



# The Daily Star

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**"We don't need so many leaders. What we need now are true activists."**  
AWAMI LEAGUE GENERAL SECRETARY  
OBAIDUL QUADER SAYS



**"This [coronavirus] is going to be with us for some time -- it's endemic in human populations and is not going to go away without a vaccine."**  
INFECTIOUS-DISEASE EXPERT AT JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER FOR HEALTH SECURITY AMESH ADALJA (PAGE 2)



**"We are watching. As a domestic issue, we would want India to control it. It is our expectation."**  
FOREIGN SECRETARY MASUD BIN MOMEN SAID ABOUT DELHI VIOLENCE (PAGE 2)



MOHAMMADPUR GENEVA CAMP

## Exiled yaba lord reclaims throne

Returns to country after staying out for 2 yrs amid anti-drug purge; business of mad drug fully on as some law enforcers keep backing it up



SHAHEEN MOLLA, MUNTAKIM SAAD and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

He is back. Ishtiaq Ahmed, known as the drug lord of Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, was forced to stay out of his empire after the anti-narcotics crackdown began in 2018. But he reclaimed the throne this year, thanks to some unscrupulous law enforcement officials, and a top underworld criminal who had got life term but came



out of jail recently, said intelligence and camp sources.

Ishtiaq first appeared on the scene in 2006. It was initially a gang of six but more people eventually joined him, and by 2015, he led a gang of 250.

After the countrywide drives began in May 2018, he took shelter in "safe houses" in different Asian countries, including Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, and back home, dozens of his gang members got

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## 'FIR MANIPULATION' SC rejects Puthia OC's appeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court verdict that directed the authorities to enquire into the allegation against then OC of Rajshahi's Puthia Police Station Shakil Uddin Ahmed and others of manipulating the FIR in labour leader Nurul Islam murder case.

A four-member bench led by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order after dismissing a leave to appeal petition filed by the OC challenging the HC judgment.

Following a writ petition filed by Nurul's daughter Nigar Sultana, the HC on December 1 last year observed that the allegation against Shakil of manipulating the FIR is undoubtedly grave, which is a punitive offence under sections 166 and 167 of the Penal Code.

The two sections of the Penal Code are included

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The lower level of the Padma bridge, construction of which is scheduled to be completed by June 2021. Trains will ply the lower level, while the upper will be for vehicles. Inset, people working on a pier that will be the last to be completed.

PHOTO: TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

## Experts want meticulous monitoring

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although the government is working to prevent the novel coronavirus from entering the country, it is not getting all personnel of the health sector involved, say public health specialists.

They said luckily, there was still no confirmed case of coronavirus infection in the country. But the situation could be bad if an infected person enters the country due to limitations in screening.

"The situation in China has become serious as the country was 'reluctant' at the very beginning of this disease outbreak. We have to learn from China. They have assigned necessary human resources, integrated all government and private organisations and built makeshift hospitals. Have we such capacity? the [national preparedness] plan should have been ready much earlier," Prof Muzaherul Huq, founder of Public Health Foundation of Bangladesh, told The Daily Star

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CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

## Deaths, cases rise across the globe

Trump urges calm after US death

AFP, Beijing

Thailand, Australia became the latest country to report its first death from coronavirus as the outbreak continues to spread around the world with more than 86,000 people infected.

Yesterday, several European countries, including The Czech Republic, Luxembourg and Ireland, announced their first cases.

China also reported a fresh spike in coronavirus infections yesterday, as US President Donald Trump urged calm after the first death on American soil and Australia registered its first fatality.

The virus has spread to more than 60 countries around the globe, prompting the World Health Organization to raise its risk assessment to its highest level.

Worldwide, nearly 3,000 people have been killed and more than

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COVID-19 UPDATE	2,990 DEATHS	79,824 confirmed cases in mainland China	The virus spread to at least 64 countries
	87,565 confirmed cases		

## Abuzz with life, tinged with worry too

Padma bridge work goes on in full swing but there is concern over coronavirus fallout

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

It was a sunny spring morning last Thursday.

The construction site of the much-anticipated Padma bridge was humming with activity. With the relatively calm river beneath, around 30 workers were placing rods to make the base of a pier of the bridge.

Counting from the Mawa side of the river, this would be the 26th pier -- one of the four piers yet to be completed, and the last one to be finished.

The men were smiling and talking to each other as they worked. They were on the cusp of accomplishing a monumental task.

"Concreting over the metal base of the 26th pier will be done in



two days and it will take around a month to construct the rest of the pier," one of several Bangladeshi engineers overseeing the work told this correspondent.

The task of driving into the ground the 294 piles supporting the piers was completed in July last year.

Over a kilometre away, around 40

workers and several Bangladeshi and Chinese engineers were working on the top level of the double-decker bridge. On the Janjira side of the bridge, over 600 metres of road was visible. The bottom level is for trains.

Over 3.7 km of the 6.15 km bridge is visible with 25 of the 41 spans

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## Liton, Saifuddin get Tigers back to winning ways

MAZHAR UDDIN from Sylhet

Opener Liton Das smashed his second century that, along with Mohammad Saifuddin's all-round efforts, helped Bangladesh return to winning ways in the fifty-over format in the first ODI against Zimbabwe at the Sylhet International Stadium yesterday.

The home side posted their highest total against Zimbabwe of 321 for six and registered their largest victory in the format, by 169 runs, surpassing the 163-run victory against Sri Lanka in 2018.

Zimbabwe never looked like posing any threat in chase of the huge target and were eventually bundled out for 152 in 39.1 overs.

The game also witnessed Mashrafe Bin Mortaza become only the fifth bowler in ODI history to take 100 wickets as skipper when he picked up the last Zimbabwean wicket, his second of the match, of Tinotenda Mutombodzi. It was also his 700th wicket in his professional career.

Earlier, Liton, who was all set for an even bigger score than the 126 he had reached, had to surrender Sylhet's heat and humidity as the right-hander was forced to retire hurt and bring an end to a magnificent knock that took just 105 deliveries.

Bangladesh capitalised on Liton's hundred as

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