Take measures to prevent rape

PM asks admin officials to create public awareness

Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the administration to take extensive measures against rape and raise public awareness against such incidents in the society.

"We will have to take extensive measures to resist such rape incidents. And after all, we need to create public awareness," she said.

The PM was virtually addressing the concluding ceremony of the 70th Foundation Training Course for fresh cadre service officers. She joined the programme from the Gono Bhaban through a video conference.

participants The connected from Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) at Savar and the offices of seven divisional commissioners.

Hasina said the government has amended the Women and Children Repression Prevention (Amendment) Act 2000 and an ordinance has already been promulgated to check rape incidents.

She said the rape incidents that take place these days are propagated widely. "The more it is propagated, the more its prevalence increases."

Noting that people have the right to get justice, the PM said she knows what is the pain of not getting justice. Hasina said she did not

have access to justice after the assassination of her father, mother, brothers and others on August 15, 1975 as indemnity was given to the

She said this culture (of injustice) should not remain in the country. "It has been possible to try the killers only because I could come to power."

Hasina said the government wants people not to fall victims to any injustice.

Focusing on the government's vision and plans to develop the country, she asked the new cadre officers to take Bangladesh forward being imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War.

She said as the government wants to make Bangladesh a developed country by 2041, the young generation, including the trained officers who would be running the country till that time, should take the country forward in such a way that Bangladesh does not fall back any more.

The PM asked the new officers to work for the welfare of the people.

Hasina said the government wants to develop every village equipped with all civic amenities so that rural people get urban facilities.

She put emphasis on modern training for government employees so that they can cope with the pace of the

Public Administration Secretary Shaikh Yusuf Harun delivered the welcome speech, while BPATC Rector Md Rakib Hossain, on behalf of the PM, distributed certificates among the

Cadre officers Monia Sirat and Mehedi Hasan Kawsar, on behalf of 663 participants of the six-month foundation training course, spoke at the function.

Death penalty

It marked the first conviction since the government this week introduced the death penalty for rape.
Gang-rape already carried the death

sentence, but rape by a single offender had previously been punishable only by life imprisonment.

Bachelet cited the law change in Bangladesh, but also calls in a number of other countries to impose the death penalty for rape.

She highlighted calls in Pakistan for public hanging and castration of rapists, and a law introduced in the northwestern Nigerian state of Kaduna last month imposing surgical castration followed by execution in rape cases where the victim is under 14.

The main argument being made for the death penalty is for it to deter rape but in fact there is no evidence that the death penalty deters crime more than other forms of punishment," Bachelet

"Evidence shows that the certainty of punishment, rather than its severity, deters crime.'

She stressed that in most countries, the key problem is that victims of sexual violence do not have access to justice in the first place."

This was due to a range of factors, including "stigma, fear of reprisals, entrenched gender stereotypes and power imbalances," she said, stressing that handing the death penalty to perpetrators would not remove those

EC sues MP Nixon Chy

Charbhadrasan upazila parishad Faridpur.

According to the case statement, Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, 42, called Atul Sarkar, deputy commissioner of Faridpur, over mobile phone around 8:00am the previous day and expressed his displeasure over the appointment of more magistrates.

On the day of the election, AC (Land) of Bhanga arrested an activist of Nixon's for violating the election code of conduct.

For this reason, Nixon then used abusive language directed in a phone conversation with Jasmin Sultana, Charbhadrasan Upazila Nirbahi

Nixon also violated the election code of conduct by participating in a victory rally after the announcement of Charbhadrasan upazila election results.

Nazneen Khanum, officer-in-charge of Charbhadrasan Police Station, who accepted the case, said they would

investigate the matter. The district Awami League unit expressed regret to the deputy commissioner (DC) of Faridpur for Nixon's unedifying behavior on Wednesday. Members of Bhanga upazila AL unit also formed a human

chain demanding his punishment. However, at a press conference, Nixon Chowdhury denied the allegation of using abusive language and sought legal action against the Faridpur DC,

claiming that he acted in favour of On October 10, a by-election was BNP candidate KM Obaidul Bari in the held for the post of chairman of Charbhadrasan by-election.

UNO SUES SUSPENDED MAYOR IN In an unrelated development in Pabna,

Bera Upazila Nirbaĥi Officer Asif Anam Siddiquee filed a case against the suspended mayor of Bera municipality for assaulting him in the upazila law and order committee meeting.

The UNO filed a case with Bera Police Station on Wednesday night, police said.

Talking to The Daily Star, the Bera JNO said suspended mayor Abdul Baten proposed to include the unlawful allotment of Kazirhaat and Nagarbari ghat to Bera upazila parishad so that they could be leased out.

When the UNO denied to sign the proposal, the mayor allegedly misbehaved with him during the meeting on Monday. He was suspended the following day.

Later, the UNO filed a case with Bera

police station on Wednesday night accusing Abdul Baten of assaulting him and obstructing the regular work of government.

Officer-in-charge of Bera Police Station said the case was recorded and they were investigating the incident. Police are trying to nab the accused, the

OC added. Abdul Baten, also the younger brother of lawmaker of Pabna-1 Samsul Haque Tuku, in a press conference earlier refuted the allegation of assaulting the UNO.

5 to die for gang-raping

FROM PAGE 1

Sagar took the girl to Elenga by a CNG-run three-wheeler when she reached in Shaldair area on her way to the madrasa on January 15 the same year. He later took her to the house of Rajan, his friend and another of the accused, at Charaljani in Madhupur on the same day.

Sagar, by the four other accused, gave the girl pressure for marrying him. The girl, however, refused for marriage after came to acknowledge that Sagar is a Hindu man.

Then Sagar raped the girl at the house

on the same night. They later took the girl beside the

In the morning (January 18), the girl, with the help of locals, went to

her family members went there and took her to the house.

The girl filed a case against the five people with Bhuapur Police Station on the same day.

Moni Rishi, one of the accused, on the same day and Sujon gave confessional statement to the court under Section 164 on the next day (January 19) admitting his involvement with the

Later the four other accused were

After investigation, police submitted a charge sheet against the five. Later, the trial of the case was started with framing charges against the accused on October

The PP expressed his satisfaction over the verdict saying that the victim

got justice. On the other hand, Golam Mostofa, one of the lawyers of the accused, said they were not satisfied over the verdict and they would appeal to the higher court against the verdict.



E Biegun exchange gifts as the latter calls on the PM at the Gono Bhaban yesterday.

Extend help in Rohingya FROM PAGE 1 Insanul Karim briefed reporters after the said he has already discussed the issue of economic cooperation with Bangladesh

Quoting Biegun, Ihsanul said the

United States also wants a permanent solution to the protracted Rohingya crisis. "We will continue to extend our

support to Bangladesh on this issue," the press secretary quoted Biegun as saying. Hasina mentioned that over 1.1 million forcibly displaced Rohingyas are living in Bangladesh at the moment,

which is an extra burden on the country. "The problem has been created by Myanmar and we are holding dialogues

with them ... they should take their citizens back," she said. The PM said the Rohingya issue is a social problem, and a large number of the displaced Myanmar nationals are living at camps in Cox's Bazar.

Some quarters could mislead them and get them involved in anti-social activities. So, we need their immediate repatriation to their homeland," she said.

The premier and the US deputy secretary of state discussed the issue of bringing back Bangabandhu's convicted fugitive killer Rashed Chowdhury, now in the USA.

Biegun informed that the case was being reviewed by the US attorney general's office.

He said the visa services for Bangladeshis students would be reopened once the Covid-19 situation

The US deputy secretary of state, who arrived in Bangladesh on Wednesday,

officials. "The US government will closely

work with Bangladesh for promoting economic and trade relations," he said. He discussed with the PM the coronavirus situation in the USA and said

that over two lakh people have died there after being infected with the deadly virus. "We are close to making vaccines available and hopefully those will be available in the market in the next two

weeks," he said. According to Biegun, several US companies are manufacturing the vaccines as widespread vaccination will start from next year.

The US deputy secretary of state highly appreciated Bangladesh's tremendous economic stability and progress under the leadership of Hasina. He said Bangladesh is attracting

foreign investment in huge volumes. The United States wants to further strengthen cooperation with Bangladesh in the energy sector, he added. Hasina said her government is setting

up 100 special economic zones across the country to attract more investment from home and abroad as well as generate employment.

She also briefly highlighted her government's steps to contain the Covid-19 alongside keeping the wheels of the country's economy moving.

US Ambassador in Dhaka Earl R Miller and PM's Principal Secretary Ahmad Kaikaus were present during the meeting.

Too pricey to be on menu of many

Already hit hard by plummeting income due to the novel coronavirus, Hosne Ara is now looking for alternative ways to make ends meet.

"I've curtailed my shopping list and I buy vegetables at night to get comparatively lower prices," she added. Egg, a good source of protein for the

poor and limited income group, has also

become dearer. Farhad Hossain, who runs a grocery shop in Jatrabari, said he bought 100 eggs for Tk 890 a week ago. "Now it is sold at Tk 920 in the wholesale market. I will sell each dozen at Tk 144," he said, adding that he earlier sold a dozen for Tk

The price of broiler chicken, another good source of protein, has also increased to Tk 130 from Tk 120 a kg.

MYSTERY OVER POTATO Fixing the price of per kg potato at Tk 30 at the retailer level, the Department of Agriculture Marketing (DAM) issued letter to deputy commissioners on

In the letter, DAM claimed that about 1.09 crore tonnes of potato was produced last year against an annual domestic demand of 77.09 lakh tonnes. Though the country exports potato, there is less possibility of crisis, read the letter. According to DAM, the price of per

kg potato when kept in cold storages The cost of cold storage rent, interest, collection charge and weight loss stand at

Tk 9. Considering that factor, if the potato is sold at Tk 23 per kg, persons who kept potato at cold storage will get Tk 2 profit. If the wholesaler adds Tk 2 in profit per

reasonable to charge over Tk 30 per kg at retail stage, read the letter. A farmer spent Tk 8.32 to produce one kg potato, it said.

kg, the price would be Tk 25 and it is not

Four days after the DAM's letter, Bangladesh Cold Storage Association (BCSA) on October 11 called upon farmers and traders to bring out potato from storage in an attempt to stabilise the

The association said that this year the production of potato was 85 lakh tonnes and due to transport and labour crisis for Covid-19 only 40 lakh tonnes of potatoes was kept in cold storages.

However, DAM Director General Mohammad Yousuf disputed BCSA's potato production figure of 85 lakh tonnes. He said about 1.09 crore tonnes of potatoes was produced this year. About 55 percent of 40 lakh tonnes

potato has already been sold at the market. Of the remaining, 10 lakh tonnes are seed potato which will be used for the next cultivation season in November, read the BCSA letter. A source said with the remaining potatoes, another one and half months

will be covered. The newly harvested potato is supposed to hit the market by the end of December as potato cultivation was delayed due to the flood.

at cold storages understand that there will be a crisis in the market. That's why they are releasing potato slowly to get more profit," said the source with knowledge about potato business.

Mohammad Yousuf said they have taken measures and within a day or two the price of potato will drop.

new potato will start hitting market early

the vegetable price will start dropping.

onion price, he said they have already taken an initiative to import seven lakh added.

of Bangladesh (CAB) opined that the

businessmen to control the market. Because of this policy, they fail to intervene when prices escalate," he said.

He suggested that the government

Tk 12,000 each for medicine

Shows a study

A study conducted by Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW) reported that coronavirus patients spent Tk 12,000 each on average as medicine cost.

The respondents of the survey said specific medicines were not available in the pharmacies and they had to

the study which was based on the interviews of 101 Covid-19 patients.

They were interviewed over phone between Jue 4 and Aug 30.

The study found, almost 70 and Hydroxychloroquine.

of taking other antibiotics such as Amoxicillin, Levofloxacin and Amoxicillin plus Clavuronic acid etc.

In very few cases, the positive patients have used hydrocortisone and Ivermectine.

Besides, all of the respondents took precautionary measures and supplementary food besides taking

Earlier last week, officials at the institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) said they were validating antigen-based rapid testing kits of several companies, including those mentioned above.

On September 17, the government permitted antigen-based rapid testing at the public healthcare centres after

treat Covid-19 cases, across the country. These healthcare installations do not

Private hospitals have not been allowed to use antigen-based rapid

testing yet. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) has delayed the supply of 10 lakh antigen kits to

income countries under an agreement between manufacturers Abbott and SD Biosensor and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The antigen-based rapid testing is a molecular test, an alternative to the sophisticated RT-PCR test, which detects the presence of the novel coronavirus.

a saliva sample and it can usually determine whether a person is infected within 15-30 minutes.

US adds fresh vigour to ties with Dhaka

Hotel Westin in the afternoon.

He explained that the IPS is a vision for peace and stability and not directed at any specific country. For long, South Asia has been left out of most Asian

strategies where the US participates. Stephen Biegun arrived just weeks before the US elections and at a time when nearly 1.1 million people have died from Covid-19. Last month, US Defence Secretary Mark T Esper called on the prime minister and discussed issues, including defence many

cooperation. Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Biegun yesterday spoke with warmth and new hope of solid relations at a meeting at the State Guesthouse Padma in the capital yesterday morning. The meeting lasted

for about two hours. "The US sees Bangladesh as a key partner in the Indo-Pacific region ... we are committed to growing our partnership in this regard to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific. Bangladesh will be the centrepiece of our work in the region," Biegun told reporters at an open-stage press conference afterwards.

He said he was pleased to have the latest chapter of cooperation that has bound Bangladeshi and American people for many years. Momen said US impression about

Bangladesh has improved manifolds

because of the country's sustained

growth, stability, and geopolitical location. "We have a very stable government and democracy. We believe in the same values and principles. Therefore, our relationship is becoming more solid ... we look forward to it. I have no doubt

it will continue to improve. We hope to achieve many goals. Biegun said from Covid-19 vaccine cooperation to trade and investment, agro-processing industries, IT, pharmaceuticals and energy, US companies were showing increased interest in Bangladesh.

Biegun arrived Wednesday afternoon and had a meeting State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam that dav. Yesterday morning, he visited the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi before his meeting at the guesthouse. Around noon, he called on Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Gono

Bhaban and then visited the Kurmitola

General Hospital where he donated

some medical equipment. TRADE, INVESTMENT

sought large US investments, including in energy, IT, pharmaceuticals, agroprocessing, blue economy, relocation of US companies, climate-change adaptation, said Momen.

river erosion, build embankment to check the impacts of climate change, he said. Biegun said they would work on it and apprised that many US companies

global supply chain. and US have recently kicked off an economic dialogue. The two countries appointed representatives who have started developing a work plan that would be a roadmap for deepening

"Our business community is having increased interest in Bangladesh because of the size of your consumer skilled labour, and the geographical location on the bank of the Bay of Bengal. It makes an attractive

Bangladesh also sought post-Covid-19 economic recovery assistance Biegun, however, said Bangladesh

they encourage signing a free trade agreement. Asked if Washington sees Bangladesh

"The media says that. It's not right. We are an independent and sovereign country. We have values and principles. We do what we need to do for our interests. The US looks at us independently. If the US saw us in New Delhi's eyes, he would not have come here," he said.

Rohingya repatriation. Biegun said the US has been the biggest contributor of humanitarian assistance for the Rohingyas and it will continue. However, permanent solution lies in the Rohingyas return to Myanmar, which should create

He said the US has been using its political influence as much as possible

December, after that the crisis will be Yousuf also said winter vegetables will hit the market in 15-20 days. After that

tonnes of onion from Turkey. "It takes 25-45 days to reach Bangladesh," he Asked, SM Nazer Hossain, vice-

government had failed to effectively monitoring the market. "The government is relying on

"Farmers and traders who kept potato

We want big investments. I said we want to build a dedicated Dhaka-Chattogram train line. We want to stop

were interested in investing here and that Bangladesh should be part of the At a press conference at a city hotel in the afternoon, he said Bangladesh

ROHINGYA REPATRIATION Bangladesh sought strong US role for

conditions and ensure rights.

Contacted, DAM Director General Claiming that potato cultivation was not hampered in Rangpur, he said, "The

Replying to a question related to

president of Consumers Association

create an alternative market to control price hike. "We saw success in the Open Market Very few of the patients mentioned Sale [OMS] in the past. But this time they are silent. Their silent role is creating frustration among people," he added.

'All countries need to work shoulder

Govt to start

Tk 700-800 if procured in bulks, according to a health ministry document obtained by this newspaper.

Apart from the two companies, the government will also procure more kits through the World Bank and the Unicef,

months of bureaucratic tangles. The decision is yet to come into force. Initially, the government has planned to introduce antigen testing facilities at 10 specialised and 39 district hospitals, including those designated to

have coronavirus testing facilities.

Bangladesh. On September 28, the WHO announced that 120 million antigen rapid diagnostic kits for Covid-19 would

"They said they will give us kits within a week. Now they are saying they will need more time. They will give 10 lakh kits. If we get those, we will not need to go for procurement," Prof Khurshid said.

An RT-PCR test now costs the government Tk 3,500 to Tk 4,000, said DGHS officials

said the victim and Sagar got to know each other through mobile conversation

Bonshi river at night on January 17 and Sagar and two others raped her on there again and others helped them. They later left her there in unconscious

Madhupur Bus Stand and informed the

matter to her brother over phone. Later,

Police arrested Sujon Chandra

also arrested.

economic relationship. Biegun said the US is the second

largest investor in Bangladesh after the

that America is giving countries that have good relationship with the US. has a bigger economy and that

place for US investors," he said.

in the eyes of New Delhi, the foreign minister replied in the negative.

During the meetings, Bangladesh to influence decisions inside Myanmar

regarding the treatment and restoration

of rights of the Rohingyas.

Every major country in the Indo-Pacific should be speaking in equal outspokenness to the government of Myanmar to take steps necessary to end this crisis," he said. Biegun said apart from immediate humanitarian support to the Rohingyas, the international community should

redouble its efforts to reach a long-term

solution, which lies in the sustainable

return of the Rohingyas to Myanmar. Some one million Rohingvas. 750,000 of whom fled a military crackdown in Rakhine State of Myanmar in 2017, are in Bangladesh. US REVIEWING RASHED

CHOWDHURY'S EXTRADITION

confessed killer of Bangabandhu living in the US, Biegun said US Attorney General William Barr's office was reviewing the matter.

"Those matters are beyond the

"It's deeply moving for me and all

department of state," he said, but

assured of cooperation towards this end.

Americans. It is another impression

In response to Dhaka's request to

extradite Rashed Chowdhury, a self-

of how severe the nature of the event was," Biegun said about the killing of Bangabandhu and most of his family members on August 15, 1975. He had visited the spot earlier in the day. TACKLING COVID-19 Biegun appreciated Bangladesh for manufacturing world-class PPE and

Covid-19 medicine Remdesivir, and

apprised that Bangladesh was one of

the countries with priority for getting

US Covid-19 vaccines once they are

approved following phase-III trials. Asked if US companies would collaborate with Bangladesh for phase-III trials, a US official said that would be unlikely given that the US has a large number of Covid-19 patients. Biegun said his country seeks long-

term partnership with Dhaka to tackle

the pandemic as Bangladesh wants

early access to prospective vaccines to be developed by the US, BSS reports. Long-term partnership has become crucial for two countries to fight Covid-19 ... combined efforts between Bangladesh and the USA are needed to deal the pandemic," he told a press briefing after a meeting at the state-run Kurmitola General Hospital.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque who joined Biegun at the briefing said Dhaka urged the US to provide it with a vaccine soon after it is developed.

Covid patients have to spend

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

procure it from alternative sources. Patients who were interviewed during the survey took Paracetamol followed by Vitamins C, B and A, read

percent of the respondents took the antibiotics particularly Azythromycin, followed 10 percent by Doxycycline, and nine percent jointly Chloroquine

to shoulder ... This is a global priority. medicine and regular foods.

FROM PAGE 1

said DGHS officials.

be made available to low- and middle-

The antigen test involves taking