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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Pandemic paused their education

Mohiuddin Alamgir and Nilima Jahan

Mohammad Alif's life has utterly changed. The sixth grader was a resident of Blind Education and Rehabilitation Development Organisation (BERDO) in the capital's Mirpur. He was fond of his fellow students who also lived at the facility. After the school closed late March due to the pandemic, his father Joyanal Abedin, a police constable, took him back home, which is also in Mirpur. "My son's studies came to a complete halt in the first three months. He got depressed. Although she has to take care of the younger children, my wife learnt to read Braille and started teaching him at home," said Joyanal. Since the family does not own any smart device, Alif has not attended the classes his school has been giving twice a week for the last few months. His hardship is multiplied by the thousands of students with disabilities either in mainstream or special schools. Rights activists say these students lack access because of a lack of study material in format suitable for children with special needs. Students with hearing impairment miss out on lessons because of the absence of sign language interpreters. Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled, Bangladesh, widely known as SWID Bangladesh, has 539 special schools with over 27,000 students.

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Men drying and sorting out plastic sheets discarded from re-rolling mills in Bayejid area of Chattogram city as a white cloud of chemical residues from the sheets covers the area. Even the risks involved with prolonged inhalation of the chemical have not been able to make two of them wear a face covering, let alone the coronavirus rules.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Legal action if rallies held without permit

Says DMP
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police has imposed a ban on organising assemblies, rallies, mass gatherings, and use of loudspeakers at these programmes in the capital without prior permission. A DMP press release yesterday said legal actions would be taken against any violation of the ban. The ban came at a time when different religious groups held public rallies opposing establishment of Bangabandhu's sculpture in the country. "Nowadays it is being noticed that various socio-political and religious organisations are announcing programmes like assemblies, rallies and public gatherings in Dhaka without having permission from the authorities concerned. Movement of traffic is being disrupted due to various obstacles created on roads because of these programmes," says the release. The DMP ordinance

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DIGITAL SECURITY ACT Arrest warrant issued against Baul Rita

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued an arrest warrant for Baul singer Rita Dewan for "hurting religious sentiments". Dhaka Cyber Tribunal Judge Mohammad Ash Sams Joglul Hossain issued the order, Shamim Al Mamun, bench assistant of the tribunal, told The Daily Star. Two others, Shahjahan and Md Iqbal Hossain, who had uploaded Rita's songs to their YouTube channels, were also ordered to be arrested. Rita Dewan was sued on February 2 by a lawyer named Advocate Imrul Hasan. The case was filed with the cyber tribunal in Dhaka. On February 3, another case was filed against her by short filmmaker Rasel Mia with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court in Dhaka. The arrest warrant

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Bangladesh will work for durable peace



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman offering prayers at the mass grave at Jhalokati on December 3, 1972.

December 3, 1972
 SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN
PRESIDENT ASSURES ALL COOPERATION TO INDIA
 President Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury today says that the new nation Bangladesh would extend full cooperation to India for establishment of durable peace in the subcontinent to make it an abode of peace. Speaking at a civic reception given in his honour by the sheriff of Calcutta, President Chowdhury says Bangladesh is following a policy of non-alignment to have friendship with all countries of the world and help establishment of peace in the subcontinent. He further says Bangladesh is also ready to cooperate with Pakistan for the cause of peace in the subcontinent. He, however, regrets that no response has yet been received from Pakistan for establishment of peace in the region.



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China probe lands on Moon

AFP, Beijing

A Chinese space probe yesterday began drilling on the surface of the Moon hours after landing, in an ambitious attempt to bring back the first lunar samples in four decades. Beijing has poured billions into its military-run space programme, with hopes of having a crewed space station by 2022 and of eventually sending humans to the Moon. The Chang'e-5 spacecraft -- named for the mythical Chinese moon goddess -- touched down on the near side of the Moon on Tuesday, and is now gathering samples from the surface, the China National Space Administration said. Chang'e-5's goal is to collect lunar rocks and soil to help scientists learn about the Moon's origins, formation and volcanic activity. If the return journey

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S'pore allows sale of lab-grown meat

REUTERS, Singapore



Singapore has given US start-up Eat Just the greenlight to sell its lab-grown chicken meat, in what the firm says is the world's first regulatory approval for so-called clean meat that does not come from slaughtered animals. The meat, to be sold as nuggets, will be priced at premium chicken prices when it first launches in a restaurant in Singapore "in the very near term", co-founder and CEO Josh Tetrick said. Demand for alternatives to regular meat is surging due to concerns about health, animal welfare and the environment. Plant-based substitutes, popularised by the likes of Beyond Meat, Impossible Foods and Quorn, increasingly feature on supermarket shelves and restaurant menus.

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2020 one of three hottest years ever: UN

AFP, Geneva

This year is on course to be one of the three warmest ever recorded and could even top the record set in 2016, the United Nations said yesterday. The past six years, 2015 to 2020, are set to make up all six of the hottest years since modern records began in 1850, the UN's World Meteorological Organization said in its provisional 2020 State of the Global Climate report. "2020 has, unfortunately, been yet another extraordinary year for our climate," said WMO secretary-general Petteri Taalas. The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change calls for capping global warming at well below two degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial (1850-1900) level, while countries will pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 C. "The average global

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7 Myanmar nationals held with 2.8 lakh yaba pills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Coast Guard detained seven Myanmar nationals with 280,000 yaba tablets from a boat in the Bay of Bengal in Teknaf's Katabunia area early yesterday. Tipped off, coastguards conducted a raid in Shah Pari Dwip area and chased down a boat entering Bangladesh territory from Myanmar, said Lt Commander M Hamidul Islam, media officer at Coast Guard headquarters. The coastguards searched the boat and found seven Myanmar citizens smuggling the contraband tablets into

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Over one lakh people of 15 villages in Aruail and Pakshimul union of Brahmanbaria's Sarail depend on this six-foot wide bamboo bridge over the Chetra River. Their only other option is to use boats, but that too becomes impossible in winter. A proper bridge would hugely benefit the residents of the area.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDYO

More than 2,500 die in US in 24 hrs

England leaves lockdown but sees new Covid curbs

AGENCIES

The United States, the country hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic and in the throes of a surge in cases, registered more than 2,500 deaths in a 24-hour period, the highest total since late April, Johns Hopkins University said. More than 180,000 new infections were recorded, according to real-time data provided by the Baltimore-based university at 8:30 pm (0130 GMT yesterday). The last time the daily death toll was higher than Tuesday's total of 2,562 was in late April, at the height of the pandemic's first wave. The number of hospitalizations in the United States hit 99,000 on Tuesday, a new record, according to the Covid Tracking Project. The situation is particularly dire in several Midwestern states, including Indiana and South Dakota. Experts fear a new surge in the number of infections now that several days have passed since the Thanksgiving holiday, which saw millions of Americans travel to see loved ones despite recommendations to skip festive gatherings. For now, the number of new daily infections is still high, but more or less consistent with the figures seen in recent weeks. The United States regularly saw 2,000 deaths a day in the spring, but has hit the number several times in the past two weeks. In total, the US now has registered more than 13.7 million coronavirus cases and more than 270,000 deaths.

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PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 3
 Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
 AZAN 5-15 12-45 3-45 5-19 7-00
 JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30
 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION