and specially arranged flights were operated between the two countries amid the pandemic.

The Bangladesh government suspended regular flight operations with all countries, except China, from mid-March to contain Covid-19 spread.

At present, 14 airlines, including 12 foreign air carriers, are operating 48 weekly flights in eight countries from Bangladesh, sources at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport said.

Selim siphoned

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"Since it will take longer to find the evidence of Selim's money and properties abroad, we have submitted a charge sheet against Selim and the other accused only for laundering Tk 13.28 crore," Special Superintendent of CID's Financial Crime Unit Mostafa Kamal told The Daily Star yesterday.

Officers also pressed charges against Selim's South Korean associate Youngsik Lee, and Bangladeshi associates Akhteruzzaman, Roman, Arifur Rahman and Chowdhury Golam Molla, said CID officials.

Four of them have been arrested and two are on the run.

The investigator found nine businesses, a villa in Thailand and two bank cheques of Tk 6 crore. Besides, 83 bank accounts of the six accused were frozen.

Mostafa Kamal said the investigation officer of the case CID Inspector Shahidul Islam Khan have the permission to launch an independent inquiry to find evidence of Selim's wealth and properties overseas.

Selim also has bank accounts in the USA and has properties in Bangladesh, Kamal added.

Officers are not sure whether Selim has properties in London and Japan.

While he was remanded by the CID, Selim told investigators that after he went to Japan in 1988, he worked at a hotel.

He also claimed that he started a hotel business there, but could not

show any document to support his claims, CID officials said.

Selim even stopped paying the rent for his office and home and used to scare the landlords, officials added.

On September 28 last year, Rab arrested Salim at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport while he was attempting to flee the country.

Based on information, the Rab conducted a 20-hour raid at his Gulshan office and Banani residence that day.

During the raid, the law enforcers seized around Tk 29 lakh in cash, currencies of 23 countries worth Tk 77.63 lakh, 32 cheque books of three banks, five credit cards, two pieces of spotted deer hide and 48 bottles of foreign liquor.

Rab investigators found that at least Tk 9 crore was deposited in a month to a single payment gateway used for online gambling, with the amount shared equally between Salim and his North Korean partner Doo. The duo had few more online payment gateways.

Born in Dhaka in 1973, Selim went to Japan in 1988 with his brother.

He later moved to Thailand where he met Doo.

It was Doo's idea to open an online gambling business in Bangladesh, officers said.

They opened two gaming sites, P24 and T21, in Bangladesh in 2018 and since then Selim had been running them. He was also one of the first providers of B2B live casino solutions in Bangladesh.

Race much tighter in key swing states

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among likely voters in Florida and North Carolina. Biden led by 1 percentage point in Arizona, 3 points in Pennsylvania and 5 points in Wisconsin and Michigan.

All six are critical to determining who wins the Nov. 3 election, given their population size and potential to swing to either party. In each of the states, the difference between the two candidates was near or within the poll's sampling error, meaning that neither candidate has a clear advantage.

Nationally, the latest Reuters/Ipsos conducted on Monday and Tuesday put Biden's lead over Trump at 8 percentage points among all likely voters.

Taken together, the state and national surveys show the 2020 election may wind up with the same mixed result as 2016, with the Democrats receiving a majority of the votes but the Republicans winning the Electoral College and the White House.

While Biden has an early advantage in winning the national popular vote, Trump has nearly the same chances of winning the battleground states, and with them enough electoral votes for a second term.

The polls also found some important shifts in opinion this year within the US electorate.

Biden, who emerged from a diverse field of Democratic presidential contenders on the promise that he was the most electable candidate, has been chipping away at Trump's dominance over one of the largest voter blocs in America: whites without a college degree.

Trump does not appear to have been penalized by swing-state voters as much as he has been nationally for his response to the novel coronavirus pandemic. Swing-state voters are also more likely to see Trump as better than Biden at managing the US economy.

Support for Biden among non-college whites is up 10 percentage points nationally, when the results of Reuters/Ipsos polling this month are compared with support for Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016 exit polls.

When asked whom they would support for president, 50% of likely non-college white voters said they were supporting Trump, while 41% were backing Biden. Four years ago, 61% of non-college whites voted for Trump and 31% for Clinton.

This shift is happening too among non-college whites in battleground states. In Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, four in 10 non-college likely white voters said they were backing Biden this year, which is up from 2016 when Clinton was supported by about three in 10 non-college whites in those states.

The latest Reuters/Ipsos national poll shows that 56% of the country disapproves of Trump's response to the novel coronavirus pandemic, including 43% who "strongly" disapprove of his performance.

But Trump's handling of the coronavirus does not appear to be hurting him that much in a number of swing states, even with new cases on the rise in Arizona, Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

Trump is also more likely to be perceived in swing states as superior to Biden on the economy and job creation, a message that Trump has

spent millions of advertising dollars reinforcing with voters this year in competitive states.

Trump on Thursday, while campaigning in the battleground state Florida, said the country's economic prosperity was riding on the outcome of his Nov. 3 showdown with Biden.

"If you want to save America, you must get out and vote," he told thousands of cheering supporters, most not wearing masks during the coronavirus pandemic, at the outdoor airport rally in front of Air Force One in Jacksonville, Florida.

PUTIN PROPOSES ELECTION NON-INTERFERENCE PACT WITH US
Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday proposed concluding a pact with the United States against interfering in one another's elections, just weeks before the US heads to the polls.

Western countries have for years accused Russia of using hackers and internet trolls to sway the outcome of elections, and US intelligence officials have said that it is once again manipulating social media in favour of Trump as it did in 2016.

In a Kremlin statement, Putin called for the two countries to "exchange guarantees of non-interference in each others' domestic affairs including elections, including with the use of information and communication technologies".

He also called for a global pact agreeing not to use such methods to deal "the first blow" in conflicts.

The Kremlin has denied allegations of election meddling and interference and instead accused the Western leaders of waging a disinformation campaign against Russia.

Over 80pc of Britons not heeding Covid-19 self-isolation rules: study

REUTERS, London

Over 80% of people in Britain are not adhering to self-isolation guidelines when they have Covid-19 symptoms or had contact with someone who has tested positive, a study has found.

A majority were also unable to identify the symptoms of Covid-19, the respiratory disease caused by the new coronavirus.

The research raises major questions about the effectiveness of England's Test and Trace programme as Prime Minister Boris Johnson seeks to keep

a lid on rising infection numbers with new restrictions.

The research, led by King's College London, found that only 18.2% of people who reported having symptoms of Covid-19 in the last seven days had not left home since the symptoms developed, and only 11.9% requested a Covid-19 test.

It also found that only 10.9% of people told by the NHS Test and Trace scheme to self-isolate after close contact with a Covid-19 case had done so for 14 days as required.

The government last week

introduced fines of up to 10,000 pounds (\$12,780.00) for breaking self-isolation rules, and are offering a 500-pound support payment to low-paid workers who lose income from quarantining.

The researchers said that financial support for self-isolating could encourage adherence.

"Our results suggest that financial constraints and caring responsibilities impeded adherence to self-isolation, intending to share details of close contacts, and quarantining of contacts," they wrote.

Turkish FM blasts Pelosi's 'ignorance' about democracy

AFP, Istanbul

Turkey's top diplomat yesterday condemned US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's "blatant ignorance" for suggesting President Donald Trump was trampling on democracy as if he were in Turkey.

Trump sparked outrage in Washington by indicating on Wednesday he might not honour the results of the November 3 US presidential election.

His comments drew harsh criticism from top Republicans and Democrats including Pelosi, who warned the US leader: "You are not in North Korea, you are not in Turkey, you are not in Russia, Mr. President."

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu took aim at Pelosi on Twitter yesterday, firing off messages in both Turkish and in English.

"@SpeakerPelosi's rise to become Speaker of the House is what is truly worrisome for American democracy, given her blatant ignorance," he wrote in English.

"You will learn to respect the Turkish people's will," he said, also tagging Trump's Twitter handle.

Life goes on

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They had endured untold hardships when this foundry, among around 20 in the area employing more than 5,000 such workers, had been closed during the countrywide shutdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While the wider world battles fears of Covid-19, these workers fear not being able to earn the Tk 10,000-15,000 they get per month working in harsh conditions that would necessitate masks even without Covid-19.

But they are seen without masks or any other protective equipment when working in close proximity with each other. Even when eating, they do so with hands covered in a thick film of metal shavings.

"Allah protects us poor folk from coronavirus," they said when this photographer asked if they were afraid of working without protection.

21 more die

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The position is one step ahead of Iraq and one step behind the United Kingdom.

Meanwhile, 1,932 Covid-19 patients have recovered in the same 24 hours.

The total number of recoveries stands at 2,67,024 and the recovery rate at 74.85 percent.

Among those reported dead yesterday 14 were male and seven female. All of them died in hospitals, according to the press release.

Seven of them were aged between 41 and 50 years, four between 51 and 60 and 10 were above 60 years.

So far more than half of the deceased have been over 60.

One each of the deceased yesterday was from Rangpur, Khulna and Rajshahi divisions, two from Chattogram and the rest 16 were from Dhaka.

Dhaka division saw 49.54 percent of the deceased.

As of yesterday noon, a total of 2,762 patients were undergoing treatment in general beds and 260 in ICU beds in Covid-19 dedicated hospitals across the country.