

**BANGLADESH
UPDATE**

1,308
New cases in 24hrs

3,98,815
Total cases

5,803
Deaths

3,15,107
Recoveries

**GLOBAL
UPDATE**

1,156,521
Deaths

43,096,130
Total cases

Shun unethical journalism

FROM PAGE 1
work with responsibility and patriotism for the welfare of people. She also urged them to refrain from publishing any report which can mislead people.

"Journalists work risking their lives and many inside stories come to light with their reports. As a result, necessary action can be taken to solve various problems."

Putting emphasis on abiding by the existing policy for journalists, the prime minister said they would have to engage in this profession to work for the welfare of the country and its people.

Quoting Father of the Nation Bangabandhu, she said like politics, journalism without principle can give nothing to the country and the nation.

About her government's policy, Hasina said, it believes in freedom of thoughts and expression of opinions. "The government doesn't have any objection to criticisms," she said, adding that many facts are unearthed through logical criticisms.

Hasina, however, called upon all concerned to respect the opinions of others as well as keep in mind the responsibilities to the state while making any criticism.

Terminating newspapers the mirror of society, the prime minister said her government did not believe in the culture of hiding information.

She pointed out the reports in

newspapers on corruption and other irregularities and said the government takes action without considering party identities of the corrupt people.

Highlighting various steps taken by her government for the welfare of journalists, Hasina said the National Broadcast Commission has been formulated, while works are underway to enact the Broadcast Law.

"We'll formulate the Broadcast Law so that fact-based works can be done...there must not be any yellow journalism to mislead people through unnecessary criticisms," she said.

The prime minister said the government has formulated a law for ensuring the job security of journalists.

She vowed to establish poverty- and hunger-free Bangladesh as dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim conducted the programme from the Gono Bhawan.

Presided over by former DRU President and Chairman of the Silver Jubilee Celebration Committee Shahjahan Sarder, the function was attended, among others, by DRU President Rafiqul Islam Azad, former DRU president Shahed Chowdhury, founding DRU General Secretary Mostafa Firoze, DRU Vice-president Nazrul Kabir, DRU General Secretary Reaz Chowdhury and DRU Organising Secretary Habibur Rahman.



A man trying to save what he can after his makeshift shop was knocked down. The Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday conducted a drive to dismantle illegal food stalls on footpaths in front of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

No mask no service

FROM PAGE 1
the government on its coronavirus response, urged the government to prepare a roadmap and take all-out preparations for the second wave.

Notwithstanding this, there is a growing unwillingness among the people to wear face masks as the number of people infected with the deadly virus inches towards 4 lakh. The reported Covid-19 deaths reached 5,803 yesterday.

Countries across Europe are seeing a resurgence in Covid-19 cases after successfully slowing outbreaks earlier this year.

Most of the European countries are reporting more new cases each day now than they were during the first wave earlier this year, according to global news agencies.

A second wave, in the context of a viral pandemic, does not have a formal scientific definition or a distinctly defined stage. It is generally considered as a stage when an outbreak appears to recede almost entirely before returning again. In order to say that one wave has ended, the virus has to be brought under control and cases have to fall substantially.

"Refusal to wear masks is unacceptable. Masks must be used in all institutions, haats, markets, shopping malls, schools, and social and religious gatherings. We have made it mandatory," the cabinet secretary said.

Anwarul said the Islamic Foundation has been instructed to ask the imams of mosques to spread the message after prayers at least twice a day.

The issue of face masks was discussed when the health ministry informed the cabinet about the steps it had taken during the pandemic.

When his attention was drawn to packed mass transports, he said, "We agree. Let's observe the scenario of the second wave and then we'll set our next

course of action."

The cabinet secretary said he will sit with secretaries of roads and highways, shipping and railways in a couple of days to discuss the matter.

Contacted, Prof Nazrul Islam, a member of the NTAC, said, "We welcome this announcement. However, the question is why this announcement was not made before."

"Previously, we observed a lack in implementation [of the directives]. This announcement is very much appropriate and the implementation must be ensured."

About the vaccine for Covid-19, the cabinet secretary said the government has taken the steps necessary to get the shots.

"There are government and private initiatives. We hope to get the vaccine at the first stage," he said.

DAILY BRIEFING
Twenty-three people have died from Covid-19 in the country in the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, according to a press release issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

With this, the total number of deaths rose to 5,803, which is 1.46 percent of all confirmed cases.

Besides, 1,308 people tested positive for the coronavirus, raising the total number of people infected to 3,98,815.

With this, Bangladesh is now the country with the 18th highest number of confirmed cases, according to the worldometers.info.

Following 11,757 tests, yesterday's positivity rate was 11.78 percent. With this, the overall positivity rate stood at 17.67 percent.

Meanwhile, 1,544 Covid-19 patients recovered in the 24 hours, raising the total number of recoveries to 3,15,107. This is around 79.01 percent of all confirmed cases.

Among the 23 deceased, 19 were male. All of them died in hospitals.

PK Halder yet to return, cites fever

FROM PAGE 1
concerned about the new date and time of his arrival as soon as he is physically fit.

Halder is allegedly involved in the misappropriation of about Tk 10,200 crore from four non-banking financial institutions (NBFI).

Earlier on October 21, the High Court directed law enforcement agencies to arrest Halder immediately after his return to the country.

At the same time, the HC bench of Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar asked law enforcers to give PK Halder, former managing director of NRB Global Bank and Reliance Finance, the scope to refund the money to the organisations from which he embezzled the money.

Halder had earlier wanted to return home and refund the money.

In August, he wrote to ILFSL -- one of the four NBFI -- saying he would return home and settle the liabilities with the firm if he is provided proper

security.

According to Canadian media reports, Halder is now staying in Toronto. He is the director of Canadian corporation P&L Hal Holding Inc.

The three other NBFI from which Halder allegedly embezzled crores of taka are People's Leasing and Financial Services, FAS Finance and Investment, and Reliance Finance.

In an investigation, the central bank found that Tk 1,596 crore was transferred from ILFSL in violation of the rules through 48 accounts of various organisations related to the directors and shareholders of the firm, according to Bangladesh Bank officials.

Halder came under the limelight during the anti-casino drives last year. The ACC opened investigations into the involvement of 43 people, including Halder, in the illegal casino business.

The government issued a travel ban on him on October 3 last year, but he

managed to flee the country.

The ACC on January 8 this year filed a case against Halder on charges of illegally amassing wealth worth Tk 275 crore.

Following a petition filed by two depositors, the HC on January 21 directed the Bangladesh Bank and all private banks to freeze the accounts of Halder, his five relatives, Bank Asia's former managing director Erfan Uddin Ahmed and Halder's aide Uzzal Kumar Nondi for allegedly misappropriating funds.

The HC further ordered the government to seize the passports of 20 people, including Halder, his wife Susmita Saha and his brother Pritish Kumar Halder.

The court also directed authorities concerned not to allow transfers of any of their movable and immovable property, including stock, cash and cars, to any persons or entities until the disposal of the case.

Two held in connection

FROM PAGE 1
housewife was raped in Hatiya's Char Kailash area on Friday night.

Police said the victim and accused Tropel Das Noyan, 28, knew each other. Taking the chance, Noyan went to the victim's house around 10:00pm on Friday and raped her. His friend Masud helped him.

The victim lodged a case against the duo yesterday and police arrested Noyan, said Abul Khayer, OC of Hatiya Police Station.

In Kishoreganj, a court yesterday sent two people to jail on charges of raping a woman in Astagram upazila.

The accused are Haris Mia, 32, and Zakir Mia, 30, of Boragirkandi village in the same upazila.

Police said the 22-year-old victim,

who is the mother of one, went outside her room around 11:15pm on October 4. At that time, the two forcibly took her to a nearby place and raped her.

On Saturday, the victim's husband filed a case against them. Hours later, police arrested them. During primary interrogation, they confessed their involvement in the crime. They were produced before the court that sent them to jail yesterday, said Kamrul Islam, OC of Astagram Police Station.

In Gazipur, a quack was sued for raping a female garment worker after making her unconscious on Friday.

Police said the victim works at a garment factory in Sreepur and has been residing in a rented house in the area for around two and a half

months. Abul Hashem, the quack, used to live in the same house.

On October 20, Hashem asked the girl to come to his room. When she went there, he asked her to drink some blessed water so that she might get married soon. After drinking the water, the girl lost consciousness and Hashem raped her, said police, quoting the victim.

Police suspected that the water was mixed with sedative.

On Friday night, the victim filed a case against Hashem, who went into hiding. Police were trying to arrest him, said Khandaker Imam Hossain, OC of Sreepur Police Station.

[Our correspondents in Naokhali, Mymensingh and Gazipur contributed to this report]

25 cops hurt

FROM PAGE 1
and transporting of hilsa from October 14 to November 4 to protect safe spawning of hilsa during its peak breeding period.

Farida Parveen, additional superintendent of river police, who was leading the drive was among the injured.

Injured Inspector Mujahidul Islam told The Daily Star that a team of 80 police personnel went to Chandpur from Dhaka to conduct the drive around 11:00am.

"When we reached Laxmirchar area, hundreds of fishermen attacked us with sticks and threw brick chunks. Later, some of us fired rubber bullets and shotgun shells to bring the situation under control."

"We arrested seven fishermen," the police officer added.

The river police personnel returned to Dhaka.

Mohammad Nasim Uddin, OC of Chandpur Model Police Station, said, "We have not been informed about the drive before. After getting the news, we visited the injured policemen at hospital."

A case was filed in connection with the attack.

"It is not the first attack. Several officers were injured by fishermen attack on the same spot last year," said Asadul Baki, district fisheries officer.

The majority

FROM PAGE 1
enough available seats now.

Mokabbir said they have been operating Boeing 777 aircraft with a capacity of 419 seats to accommodate a greater number of passengers in a single flight.

An official of Saudia said there is no rush of Saudi-bound passengers at present in their airlines and they hope to carry all Bangladeshi migrant workers to Saudi Arabia within their scheduled time.

"No one is leaving from our counter at present without re-issuance of their return tickets," said the official, preferring not to be named.

At least 55,000 Bangladeshi expatriates with return tickets in hand have been waiting to board Saudi Arabia-bound flights since the Covid-19 pandemic halted air travel to the Kingdom.

Since the resumption of flights by Saudia and Biman, expatriate Bangladeshis rushed to sales offices of the two airlines in the capital to ensure re-issuance of their return tickets.

Almost every day since resumption, several thousand expatriate workers gathered in front of the offices with the hope of getting a ticket to return to their workplaces in Saudi Arabia.

They were worried about losing their jobs if they were unable to return to the Kingdom before the expiry of their visa or Iqama (work permit).

The Saudi government agreed to increase visas and Iqamas of Bangladeshi workers till October 30.

More mass testing in China after 137 virus cases in Xinjiang

AFP, Beijing

Chinese officials were racing yesterday to smother a fresh coronavirus outbreak in the country's far northwest after 137 new infections were discovered.

Mass testing began Saturday evening to cover 4.75 million residents in and around Kashgar, Xinjiang province, after a 17-year-old garment factory worker tested positive for the virus.

China -- where the coronavirus first emerged late last year -- has largely brought domestic transmission under control through lockdowns, travel restrictions and testing, but sporadic regional outbreaks have emerged.

Beijing has lauded its rapid testing capabilities, with the Communist Party eager to project an image of victory over the virus as much of the world struggles with lockdowns and mass outbreaks.

The new cases -- all asymptomatic -- were linked to a factory in Shufu county where the girl and her parents worked, the Xinjiang health commission told a press briefing Sunday.

A special team from Beijing's National Health Commission was sent to investigate the source of the outbreak and assist with preventive measures, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

As of Sunday afternoon more than 2.8 million samples had been collected in the area and the rest would be completed within two days, the city government said in a statement. Kashgar -- near the country's borders with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan -- is the cultural heart of ethnic Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims, many of whom complain of long-running political and religious oppression, which the Chinese government denies.

All schools in Kashgar have been closed until October 30 and anyone leaving the city needs to show a negative nucleic acid test, the city government said.

'We can make things better'

FROM PAGE 1
Saturday, at nearly 89,000, with a further surge expected as cold weather arrives.

The virus has claimed more than 224,000 American lives, with no end in sight, and a majority of voters say Trump has handled the crisis poorly.

"That's Donald Trump's presidency," Biden said Saturday during a drive-in rally, one of two events in his native Pennsylvania, a critical swing state. He spoke from a stage decorated with bales of hay and Halloween pumpkins.

"Donald Trump said, and is still saying, we're rounding the corner. It's going away. We're learning how to live with it."

Biden added: "We're not learning how to live with it. You're asking us to learn how to die with it and it's wrong."

The Biden campaign also deployed a key surrogate, former president Barack Obama, who slammed the Trump administration's Covid-19 response.

"The idea that somehow this White House has done anything but completely screw this thing up is nonsense," Obama told supporters at a drive-in rally in Miami, Florida.

"Donald Trump isn't suddenly going to protect all of us. He can't even take the basic steps to protect himself," Obama added, referring to Trump's hospitalization for Covid-19 three weeks ago.

Also slamming the president's failure to denounce white supremacy, and the many times he has lied in public, among other issues, Obama called on supporters to vote for his former vice president.

"We can make things better... That's what voting is about, not making things perfect, but making things better," he said.

"If we vote up and down the ticket like never before, we will elect Joe Biden."

Trump shrugged off Obama's criticism, saying on Twitter that the former president had only "47 people" at his event.

"No energy, but still better than Joe!" he quipped.

And he shrugged off polls which continue to show his Democratic rival Biden leading the race.

"They want to depress you," he said of the political and media outlets reporting the numbers. "These polls are much better than four years ago."

New fighting flares over Nagorno-Karabakh as Aliyev warns against Russian involvement

REUTERS, Baku

New fighting erupted between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces yesterday over the mountainous enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh as both sides blamed each other for blocking a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

Armenia accused Azeri forces of shelling civilian settlements. Baku denied killing civilians and said it was ready to implement a ceasefire, provided that Armenian forces withdrew from the battlefield.

The weekend's clashes in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, a part of Azerbaijan populated and controlled by ethnic Armenians, came after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo hosted the foreign ministers of both countries in a new peace push on Friday.

The collapse of two Russia-brokered ceasefires had already dimmed the prospect of a quick end to fighting that broke out on Sept. 27

over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Local officials in Nagorno-Karabakh accused Azeri forces of firing artillery on settlements in the areas of Askeran and Martuni during the night. Azerbaijan said its positions had been attacked with small arms, mortars, tanks, mortars, and howitzers.

"I am absolutely confident in the effectiveness of the peace negotiations but this also depends on the will of the Armenian side to take part in them," said Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

"Why can Azerbaijani and Armenian people live together in Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, and other countries but not in Nagorno Karabakh?" he added in a Fox News interview that was reprinted by the state Azertag News Agency.

Armenian President Armen Sarkissian accused Baku of being "aggressively stubborn and destructive".