

## Detained children at Covid-19 risk

Unicef says, welcomes virtual courts to expedite their release

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of children detained has increased in the country since court proceedings were postponed in March amid Covid-19 outbreak. Unicef Bangladesh said yesterday.

"Their number is now almost twice the capacity of the juvenile centres," it said in a statement, adding, more than 1,000 children awaiting trial or sentenced for petty crimes are currently held in three correction centres.

With limited staff and logistical support, and with inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, it is exceptionally difficult for children and staff at the centres to practice physical distancing or to self-isolate to minimise the risk of Covid-19 infection.

"These facilities can become hotspots of infection," it added.

Amid this, seven children were released on Wednesday through setting up a virtual children's court. Several hundred can

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Amid all the hype of fancy hand sanitizers, rubbing alcohol and disinfectant liquid soaps that have come to the fore with the heightened hygiene awareness that the novel coronavirus has caused, it appears that some still have faith in good old 'Bangla Saban', a traditional laundry soap. The ball-shaped soap still being manufactured in large quantities, an indication that it still holds some market share. The photo was taken at Chattogram city's Rajakhali area recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## 'Irreparable loss to the nation'

Condolences pour in for National Professor Anisuzzaman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country was left in a state of mourning after national professor, renowned academician Dr Anisuzzaman passed away at the age of 83 at Dhaka CMH yesterday.

The passing of one of the country's foremost intellectuals and a lighthouse for the nation drew floods of messages of condolences and tributes from all quarters.

A freedom fighter and professor emeritus of Dhaka University Dr Anisuzzaman passed away around 5pm.

One of the most prolific essayists of the country, Prof Anisuzzaman was admitted to Universal Medical College Hospital after he fell seriously ill on April 27. He was shifted to Dhaka CMH on May 9, as his condition was not improving.

President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain, ministers, distinguished personalities, top leaders of different political and socio-economic-cultural organisations, educational institutions and people from different walks of life expressed deep shock and sorrow at the demise of the intellectual giant of our times.

In his condolence message, President Abdul Hamid expressed profound shock and sorrow at the death of the eminent educationist and renowned writer.

"Prof Dr Anisuzzaman was a shining star that guided the nation. He played a very significant role in improving the quality of education in Bangladesh. His death is truly an irreparable loss..."

The president prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to the bereaved family.

In her condolence message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of the noted educationist.

With profound respect, the premier recalled the outstanding contributions of Prof Anisuzzaman to the field of education and all democratic movements including the 1952 Language Movement, 1969 mass upsurge and 1971 Liberation War.

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## SBMCH gets first kidney dialysis unit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

A kidney dialysis unit with 10 machines has been installed at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH) in Barishal.

The authorities of the public hospital said the government took the initiative to support kidney patients -- especially those infected with coronavirus and in urgent need of dialysis.

The machines were procured from Japan, said Dr Manabendra Das, registrar of the Department of Nephrology at SBMCH.

Hospital Director Dr Bakir Hossain, who inaugurated the unit on Tuesday, said 10 more machines will be set up soon and then 20 patients can undergo kidney dialysis at a time.

Through the inauguration, the hospital has got the first-ever kidney dialysis unit in its 52 years of history, said the authorities.

The dialysis would be cheaper than that of private hospitals or clinics, they confirmed.

Talking about the issue, Dr Manabendra Das said a kidney patient, who needs dialysis twice a week for six months, have to spend around Tk 2.5 lakh at private healthcare centre.

However, SBMCH is offering such a package for only Tk 20,000, Dr Das told this newspaper.

Khasru Alami Sikder from Baherchar village in Patuakhali -- who is the first patient admitted to the unit -- said, "I am very happy to receive the service. Now, I need not go to Dhaka or a private clinic to get a dialysis."



Slowly but surely, streetside shopping is coming back to Dhaka. Sellers have started to display colourful clothing items, bed sheets and luggages at their makeshift stalls in the capital's Gulistan, as Ramadan enters the last 10 days. During regular times, this would already be underway by now. However, due to the pandemic this year, it's only now that sales are picking up, and not without objections from conscious corners of society. This photo was taken yesterday.



44 test positive, 137 quarantined

## Petition seeks 'yellow zone' at private hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) yesterday filed a writ petition seeking its directive on authorities concerned to set up "yellow zones" at entrances of every private hospital, clinic and diagnostic centre.

Advocate Manzill Murshid submitted the petition digitally, requesting the HC to pass an order on the government to supply personal protective equipment to doctors, nurses and staff at yellow zones who will conduct tests of emergency patients and provide treatment during the pandemic.

In the petition, HRPB prayed to the HC to issue a rule asking authorities to explain why they should not be directed to take necessary steps in this regard, and to direct respondents to show cause why their failure to protect people from coronavirus should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional.

Chairman of advisory committee for prevention of infectious diseases, health secretary, additional secretary (hospitals) of health ministry, director general of directorate of health services and president and secretary of Bangladesh Private Clinics and Diagnostics Owners Association have been made respondents to the required rule.

If a yellow zone is set up at the entrance of private hospitals and clinics, patients will be tested instantly and they will be classified on the basis of test reports and then necessary treatment can be given to them, said Advocate Manzill Murshid.

He told this newspaper that officials concerned of the HC are likely to hear on the petition on May 18.

## Dampara Police Lines turning into Covid-19 hotspot

44 test positive, 137 quarantined

FM MIZANUR RAHMAN, Ctg

Despite a number of measures taken by the authorities to stop transmission of Covid-19 among law enforcers, Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) Dampara Police Lines has become a coronavirus hotspot now, said police officials.

According to officials, in most cases the infected police personnel had no major symptoms except fever before being tested positive for coronavirus.

Close contact with the public while performing field duty, congested living condition in police barrack, not maintaining personal hygiene and lack of proper safety gears have put the personnel of CMP at high risk of being infected.

Till May 13 night, a total of 44 police personnel including the assistant commissioner (force) of CMP tested Covid-19 positive while 137 were sent for isolation and quarantine in different places assigned by CMP, said police sources.

Apart from that, a civil staff and a cook of police barracks were infected while three family members of police personnel also tested positive.

On Wednesday, 13 police personnel including an OC of Sadarghat Police Station tested positive while on Saturday, six police personnel including a traffic sergeant of CMP port division, an assistant sub-inspector and four constables tested coronavirus positive. The sergeant's wife and brother also tested positive the same day.

Meanwhile, five police personnel who were diagnosed with the virus left the hospital after their recovery.

After transmission started in Dampara Police Lines on the first week of April, authorities arranged three places including two convention centres in port city's GEC area and a private hotel at Chawkbazar area for police personnel with an aim to maintain social distancing.

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