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Watch on drug rehab centres stepped up

5 shut in city; psychiatrists observe one-day work stoppage to protest NIMH registrar's arrest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) yesterday closed five drug rehabilitation centres in the capital as those were running without licence.

The move comes days after the death of senior ASP Anisul Karim at Mind Aid Psychiatry and De-Addiction Hospital in the city's Adabor area.

Several teams raided the illegal centres in Doyaganj, Sanir Akhra, Mohammadpur and Mirpur areas and shut down their operations, DNC Director General Muhammed Ahsanul Jabbar told The Daily Star.

He said the DNC beefed up vigilance after the police officer was allegedly beaten to death inside the private rehabilitation centre by its staffers on November 9.

The DNC DG also said there were about 350 licensed rehab centres across the country, including 105 in the capital. "There is no scope to convert rehab facilities into psychiatric treatment facilities without permission, which was done by Mind Aid," he added.

During yesterday's drives, a team from the DNC's north division sealed off Hira Rehabilitation Centre in Mirpur-2 and Diner Alo Rehabilitation Centre in Mohammadpur. DNC officials said the centres had applied for licences but were yet to get them. They also did not have enough psychiatrists and support staffers, including ward boys.

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People crossing the Dhaka-Aricha highway near Abdullahpur, paying scarcely any attention to an advancing truck, which has to make way for the pedestrians rather than the other way round. This photo was taken on Tuesday morning.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

SIPHONING OFF MONEY Govt officials outnumber politicians

FM says citing initial info on 28 cases in Canada

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said he was surprised to see the number of government officials who siphoned off money and sent the amounts to Toronto, Canada, outnumbering politicians.

"It was an initial information. We have to verify it," he told reporters referring to information the government has about 28 cases.

Of the 28 cases, only four are linked to politicians while the rest to government officials and a few businesspeople.

"I thought that the number of politicians would be higher. I was surprised, though the information is not comprehensive," said the minister.

Momen was talking to reporters at an interaction session with Dhaka

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Europe sees first dip in Covid-19 cases in months

Says WHO; Pfizer/BioNTech say results show Covid vaccine 95% effective

AGENCIES

The number of new Covid-19 cases declined last week for the first time in over three months, but deaths in the region continued to climb, WHO data showed yesterday.

In total, nearly four million cases of the novel coronavirus were registered worldwide during the week ending Sunday, and almost 60,000 people died from the disease during the same period, the World Health Organization said.

Europe, which on Tuesday saw its total number of coronavirus infections climb past 15 million, remained the hardest-hit region.

Last week it accounted for 46 percent of the new global cases and 49 percent of the deaths, the UN health agency's weekly epidemiological update showed.

With 1.84 million new cases registered, the caseload across the region remained staggeringly high, but WHO noted that "in the past week, for the first time in over three months, the region observed a

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

'Stop arms race'



November 19, 1972
SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S CALL FOR LASTING WORLD PEACE

Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today calls upon peace-loving people of the world to strengthen the movement for world peace and made a fervent appeal to the big powers to stop the maddening arms race. The prime minister is confident that no power would be able to ignore the world opinion in favour of world peace. In this age one country could not subjugate or oppress another country for long, he adds. Bangabandhu is speaking at a reception accorded to him by the Bangladesh Awami League for his being awarded the Joliot-Curie peace medal.

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FIRE AT GRID SUBSTATION Power partly restored in Sylhet city after 31 hrs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

After almost 31 hours, power supply at many areas in Sylhet city started restoring from 6:10pm yesterday.

Most parts of Sylhet and some parts of Sunamganj districts plunged into darkness after a fire broke out at the 132/33 KV Sylhet Grid Substation in Kumargaon area of Sylhet around 11:00am Tuesday.

Juwel Rana, assistant engineer (sale and distribution) of Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) in Sylhet, said, "After emergency repair work, we've started restoring power connection at different parts of the city and outskirts. As the damage is huge, it will take some time to restore all connection to normalcy".

Masnun Alam, sub-assistant engineer of Power

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Robot enforces mask-wearing, distancing at Japan store

REUTERS, Tokyo



A robot has signed on as the newest staff member at a store in Japan, taking on the job of ensuring customers wear masks and practice social distancing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Robovie, developed by Kyoto-based Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International (ATR), guides customers around the sales floor at the official store of soccer team Cerezo Osaka.

It warns customers when it detects through a camera and 3D laser beam technology that they are not wearing masks or abiding by social distancing rules.

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Schoolgirl raped in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A female student of class ten was raped in a village of Lalmonirhat's Kaliganj upazila yesterday morning, police said.

The alleged rapist, 27-year-old Mashiur Rahman from the upazila's Chandrapur village, was on the run till evening.

Quoting the victim, Arij Md Sajjad Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station, said the incident happened around 8:00am when the girl was returning

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PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 19
 Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
 AZAN 5:00 12:45 3:45 5:25 7:00
 JAMAAT 5:35 1:15 4:00 5:30 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Govt to buy 40 lakh MRPs for expatriate Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs yesterday approved a proposal to procure 40 lakh machine-readable passport (MRP) books to meet the immediate requirement of Bangladeshi expatriates.

The home ministry made the proposal before the committee so that Bangladeshis living abroad get the passports, as the government cannot give them e-passports due to the coronavirus pandemic across the globe.

Cabinet Division Additional Secretary Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal said the government's target is to give everyone e-passport.

"But we are going to buy 40 lakh MRPs due to the Covid-19 situation," he told this newspaper after the cabinet committee meeting was held virtually.

Contacted, Brig Gen Saïdur Rahman Khan, project director of e-passport, said for

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Children in Hatirjheel creating earthen toys, which they will leave out in the sun to dry before they can start playing with them. Amid the continuing closure of schools during the coronavirus pandemic, children across the country have had a lot of time to engage in recreational activities. This photo was taken around noon yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

REJECTION OF FRAUD CLAIMS Trump fires US election security chief

Judge skeptical of Trump bid to halt Biden win in Pennsylvania

AGENCIES

Donald Trump on Tuesday fired the US government's top election security official, who had rejected the president's unsubstantiated claims of "massive" fraud in the vote he lost to Joe Biden.

Trump announced on Twitter the termination "effective immediately" of Chris Krebs, who led the agency that jointly declared "the November 3rd election was the most secure in American history."

The US president, who refuses to acknowledge that he lost his bid for reelection to Democrat Biden, has repeatedly claimed without evidence that the voting and count were replete with fraud.

"The recent statement by Chris Krebs on the security of the 2020 Election was highly inaccurate, in that there were massive improprieties and fraud," he wrote in a tweet.

"Therefore, effective immediately, Chris Krebs has been terminated as Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency."

Krebs, who reportedly told friends last week he expected to be removed, appeared to confirm it in a tweet on his personal account.

"Honored to serve. We did it right. Defend Today, Secure Tomorrow," he wrote.

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