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# Healthcare within reach, yet distant

140 mother and children welfare centres empty as no doctors, staffers appointed yet

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, back from Sunamganj

Expecting mothers needing specialised care in remote villages under Dharmapasha upazila of Sunamganj still have to endure hours-long potentially risky journeys to the nearest public health facility, despite two new mother and children welfare centres in the area.

In the last one month, at least three women from Datiapara village in Dakshin Bongshikunda union experiencing complications during labour were taken to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

They first travelled for hours on boat to reach Kalmakanda Upazila Health Complex in Netrokona; they were then referred to Mymensingh Hospital and it took another three hours.

After hours of journey just to get proper maternity care, they luckily gave birth to healthy babies. But this risk to both mother and child could have been avoided altogether.

Datiapara itself has a 10-bed Mother and Children Welfare Centre, but it is not functional and has no doctors.

For thousands of people of four unions under the greater Madhyanganar of Dharmapasha, access to maternal and child



healthcare services has long suffered.

In the area, a motorbike, the only means of communication on the dilapidated roads, and a boat, which takes a slow circuitous route, are the only options available to reach hospitals in Dharmapasha or in nearby Kalmakanda upazila.

As a result, remote villages mostly rely on local medical assistants and quacks.

On Tuesday, a newborn baby in Datiapara died two days after being born at home. A quack had assured that the baby was healthy, family members said.

To change this, two 10-bed mother and children welfare centres -- one in Madhyanganar union and the other in

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Using a megaphone, a district administration staffer asks hilltop residents in Chattogram's Shah Akbar area to move to safety yesterday afternoon. Persistent rainfall over the last few days has put hills in the area under risk of landslide.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

# Dolphins vanishing from Halda

Manmade hazards led to death of 27 dolphins in the river since 2017

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Chattogram

The freshwater dolphins in Bangladesh are only decreasing in number over the last few years mainly for manmade hazards, say experts.

Talking to The Daily Star, eminent Halda researcher Manzoorul Kibria reminisced how he encountered dolphins of the Ganges even in 1982.

At that time, river dolphins of the Ganges could be found in the Halda, adjacent to Nazirhat village of Chattogram's Fatikhkhari upazila. The amazingly intelligent mammals, however, disappeared over the last few decades, he said.

He said, "I first saw the aquatic mammals in my school days standing on a bridge at Nazirhat. Now, not only the dolphins disappeared from Nazirhat but also from the 40-kilometres downstream."

"You would see no dolphin from Nazirhat to Sattarghat."

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## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

### Constitution copy will be a handwritten document

October 24, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

#### ARTISTS WORKING ON CONSTITUTION LAY-OUT

The original copy of the constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh will be a handwritten document and will bear the signatures of all members of the Constituent Assembly. Five artists under the guidance of renowned painter Zainul Abedin are at present busy making designs and preparing the lay-out for the sacred documents at the Assembly building. The original handwritten constitution will be printed in offset. Besides, the constitution will be printed in usual form. The original document will be preserved in the national museum.

#### SURANJIT FLOGS THE BILL

Suranjit Sengupta of the National Awami Party, the lone opposition member in the Gono Parishad (Constituent Assembly) says today that the draft constitution has miserably failed to reflect the four fundamental principles of the state policy -- nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. He alleges that the constitution does not guarantee any of the rights of the people, demands for which came to the fore during the Liberation War, such as a people-oriented education system, revolutionary land reform, right to livelihood and medical care. He voices the demand for eliciting public opinion on the draft constitution.

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# Child raped by 55-yr-old in Noakhali

BCL man sued over rape in Narsingdi

STAR REPORT

A seven-year-old girl was raped allegedly by a 55-year-old man at Char Jabbar union in Subarnachar upazila of Noakhali on Wednesday.

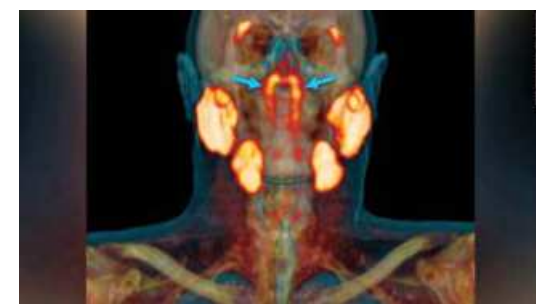
Besides, a Chattra League leader was sued in Narsingdi, a 45-year-old man was sued in Gazipur and a minor boy was sent to correction facilities in Feni on rape charges yesterday.

In Noakhali, the suspect Abul Haque Kazi of Char Hasan village went into hiding after the incident. On the other hand, the victim was admitted at Noakhali General Hospital for treatment, reports our Noakhali correspondent.

After the incident, the victim's father filed a case with Char Jabbar police on Thursday night against Haque. Police were

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# Scientists claim to have discovered new human organ



CNN ONLINE

It's hard to imagine there is a part of the human body that's gone unnoticed by doctors after centuries of medical research.

But that's exactly what a group of scientists from the Netherlands believe. They said they have discovered a pair of previously overlooked glands that are hidden away in our skulls where the nasal cavity and the throat meet.

The medical researchers first came across the body part, which they propose naming tubarial glands, during a scan designed to look for tumorous growths. The scientists then looked at scans of the head and neck of a further 100 individuals they were treating for prostate cancer and dissected two

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# 14 more die from Covid, 1,586 test positive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fourteen people died from Covid-19 in the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, according to a press release issued by the Directorate General of Health Services.

This month's highest reported death toll in a day was 35 on October 7.

On June 30, officials reported 64 deaths, the highest since the first death was recorded on March 18.

The first three cases of coronavirus were detected in the country on March 8.

The death toll from coronavirus is now 5,761, which is around 1.45 percent of all confirmed cases.

In yesterday's statement, the health officials said 1,586 new infections were recorded, raising the number of confirmed cases to 3,96,413.

The new cases were detected after 14,119 tests

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## LIBYAN CIVIL WAR

### Two warring factions sign 'permanent' ceasefire

AFP, Geneva

Libya's two warring factions signed a "permanent" ceasefire agreement yesterday after five days of talks at the United Nations, which hailed the deal as a historic moment following years of turmoil and bloodshed.

"Today is a good day for the Libyan people," said Stephanie Williams, the UN's acting envoy to the troubled North African country, where a UN-recognised government in Tripoli has been battling a rival administration based

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#### PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 24

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:50 12:45 4:00 5:36 7:15  
JAMAT 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:39 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



SHOPPING SPREE... Only the handle, headlights and some portion of the tyres hint that the man is sitting atop a motorcycle. He delivers groceries to online shoppers in the capital, who prefer this style of shopping amid the coronavirus pandemic. The photo was taken in the capital's Moghbazar area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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# Europe's daily cases double in 10 days

More curbs on the way as Covid spreading faster during 2nd wave

REUTERS, Paris/Madrid

The coronavirus is spreading even faster than it did during the first phase of the pandemic, a French government adviser said yesterday as authorities across Europe scrambled to try to contain the disease once again racing through the continent.

France, set to pass 1 million cases later yesterday after posting a record daily total of more than 41,000 a day earlier, has been one of the countries hardest hit in the second wave and has imposed curfews across much of the nation.

Covid patients occupy nearly half of all of France's 5,000 intensive care beds and its well-regarded health system has been showing increasing signs of strain.

"The virus is circulating more quickly than in the spring," epidemiologist Arnaud Fontanet, who sits on the Scientific Council advising the French government, said.

The disease is in resurgence all over Europe, where daily reported cases have more than doubled in 10 days, crossing 200,000 daily infections for the first time on Thursday, according to a Reuters tally.

"We are all afraid," said Maria, a 73-year old pensioner in Dolny Kubin, Slovakia, where officials were piloting a testing scheme the government plans to roll-out across the whole country of 5.5 million. "I see what's happening and it is terrifying."