

Stay alert to

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saw that we lacked in preparations,” Selim, also a presidium member of AL, said.

The committee also said they saw corruption and scandals centring facemasks and Covid-19 test.

Different quarters have already raised concerns over possible mismanagement and irregularities regarding vaccination.

The standing committee said the coronavirus vaccination programme should be under full control of the ministry and the vaccines will be given at government hospitals and upazila health complexes.

Selim asked the ministry to complete necessary measures to preserve the Covid-19 vaccine in advance, adding that the ministry should start training doctors on Covid-19 vaccination at the district and upazila level on vaccination.

He also said the vaccine cannot be given in the hands of the private sector. “If anyone wants to import vaccines from abroad, they have to do so with the government’s permission.”

The government has already signed

an agreement with Serum Institute of India and Beximco Pharmaceuticals Limited to buy three crore doses of the Oxford vaccine.

The chairman of the committee also said they have asked the ministry to communicate with different vaccine producing countries and organisations so that Bangladesh can procure vaccines suitable for children under 18, as the existing vaccine is not applicable for them.

About the suspension of air communication with the UK, Selim said many countries, including India and countries close to the EU, have stopped air communication with the UK due to a new strain of Covid-19, said to be 70 percent more contagious.

“We have asked the ministry to immediately coordinate with the Civil Aviation Ministry to take measures... We can suspend the air communication primarily for one or two weeks and monitor the situation in the UK meanwhile,” Selim added.

He said, “Earlier we have seen that Italy-returnee passengers, instead of staying in institutional quarantine, roamed around

their areas and contributed to spread the Covid-19 in the country.

“There was also some negligence regarding keeping people in quarantine when the Covid-19 was first detected in the country.”

State Minister for Civil Aviation Ministry M Mahbub Ali recently said the highest authority of the government, as well as different concerned ministries, are closely monitoring the Covid-19 situation in the UK, while the government is yet to take any decision on suspending air communication.

US nurse tests

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affiliate that his arm was sore for a day but that he had suffered no other side-effects.

Six days later on Christmas Eve, he became sick after working a shift in the Covid-19 unit, the report added. He got the chills and later came down with muscle aches and fatigue.

He went to a drive-up hospital testing site and tested positive for Covid-19 the day after Christmas, the report said.

Fugitives can’t be on any

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Journal at 11:30pm the same day. There PK Halder refuted the allegations of laundering a huge amount of money abroad.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Soheli came up with the order after hearing a petition filed by Anti-Corruption Commission lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan.

He prayed to this court to initiate a contempt of court proceedings against the authorities of Ekattor TV for broadcasting the interview of PK Halder and for bringing him as a guest to the talk show.

While passing the order, the bench said the freedom of expression is guaranteed by the constitution of the republic, but the freedom is subject to some reasonable restrictions.

The HC also fixed January 10 for holding a hearing on this issue.

Lawyer Khurshid submitted the petition yesterday morning.

In the petition, he said PK Halder is accused of laundering a huge amount of money and is a fugitive in the eye of the law as a lower court has issued an arrest warrant against him on November 25 and the government and the ACC are trying to arrest him through the Interpol.

During hearing of the petition, the lawyer told the HC bench that the Ekattor TV authorities have shown audacity and disrespect to the HC by allowing PK Halder to talk to the television programme as a guest and broadcasting his interview since a rule is pending against him.

He mentioned that another HC bench on January 7, 2015, directed the authorities concerned to stop publishing statements of BNP leader Tarique Rahman in the media as he is a fugitive.

Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik told the HC bench yesterday that there was a serious

repercussion as Ekattor TV had treated PK Halder as a guest in the talk show.

Issuing a suomuto rule, the HC bench led by Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder on November 18 wanted to know what steps have been taken to arrest PK Halder, who fled the country after allegedly siphoning off around Tk 10,200 crore from some non-banking financial institutions, and to bring him back to the country.

The court ordered the authorities concerned of the government and the ACC to explain the steps taken to arrest and bring him back.

In the rule, the court also asked the authorities to show causes as to why their inaction and failure in arresting and bringing PK Halder back should not be declared illegal.

On October 21 this year, another HC bench directed the law enforcement authorities to arrest PK Halder immediately after his return.

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

In an investigation, Bangladesh Bank found that Tk 1,596 crore was transferred from International Leasing and Financial Services (ILFSL) in violation of the rules through 48 accounts of various organisations related to the directors and shareholders of the firm, said the bank officials.

PK Halder came to the limelight during the anti-casino drives last year.

The ACC opened an investigation into the involvement of 43 people, including PK Halder, in the illegal casino business.

The government issued a travel ban on him on October 3 last year. But he managed to flee.

On January 8 this year, the anti-graft body filed a case against PK Halder on charges of illegally amassing wealth worth Tk 275 crore.

Transport strike set to begin

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transport owners and workers. The local administration, however, said they are trying to solve the problem.

President of Pabna district transport owners association, freedom fighter Habibur Rahman Habib, said vehicular movement on the Dhaka-Pabna highway in Sirajganj’s Shahzadpur has been hampered for over a week due to the harassment of Pabna transport workers going through the upazila to Sirajganj.

“The men of [Shahzadpur] transport owners and the transport workers association used to collect excessive toll from vehicles going from Pabna to Dhaka on the highway, Shahzadpur transport men often assault workers of vehicles of Pabna when they are driving on the highway,” Habibur Rahman Habib told the Daily Star.

He said transport movement to and from Pabna on its highways will remain closed indefinitely.

Talking to The Daily Star, Md Firoz Khan, former president of transport workers association, claimed no step was taken to resolve the issue, which is why transport owners and workers decided on the indefinite transport strike.

“We had placed a six-point demand on Monday with a 72-hour deadline for fulfilling them, but till now no step has been taken in this regard, so the strike has kicked off,” Firoz Khan said.

However, Pabna Deputy Commissioner Kabir Mahamud told The Daily Star that the Pabna district administration has already talked to the Sirajganj district administration and the transport leaders of both districts. “We are trying our best to solve the problem,” The DC added.

WHO urges fair distribution

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the first cases of pneumonia of unknown origin to the UN health agency.

“Vaccines offer great hope to turn the tide of the pandemic. But to protect the world, we must ensure that all people at risk everywhere - not just in countries who can afford vaccines - are immunised,” he said.

He also urged countries to combat conspiracy theories and attacks on science, saying “The choice is easy,”

Cabinet okays

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National highway (N-1) (Daudkandi-Chattogram portion), informed the additional secretary.

He said the committee returned the proposals asking for revision.

Road Transport and Highways Division forwarded the proposal to award Tk 290.27 crore contract for one package (Chattogram portion) of the project to Taher Brothers Ltd as well as to award Tk 556.54 crore contract for construction work of Kumilla portion under the same project to joint venture of Abdul Momen Ltd and Spectra Engineers Ltd.

The committee also gave a nod to the proposal of Local Government

Engineering Department (LGED) for appointment of joint venture of Ramboll Denmark A/S, Aqua Consultant & Associates Ltd (Bangladesh) and Resource Planning and Management Consultants (Pvt.) Ltd, as consultant at Tk 57.79 crore for Second City Region Development Project.

The committee also approved the proposal of Bangladesh Power Development Board for repair works of two units of Karnaphuli Hydroelectric Power Plant involving Tk 126.81 crore.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal chaired the meeting in virtual platform.

Govt plans to import 10 lakh tonnes

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keeping the second wave of Covid-19 in mind, because the government may have to go for food intervention [distributing food free of cost or at reduced price],” she told The Daily Star yesterday.

“Till now, we have a target to import 10 lakh tonnes of rice at government level. If necessary, we will import more. Apart from this, we will collect paddy from farmers if they are willing to sell,” the secretary said when this paper contacted her after the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase approved a proposal to import 50,000 tonnes of rice from an Indian company.

As per the proposal, PK Agri Link Private Ltd will provide the rice at Tk 33.72 per kg.

Bangladesh imported only 4,000 tonnes of rice in the last fiscal year, according to the food ministry documents.

The development came two days after the food ministry, following the approval of the prime minister, on Monday wrote to the National Board of Revenue (NBR) to allow the private

sector to import rice at 25 percent duty to stabilise the rice market.

Currently, an importer has to pay 62.5 percent duty to import rice. However, rice importers will have to apply to the food ministry with all necessary documents to avail the reduced duty.

The NBR will issue a circular in this regard soon and none would be allowed to import rice at this reduced rate without government approval, the food secretary said.

Asked how much rice they would allow the private sector to import, the food secretary said, “There is no ceiling here. We will allow them [private sector] until the rice price comes down to tolerable levels and the farmers get a reasonable price for their products.”

However, Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque earlier this week said the government will not allow import of more than six lakh tonnes of rice by the private sector to safeguard the interests of farmers.

Apart from the 50,000 tonnes, the purchase committee earlier approved another proposal of procuring 1 lakh tonnes of rice, while the government

will collect another 1.5 lakh tonnes of rice from India under the government-to-government initiative.

These moves came as prices of rice have kept soaring in both retail and wholesale markets.

According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), price of per kg coarse rice was Tk 46 yesterday, which is 47.69 percent higher than the price of the same rice on December 30 last year.

The price of fine and medium rice also saw a rise between 20 and 25 percent compared to the price of December 30 last year, according to the TCB.

The food grain reserve was 7.39 lakh tonnes -- 5.37 lakh tonnes of rice and 2.02 lakh tonnes of wheat -- on Sunday, while the reserve of food grain was 13.83 lakh tonnes on the same date last year, according to the food ministry.

The government’s failure to attain its Boro procurement target and increased distribution of cereal among people affected by the pandemic and recurring floods are blamed for this situation.

New import

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Bangladesh. Talking to newsmen on his arrival at Dhaka Airport after attending the 50th anniversary of the USSR, Syed Nazrul informs that Breznev, the first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, in his four-hour long report presented on the occasion discussed Bangladesh and his report demonstrated the Soviet desire to further strengthen relations with the country. The names of Bangladesh and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman are very familiar to each and every citizen of the Soviet Union, he adds.

BHASHANI’S CALL FOR SOCIALISM
Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, president of the Bangladesh Nationalist Awami Party, announces today that he would lead a deputation to Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman next week to discuss the 15-point charter of demands of the seven-party committee of action which is headed by the Maulana himself.

Addressing a peasant-worker rally at the Suhrawardy Uddyan today, Maulana Bhashani says that if Bangabandhu agrees to the charter of demands, the forthcoming elections would be free, fair and impartial. Whoever will emerge victorious in such an election, be it Awami League or any other party, he would ungrudgingly respect the electoral verdict, adds the Maulana. “But under any circumstances the struggle for socialism would continue,” he reiterates.

Source: January 1, 1973 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Bangladesh Observer and Ittefaq.

3 of family die

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at Shashongachha railway crossing near the Cumilla Railway Station.

Sub-Inspector Ismail Hossain Siraji, in-charge of Cumilla Railway police out post, confirmed four passengers, including two women and a driver of an auto-rickshaw, were injured after the incident.

He added that all four were taken to Cumilla Medical College Hospital where Farid Munshi died after admission. Peyara Begum died while undergoing treatment. Akhi and driver Robiul were referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

On the way there, Akhi succumbed to her injuries.

While talking to reporters, Md Harun, a relative of the family, said, “Farid Munshi were on their way to Cumilla town for medical treatment purposes. They hired a CNG-run auto-rickshaw from the village home and was on their way when the accident occurred.”

22 more die

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2,677.93 recoveries and 44.22 deaths per million.

The country’s infection number reached the 5,00,000-mark on December 20. The first death was reported on March 18 and the death toll exceeded 7,000 on December 12.

The government has been warning of a second wave of Covid-19 in winter and urging people to follow health safety measures. It has also adopted a “no mask, no service” policy.

Bangladesh will get Covid-19 vaccines for around 4.5 crore people by May-June next year, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said recently.

“We will get 3 crore doses of vaccine for 1.5 crore people at the end of January or early February next year and 6 crore doses for 3 crore people by May-June.”

Russia opens ‘fraud’ probe against Navalny

AFP, Moscow

Russian investigators on Tuesday opened a criminal probe into Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny, alleging he used more than 356 million rubles (\$4.8 million) of donations to his organisations for personal purposes including holidays abroad.

DESCO POWER IS YOURS ISO 9001:2015 Certified Dhaka Electric Supply Company Ltd. (DESCO) House # 22/B, Faruque Sarani, Nikunja # 2, Dhaka-1229,Bangladesh Tel. No: +88 02 8900110-11, 8900820-23, Fax No. +88 02 8900100 E-mail: pit@desco.org.bd, Web: www.desco.org.bd				
Invitation for International Tender				
1	Ministry/ Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Power Division		
2	Agency	Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited (DESCO)		
3	Procuring Entity Name	Procurement, Inspection & Testing Division, DESCO		
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh		
5	Invitation for	Construction of 12(Twelve) storied commercial building with 06 (Six) nos. basement floors for 'DESCO Head Office Building' at plot- 49/A, Nikunja-2, Khilkhet, Dhaka.		
6	Tender No.	ICT - 55/2020		
7	Invitation Ref No.	27.24.0000.021.07.055.20.1379		
8	Date	30/12/2020		
KEY INFORMATION				
9	Procurement Method	One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10	Budget and Source of Funds	DESCO's own fund		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
11	Tender Package Name	Total Civil & Finish Works, Building Electro-Mechanical System and Complete Facade Works for DESCO Head Office Building		
12	Tender Selling Date, Closing & Opening Date and Time	Last Selling Date	Closing Date &Time	Opening Date & Time
		February 15, 2021	February 16, 2021 12.00 Hr BST	February 16, 2021 12.30 Hr BST
13	Date & Time and Address of the office for Pre-tender Meeting	January 20, 2021; 11:00 Hr BST Conference Room, Office of the Managing Director, DESCO. House # 22/B (3 rd floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Uttara, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh.		
		Selling Office of Deputy General Manager (Accounts), DESCO House # 22/B (6 th floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229.	Receiving Conference Room, Office of the Managing Director, DESCO House # 22/B (3 rd floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh.	Opening Conference Room, Office of the Managing Director, DESCO House # 22/B (3 rd floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
15	Eligibility of Tenderer	This invitation for Tender is open to all eligible Tenderers or JVCA as mentioned below: 1. General Experience : The minimum number of years of general experience of the Tenderer in the construction works as Prime Contractor, subcontractor or management contractor shall be 15 (Fifteen) years under public or reputed sector organization in national or international counting backward from the date of publication of Invitation for Tender in the News Paper. 2. Specific Experience – A. The minimum specific experience as a Prime Contractor in construction works of i) At least 3 (Three) contracts of successful completion of 10 Storied or above Building with Basements (having not less than 1000 Sqm area of each Basement &10000 Sqm total built area of the building) of Office / Residential building works in any Govt./ Semi-Govt./ Autonomous Organization or reputed private sector in national or international level over the last 10 (Ten) years till the date of publication of Invitation for Tender in the News Paper. ii) Among the 3 (three) Contracts, at least 01 (One) Contract shall be of 12(Twelve) Storied or above Building with minimum 3(three) Basements with a value not less than BDT 170.00 (one hundred seventy) Crore including Civil, Sanitary& plumbing and Electrical works in a single contract (To be supported by work completion certificate). iii) The contractor or his nominated Subcontractor(s) must have completed two or more unitized curtain wall work in a single contract, glazing area not less than 10,000 sqm in last 05(five) years and should have unitized curtain wall fabrication work experience in Asia. (as per annexure-XI to XV) iv) The contractor or his nominated Subcontractor's must have experience of successful completion of Piling with Hydraulic Rotary Rig, Sanitary & Water supply system, Electrical works, Air conditioning works, supply & installation of Lift & Escalator, Generator, Electrical Sub-station, Fire detection & protection System works etc. as per annexure-XI to XIII. B. In case of foreign tenderer, experience certificate shall be authenticated by Chamber of Commerce and Industries or Foreign Ministry or Embassy/High commission of the tenderer's country. Authentication by Chamber of Commerce and Industries shall have to be attested by Bangladesh Embassy /High commission in tenderer's home country. 3. Tender capacity- Not less than BDT 175.00 (one hundred seventy five) Crore 4. Liquid Assets/ Working Capital /Credit Facilities- not less than BDT 20.00 (Twenty) Crore . Tenderer's latest Credit Information Bureau (CIB) report of Bangladesh Bank must be submitted with the information on Liquid Assets/ Working Capital/ Credit Facilities. 5. Average annual Construction Turnover over: not less than BDT 120 (One hundred twenty) Crore calculated as total certified payments received for contracts in progress or completed, in the last 05 (Five) years till the date of publication of IFT in the newspaper; 6. Other eligibility and qualification criteria of Tenderer are detailed in Tender Documents. NB: Bangladesh Bank exchange rate (USD to BDT) on the date of tender opening will be considered for evaluation process.		
		i. Setting up site including developing compacted formation level, ii. Erection of required site facilities, iii. Shore protection by Shore pile, king post pile & tension pile using Hydraulic Rotary rig method. iv. Construction of Raft/ Mat Foundation v. Construction of Basement in Top down Method. vi. Construction of RCC works in Foundation and Superstructure vii. Construction of suspended steel structure Bridge connecting buildings at each floor above 1 st floor. viii. Brick work/Stone work/Tiles work/Plaster Work/Epoxy paint work/ Paint work/ Water feature work/Grill work/ Aluminum and glazing work/ Wood works/Plantation work and all other finish work as per construction drawing. ix. Provide facilities of internal & external electrification, internal & external sanitary, internal water supply, internal gas work etc. x. Supply fitting and fixing of HVAC system, Electric Generator & substation works, Fire protection & suppression works, Fire detection including alarm & evacuation system works, vertical transportation such as elevator & escalator works, BMS system, Building Automation System etc. xi. Complete Security works as per tender document, Complete IT & communication works, xii. Sewage treatment plant, waste disposal works, Solar system, Rain water harvesting, deep tube well to be detailed in tender documents. xiii. Supply, Fitting & Fixing of complete unitized curtain wall glazing system with aluminum Louver fin works. Brief Description of works has been mentioned in the tender document: volume 2, 3 & 4 of 4. Completion Time: 36 (thirty six) months.		
17	Price of Tender Document	US\$ 300.00 (USD Three Hundred) or BDT 25,000/- (Twenty Five Thousand Taka) only payable in the form of Pay Order/Bank draft from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh in favor of ' Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited (DESCO) '.		
18	Tender Security Amount	The amount of the Tender Security shall be: BDT 7,00,00,000.00 (Taka Seven Crore only) for participating in the tender. The tender security shall be in the form of an irrevocable Bank Guarantee issued by any scheduled bank of Bangladesh or by any internationally reputable bank in favour of ' Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited '. But in case of internationally reputable bank, the Bank Guarantee should be endorsed by its any correspondent bank located in Bangladesh.		
19	Address of official inviting tender	Interested tenderers may obtain further information from the office of the following address during normal office hours (09:00 to 17:00 hours BST) . Office of the Superintending Engineer (P.&T) Address: House # 22/B (1 st floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh. Email: pit@desco.org.bd, pd.descohq@desco.org.bd		
20	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.			
Engr. Mohammad Kamruzzaman SE (Procurement, Inspection & Testing), DESCO				