



The Daily Star

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

SECOND EDITION

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXX No. 297

AGRAHAYAN 4, 1427 BS

RABIU SANI 3, 1442 HUIRI

16 PAGES PLUS SHOUT PRICE : Tk12.00

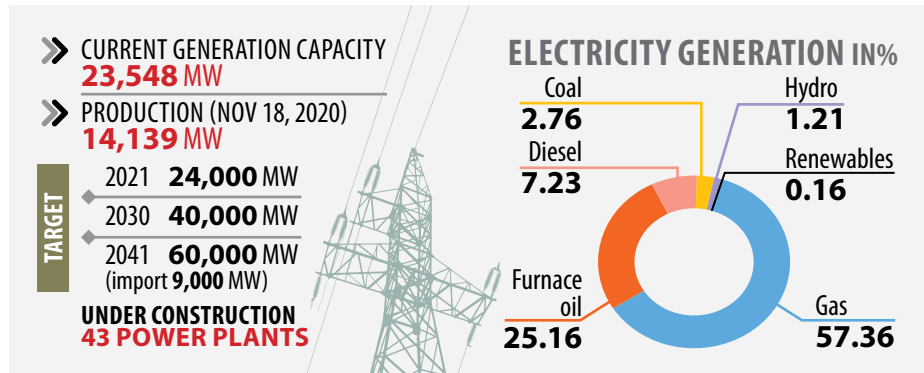
"Honored to serve. We did it right. Defend Today, Secure Tomorrow."
CHRIS KREBS AFTER TRUMP FIRES HIM FROM US GOVERNMENT'S TOP ELECTION SECURITY OFFICIAL'S POST

"The G20 now needs to scale up ambition and deliver bolder measures to ... prevent the global recession (caused by Covid-19 pandemic) from becoming a global depression."
UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTONIO GUTERRES

"You have to change something. The German national team can't play like that... There are certain values, which I didn't see on the pitch."
FORMER GERMAN PLAYER BASTIAN SCHWEINSTEIGER AFTER THE COUNTRY'S 6-0 LOSS TO SPAIN

Future not coal power

Govt plans to strike off 13 coal-based power projects, looking for cleaner alternatives; Rampal still on



PINAKI ROY

Coal-fired power projects are on the chopping block as the government finally plans to give up its obsession for the dirty energy over rising coal import costs and environmental concerns.

The power, energy and mineral resources ministry has already finalised the plan and will soon send it to the Prime Minister's Office, with a proposal for shifting to liquefied natural gas (LNG) and petroleum for electricity generation.

If the plan gets the final go-ahead from the highest office, all but five projects will

be scrapped, confirmed sources at the ministry.

The government has approved 18 coal-based power plants since 2008 as part of its aggressive plan for generating 40,000MW power -- 35 percent of it from coal -- by 2030.

Years went by, but 13 of the projects could not make any progress or ensure funds to construct the proposed plants.

"Some companies could not secure the funds after getting the approval. So, we are considering it [shutting them down] as they are taking too much time to start

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



The authorities have ordered social distancing and other restrictions ahead of winter to avert a possible second wave of the coronavirus outbreak. But the rules remain on paper while people buy goods from vendors on this footbridge near New Market in the capital. Thankfully though, most of them have some kind of face coverings.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Over 2K Covid cases for 3rd straight day

2,111 infected, 21 die in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authorities reported over 2,000 new Covid-19 cases for the third straight day yesterday, raising concerns over the possible second wave of the Covid-19 outbreak in the winter.

The number of daily reported cases remained around the 1,500-mark for the previous two months.

In 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, 2,111 people tested positive for the virus, said a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services.

With this, the number of confirmed cases in the country rose to 4,38,795.

Against a total of 16,469 tests in 115 labs in the same 24 hours, the positivity rate was 12.82 percent, which is lower than the previous day's 13.83 percent.

According to experts, the daily positivity rate is one of the important parameters to measure the transmission level of the virus.

If the positivity rate remains below

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PM again warns of second wave

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said that though the intensity of Covid-19 pandemic has declined slightly in the country, it is likely to increase in the coming winter.

She was replying to lawmakers' queries in parliament yesterday during the question-answer session of the PM. She sounded the warning in reference to opinions expressed by experts.

Her scripted answers were tabled in the House, with Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair.

Replying to a query from Awami League MP Didarul Alam, Hasina said the global epidemic has been successfully tackled in Bangladesh so far with the government's visionary leadership, timely decisions and efficient management.

"Although the intensity of the Covid-19 pandemic in Bangladesh has decreased slightly at this moment, experts have opined that it may increase again in the coming winter. A second wave of the pandemic has already started in Europe and America," the premier said.

Noting that extensive preparations have been taken to deal with a possible second wave of the virus in the country, the PM said the government has instructed the authorities concerned to implement "no mask, no service" policy to contain the spread of novel coronavirus in the coming winter.

"Screening continues at the points of entry to the country. Staying in quarantine for 14 days has been made mandatory for the returnees from abroad. Activities are being carried out according to the action plan adopted for preventing and checking Covid-19."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



No charges except for tuition fees amid Covid

Govt asks all pvt secondary schools

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has asked all non-government secondary schools not to collect re-admission, development, assignment, tiffin, laboratory, library, and magazine fees from students during Covid-19 pandemic.

In a circular, the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), yesterday also said school authorities should adjust the amounts with monthly tuition fees if they had taken it already.

If the Covid-19 situation does not improve by the beginning of 2021, schools will not be allowed to collect the fees from students, the circular read.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

CASES OVER BUS TORCHING

He was in hospital, still made accused

Claims Jubo Dal leader; a heart surgery patient among accused

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and SHARIFUL ISLAM

When buses were being torched in Dhaka on November 12 afternoon, Zakir Hossain Siddiqui, a vice-president of Jubo Dal, was undergoing treatment for a blood disease at LabAid Hospital.

The 50-year-old was in cabin-430 between November 10 and November 15, and had paid Tk 88,163 in medical care charges.

The Daily Star obtained documents in support of this claim.

However, according to a case filed by Paltan police, Zakir torched a bus on November 12 and he is accused No-3 in the case.

Zakir yesterday appeared before a High Court bench along with 119 other BNP leaders and activists, including Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, to seek anticipatory bail in cases filed over the arson attacks on buses.

The court granted them bail until January 5.

While talking to The Daily Star, Zakir alleged that four fingers of his right hand were broken after police attacked him and other BNP and pro-BNP activists during a BNP workers' conference in Nabinagar of Brahmanbaria on October 23.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

PROTHOM ALO EDITOR

Noted citizens concerned over charge framing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eighteen eminent citizens yesterday expressed concern that a court framed charges against five people, including Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman, in a case filed over the tragic death of college student Naimul Abrar.

Following is the full text of the statement given by the noted citizens:

Recently, Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court framed charges against five persons including its [Prothom Alo] Editor and Publisher Matiur Rahman in a case filed over the tragic death of Dhaka Residential Model School and College student Naimul Abrar.

Framing of charges in the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PVT PRACTICE IN OFFICE HRS Govt doctors to face action

Decides health ministry's taskforce; govt to fix fees for pvt healthcare services

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government doctors providing private services during work hours will face action, the health ministry said yesterday.

The decision came at a meeting of the ministry's taskforce committee on Tuesday, said a press release.

"The taskforce requests [people] to inform its members if any government doctors are found providing private service during office hours. We will take action," Dr Shibbir Ahmed Osman, member secretary of the committee, told The Daily Star.

The public will be informed later about the process in which they can officially report such anomalies, he added.

On February 9, the High Court issued a rule asking the government officials concerned to explain why the section of the law that allows state-appointed doctors to conduct private medical practice beyond their office hours should not be declared unconstitutional.

The law being referred to is the Medical Practice and Private Clinics and Laboratories (Regulation) Ordinance, 1982.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Women labourers wait for work with their shovels at Savar City Centre. Begum, right, says she finds work only about 10-15 days a month and attributes her reduced income to the economic slump caused by the coronavirus restrictions. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Outrage over MP's rape comments

Rights activists deeply concerned that his words went without protest at JS

NILIMA JAHAN and RASHIDUL HASAN

Human rights activists and feminists expressed grave concern over the words of independent MP of Bogura-7 Md Rezaul Karim Bablu, who said in parliament on Tuesday that feminists are to blame for the rape incidents across the country.

Bablu even resorted to comparing women to tamarinds in line with the late Amir of Hafajat-e-Islam Allama Shafi's words in 2013.

While passing the Women and Children Repression Prevention (Amendment) Bill, 2020 -- which added the provision of death penalty for rapists -- several MPs proposed circulating the bill to elicit public opinion and sending it to a select committee.

MP Bablu said, "In the name of women's liberation, feminists are continuing to expose women. This has increased the acceptability of rape so much among rapists that they are encouraged to commit the act," he said.

Referring to Shafi's words in 2013, comparing women to tamarinds, Bablu also said, "If the tamarind theory of Allama Shafi could have been applied, the rapists would be discouraged from rape..."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3