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CORONAVIRUS SCARE

MCCI for Tk 1tn fund to tackle fallout

Says central bank can manage it from global lenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Country's central bank should create a fund of Tk 1 trillion to mitigate the financial losses due to Covid-19 outbreak, says a leading business chamber.

Bangladesh Bank can manage the financial assistance from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, and Islamic Development Bank, said a press release of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) on Thursday.

The chamber also suggested the government take some financial measures to tackle the crisis.

Banks and non-banking financial institutions can be financed from the proposed fund to disburse loans to the business entities, MCCI said.

It added that at present, the central bank should take steps to inject \$2billion to \$3billion into the domestic economy to deal with the crisis.

So, BB should also sit in meetings with the stakeholders of micro, small, medium and large enterprises, banks and business chambers to fix the required incentives to the businesses.

The government should stop collection of bills of utilities like gas, electricity, and water over the last six

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People, mostly workers of Roads and Highways Department and their family members, wait on the footpath of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue near the capital's Karwan Bazar before boarding trucks to Pirganj of Rangpur. They travelled to Narayanganj's Kanchpur from Cumilla by different modes of transport amid a countrywide shutdown. From there, they had to walk on foot to reach Karwan Bazar to catch trucks which brought vegetables to the capital from different districts. After unloading the goods, the trucks would carry them to northern districts for Tk 300 to Tk 600. Inset, people boarding a truck. The photos were taken around midnight on Thursday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Around 2,500 Bangladeshis to remain stuck in India

They have to wait until lockdown ends

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladeshis stranded in India amid the nationwide lockdown, imposed to curb the coronavirus outbreak, will have to wait till the lockdown is relaxed to return, said officials concerned yesterday.

Earlier this week, the Bangladesh foreign ministry had said it was weighing options of chartering a flight to repatriate the stranded Bangladeshis, mostly in Chennai and Bengaluru.

However, that is not possible now because many of those who had wanted to return home are not agreeing to the fare that Biman Bangladesh Airlines is asking, a foreign ministry official told The Daily Star requesting anonymity.

On Thursday, the Indian government decided to

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Three die after showing virus-like symptoms

125 families under lockdown in 4 dists

STAR REPORT

At least 125 families have been kept in isolation in four districts after three people died with coronavirus-like symptoms.

Besides, in some cases, relatives or neighbours of these families were either infected or suspected to be infected with the virus, said authorities.

In Narayanganj, about 100 families were kept in isolation in Bandar upazila after a 45-year-old resident in the area died on Thursday after being tested positive for coronavirus.

Shukla Sarker, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Bandar, said the isolation was imposed in the area following directives of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

In Satkhira, at least 20 families were kept in isolation in Sadar upazila following the death of a college student who was suffering from fever and respiratory disease.

Hossain Safayat, civil surgeon of Satkhira, said they sent the sample of

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

US recognises Bangladesh



Bangabandhu along with Syed Nazrul Islam visits tornado-hit areas in Mymensingh (April 4, 1972).

APRIL 4, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

US ACCORDS RECOGNITION

The United States of America today accords recognition to Bangladesh as a sovereign and independent state. The US is the 57th country and the fourth of the five big powers to recognise Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad welcomes the US recognition as a victory of the freedom loving people of America. The foreign minister hopes that the US recognition will contribute to the maintenance of peace in the region.

BANGABANDHU WARNS RACKETEERS Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman warns dishonest traders against malpractices. He says that he will cancel the licenses issued to distributors and wholesalers of essential commodities if the prices

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Berthing of vessels delayed at Ctg port

DWAIPAN BARUA, Ctg

Chattogram port authorities have delayed scheduled berthing of three vessels due to acute space shortage at its yard designated to imported goods-laden containers.

The situation occurred due to limited transport coverage and slow delivery of containers amid the countrywide shutdown over coronavirus.

On Thursday, the port authorities canceled berthing of vessels named MV Tzini, MV MCC Danang and MV BLPL Grace, said sources.

In an unusual turn of events, the vessels were denied berth for space shortage and not for occupied jetties, they said, adding that three jetties were vacant on the day.

Meanwhile, a vessel -- MV Xpress Kaburu -- that

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Pie in the sky

Aussie plane delivers pizza to locked-down outback



AFP, Sydney

Pizza and beer are being delivered by plane to remote ranches in the Australian outback in an attempt to bring a slice of cheer to those in extreme isolation under the virus lockdown.

The Dunmarra Wayside Inn, a usually bustling roadside diner in Australia's Northern Territory, used a small fixed-wing aircraft for a trial run of what it hopes will become a weekly flying takeaway service to far-flung cattle stations.

"The station that we did send them to absolutely loved them, so much that they ate them for breakfast the next morning," Ben Anderson, the inn's manager and pizza cook, told AFP yesterday.

The business had tried to keep the service under wraps until it was certain the plane deliveries would work. "We've put in a massive

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Relief rice seized from AL leader's house

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Government officials have recovered a whopping five and a half tonnes of rice belong to vulnerable group development programme from the house of a local Awami League (AL) leader in Naogaon's Raninagar upazila.

Ayat Ali, 60, a member of Kaligram union AL, is also a rice trader, said Al Mamun, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of the upazila.

Khandaker Makammam Mahmuda, upazila women's affairs officer, came to know about the matter on Thursday when she was monitoring the distribution of VGD rice -- allotted for the ultra-poor women.

She immediately informed the matter to UNO Mamun, who then raided the house of the AL leader along with police and the local union parishad

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Pandemic may cause biggest emissions cut since WWII

REUTERS, London/Washington

Carbon dioxide emissions could fall by the largest amount since World War Two this year as the coronavirus outbreak brings economies to a virtual standstill, according to the chair of a network of scientists providing benchmark emissions data.

Rob Jackson, who chairs the Global Carbon Project, which produces widely-watched annual emissions estimates, said carbon output could fall by more than 5% year-on-year --

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PRAYER TIMING APRIL 4

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
JAMAT 4:40	12:45	4:45	6:21	7:45
5:15	1:15	5:00	6:24	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Boats loaded with pineapples wait at Bonorupa Samata Ghat in Rangamati town. Farmers said they could not recover their production costs after selling the summer fruit for Tk 10-15 a pair yesterday, down from Tk 25-30 a month ago. The price dropped sharply due to a lack of customers amid a countrywide shutdown over coronavirus.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

HELPING COUNTRIES FIGHT COVID-19

Google to publish user location data

AFP, Paris

Google says it will publish users' location data around the world to allow governments to gauge the effectiveness of social distancing measures, brought in to stem the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The reports on users' movements in 131 countries will be made available on a special website on Friday and will chart movement trends over time by geography", according to a post on one of Google's blogs.

Trends will display "a percentage point increase or decrease in visits" to locations like parks, shops, homes and places of work, not "the absolute number of visits," said the post, signed by Jen Fitzpatrick, who leads Google Maps, and the company's chief health officer Karen DeSalvo.

For example, in France, visits to restaurants, cafes, shopping centres, museums or theme parks have plunged by 88 percent from their normal levels, the data showed.

Local shops initially saw a jump of 40 percent when confinement measures announced, before suffering a drop of 72 percent.

Office use is possibly stronger than suspected meanwhile, as the decline in that area is a more modest 56 percent.

"We hope these reports will help support decisions about how to manage the Covid-19 pandemic," the Google execs said.

"This information could help officials understand changes in essential trips that can shape recommendations on business hours or inform delivery service offerings."

Like the detection of traffic jams or traffic measurement Google Maps, the new reports will use "aggregated, anonymised" data from users who have activated their location history.

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