



Confusion reigns supreme

No announcement yet on list of red zones or timing of lockdown; countrywide curbs on movement till June 30

WASIM BIN HABIB

There was confusion all around.

As the news of the government preparing a list of virus hotspots to be categorised as red zones spread, the city residents got puzzled and panicked.

"Will the entire area or a certain place be marked as red zone?", "Will it be put under lockdown?", "Will it happen today or tomorrow?", "Will there be curfew?" -- these were the questions that people kept asking throughout yesterday after they heard there would be zone-based lockdown to check further spread of Covid-19.

They called their relatives and even friends in the media to know when the announcement on finalisation of the red, yellow and green zones would come.

"I saw on television that Mirpur is in the red zone. But does it refer to the entire Mirpur or some parts of Mirpur since it is a big area," Sifat Alam, a resident of Mirpur-11, asked this correspondent over phone.

"The rate of infection varies from area to area. How can an entire area be marked as red zone? The government needs to clear the confusion right away," he said.

Till last night, there was no official announcement on the list of areas to be classified as red zones or any specific date for imposing lockdown in such areas.

Sources at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said the process of finalising the list of areas is going on, and it may take some more time.

Once the zoning is finalised, a circular will be issued with details of the areas in the red zone.

Yesterday afternoon, the government announced "general holiday" for those in the areas to be classified as red and yellow zones, but changed it hours later.

In a revised circular, the Cabinet Division kept the areas in the yellow zone out of shutdown, and said all the offices and businesses in the areas to be classified as red zones will remain shut for a certain period.

At a meeting on Saturday, the Central Technical Group under the DGHS prepared a primary list of areas all over the country through colour-coded zoning and identified 45 areas in Dhaka North and South City corporations as red zones.

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Without maintaining physical distancing, people line up outside the gate of Mugda General Hospital in the capital for Covid-19 tests. Many of them were not even wearing any gloves. The photo was taken around noon yesterday.

PHOTO:
SK ENAMUL HAQ

COVID-19 90,000 cases in 100 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With over three thousand new infections in a single day, the total number of Covid-19 cases crossed the 90,000-mark yesterday -- the 100th day since the outbreak began in the country.

The first coronavirus case in the country was detected on March 8, and from late May onwards, the number of daily cases began to rise drastically.

Data shows that over the last 15 days, 45,741 people were infected following the lifting of the temporary shutdown by the authorities.

The government is now planning to introduce a "zoning system" across the country, in which areas will be marked red, yellow and green according to the rate of infections. The higher the infection rate, the warmer the colour.

At the daily briefing yesterday, Dr Nasima Sultana, additional director general (administration) of the Directorate General of Health Services, said 3,099 people tested positive for Covid-19 in 24 hours till yesterday afternoon, taking the total to 90,619.

During this period, 38 people died from the disease, and the death toll now stands at 1,209.

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Don't send away any patient: HC

It'd be considered a crime if anyone dies without treatment, court warns hospitals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that no patient, regardless of whether they are infected with coronavirus, can be deprived of treatment at any government or private hospital.

If a patient dies or is deprived of treatment at a hospital due to negligence, it would be considered a criminal and punishable offence, the HC said.

The HC directed the authorities concerned of the government to take appropriate legal actions against those who display negligence when providing treatment in hospitals.

In response to five separate writ petitions, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim ordered authorities concerned to ensure that no government or private hospital in the country refuses treatment to any patient -- infected with Covid-19 or not.

It asked the government to strictly enforce the directives issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) on May 11 and 24 for ensuring treatment of patients at all hospitals.

The HC directed the authorities concerned to inform people through media and regular bulletins the number of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds at government hospitals and their condition so that patients can easily and quickly avail ICU services.

The authorities concerned have been asked to make ICU beds management more accountable and to launch a hotline named ICU Hotline so that patients can communicate with authorities in this regard.

The court ordered the health ministry and DGHS to set up a monitoring cell to ensure that private hospitals provide proper treatment to patients

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We will not accept defeat fearing death

Says PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she would not accept defeat against an invisible force like the novel coronavirus fearing death.

"We will not accept defeat. Death is inevitable and it can occur anytime. But it cannot happen that we will have to accept defeat to the invisible force out of fear," she said.

The PM was addressing a function marking the 34th founding anniversary of Special Security Force (SSF) through videoconferencing from the Gono Bhaban.

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Situation dire due to incoordination

Says a TIB study about the govt response to virus outbreak

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Absence of proper planning and coordination in the government's coronavirus response has resulted in a disastrous situation, said a study by the Transparency International Bangladesh.

The government had three months in the beginning of this year to make adequate preparations, but failed to do that, said the study based on data from 47 hospitals in 38 districts, interviews with officials, and newspaper reports.

TIB researchers collected data between April 15 and June 14.

About 44 percent of the hospitals only started making preparations when community transmission had already begun while the government claimed that all preparations were taken even in upazilas.

Besides, the patients' demands at 21 percent hospitals were not estimated in advance.

Only 22 percent of the healthcare staffers were trained on treating Covid-19 patients and 57 percent of hospitals were found capable of doing as many tests as needed. And people got test results between one and eight days.

The 60 Covid-19 testing labs have been testing 13,600 samples every day for 14 days even though the facilities are capable of testing 24,000 samples. The full potential of the labs were not being utilised due to shortage of skilled employees.

Improper sample collection and shortage of skilled

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2 more cops die from Covid-19

7,703 law enforcers infected

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two police personnel, who tested Covid-19 positive earlier, died in city hospitals yesterday.

With them, 27 police personnel have so far breathed their last after being infected with coronavirus, said a Police Headquarters (PHQ) statement yesterday.

The two victims are Sub-Inspector SM Mukul Mia, 55, and constable Abul Hossain Azad, 51.

SI Mukul was discharging his duties at Khilgaon Police Station under Dhaka Metropolitan Police. He tested positive on May 23 and was taking treatment at home.

But he was taken to Impulse Hospital on May 26 as his condition deteriorated. He breathed his last around 11:00am, said PHQ officials.

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Sylhet city ex-mayor Kamran dies from Covid-19

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Former Sylhet mayor Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran died of novel coronavirus at the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka early yesterday.

The 69-year-old central executive committee member of Awami League left behind his wife, two sons, a daughter, and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Family members said Kamran tested positive for Covid-19 on June 5. Two days later, he was flown to Dhaka from Sylhet as his health deteriorated.

His condition had improved after he was treated with plasma therapy on June 8. But his health worsened suddenly early yesterday. He breathed his last around 3:00am.

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A truck laden with bamboos lumbers near motorcyclists on the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Amin Bazar area on the outskirts of the capital yesterday. As the bamboos stick out of the moving vehicle and drag on the road surface, it poses the risks that they might get loose and fling towards other vehicles.

PHOTO:
PRABIR DAS

MP Shahid 'spills the beans'

Al-Rai reports he named some high officials during interrogation in Kuwait

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Laxmipur lawmaker Mohammad Shahid Islam has caused an uproar in Kuwait by revealing that high-placed officials of that country used to take bribes from him.

The MP who goes by the alias Kazi Papul made the striking admission after nine days of interrogation by Kuwaiti authorities, influential newspaper Al-Rai of the Gulf country reports.

Papul pleaded innocent after he was arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department in Kuwait on June 6.

"He admitted that he had handed one million Kuwaiti dinars [nearly 3 million USD] in cash to the manager of a company in exchange for bringing people from Bangladesh to Kuwait illegally. The company has government contracts," a senior reporter of the newspaper told The Daily Star, citing official sources.

According to the Al-Rai report, Papul also admitted to paying large sums of money to high officials including a security official. He also revealed to his interrogators that former and serving Kuwaiti lawmakers were involved in the racket.

Certain Kuwaiti quarters within the government were involved in residency trade which paved the entry of Bangladeshi workers to the Arab country in exchange for money, said the Al-Rai report published yesterday.

He told prosecutors of the Gulf state on Sunday that he had paid off Kuwaiti government officials through deposits to certain Kuwaiti quarters.

Papul named a senior security official as his close associate.

Lawmakers of the country demanded extensive investigation to identify everyone involved and to bring them to book.

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We will not accept defeat

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Hasina said she was taking the advantage of digitalisation of the country for reaching to the masses and talk to them to boost their confidence. "I want people maintain their trust and confidence."

She said the government has given special attention to saving lives and ensuring food, treatment, and education for all.

"For that I am requesting the people of the country to strictly follow the health guidelines. Everybody has to protect others by keeping himself protected."

The PM said the whole world has become stagnant due to the fear from this invisible virus. She blamed Covid-19 for stalling the country's progress.

Terming 2020 a very important year for Bangladesh, Hasina said the government had taken up various programmes to celebrate the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman.

"But we can't celebrate that as per the plan because of this coronavirus," she said.

Talking about the ever-changing technology and crimes with the advancement of the world, she said technology is used for both good and bad activities.

"Keeping that in mind, the people who are involved in providing security have to attain knowledge on modern technology. They have to enrich their knowledge on what type of criminal activities are going on and how to prevent those," the PM added.

She put emphasis on acquiring necessary training in this regard.

Earlier, SSF Director General Maj Gen Md Majibur Rahman delivered the welcome speech.

On behalf of the SSF personnel, the director general handed a cheque, amounting Tk 1 crore, of a day's salary of the force to the Prime Minister's Relief and Welfare Fund.



A suspected Covid-19 patient holds the hand of his wife while a youth tries to comfort him with a hand-fan at the coronavirus treatment unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. The man was admitted to the unit earlier in the day after he suffered a stroke at his home in Narsingdi. His wife was about to get some food, but he requested her to stay a little longer.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

90,000 cases in 100 days

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A total of 15,038 samples were tested in 58 labs across the country in those 24 hours, Dr Nasima said, adding that 34,027 infected people recovered from Covid-19 so far.

Till Sunday, the number of recoveries was 18,730.

Regarding the jump in recovery, she explained there were people who recovered from the infection at home. They have added the number of those people after getting information from the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

According to the IEDCR, about 71 percent of those infected are male and the rest are female.

Younger people seem to make up the majority of those infected, as 54.7 percent of detected patients are aged between 21 and 40.

The death rate is also higher among men. Of the total reported deaths, 77 percent were male.

The IEDCR shows that 68.6 percent of the people who died from Covid-19 were aged over 50.

Eighteen of the dead were from Dhaka, 12 from Chattogram, six from Sylhet, one from Barishal and another was from Rangpur division.

Of them, three were aged between 21 and 30, three between 31 and 40, seven between 41 and 50, five between 51 and 60, 15 between 61 and 70 and the rest were between 71 and 80, the DGHS official said.

A total of 536 people were put under isolation in the 24 hours till yesterday afternoon, she added.

Dr Nasima requested people to maintain social distance and health safety to avert the risk of infection.

"Many people are dying...Health workers are getting infected and dying. So be careful to avert further loss," she said, urging people to wear masks always outside of home.

Don't send away any patient: HC

FROM PAGE 1

and that they do not charge extra or unreasonable fees.

The authorities must ensure that the hospitals concerned continue providing dialysis and other necessary treatment to non-Covid-19 patients.

The HC directed authorities concerned to fix the retail price of oxygen cylinders, as well as their refilling price, and to display the prices at the outlets and shops so that the customers are not charged extra.

The authorities can take necessary measures to stop selling oxygen cylinders without prescription from registered doctors, the HC said in the directives.

The HC bench asked the commerce ministry and Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection to strengthen monitoring of supply and sale of oxygen cylinders.

The HC bench also asked the government to make a countrywide list of private hospitals with 50 or more beds and get data on the number of Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 patients to whom they have provided treatment after the DGHS directives were issued on May 24. The authorities concerned will then have to inform the court whether the private hospitals have taken legal action against those who failed to comply with the directives.

The court asked the health secretary and director general of DGHS to submit separate detailed reports after complying with the directives to the court in 15 days.

It, however, refrained from passing any order on a writ petition seeking its directives on the government to lock down all of Dhaka city to contain the spread of Covid-19 as the government

has decided to categorise areas of the capital into red, yellow and green zones for this purpose.

The HC bench issued the directives following five separate writ petitions filed recently as public interest litigation seeking necessary orders from it. Rights organisation Justice Watch Foundation, Deputy Registrar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Dr Sheikh Abdullah Al Mamun, Supreme Court lawyers Mahbubul Islam and Aynunnahar Siddiqua filed a petition each.

Four Supreme Court lawyers - AM Jamil Hoque, MD Nazmul Huda, Md Mehdi Hassan and AKM Ehsanur Rahman collectively submitted another petition.

The petitioners said it has been noticed from different media reports that certain private hospitals and clinics have refused to treat patients without Covid-19 test results.

Citing the DGHS directives, the lawyers said all hospitals must have separate arrangements for treating suspected Covid-19 patients and private hospitals and clinics cannot refuse treatment to patients, Covid-19 or otherwise, if they have the requisite facilities or equipment.

Advocate Manzill Murshid appeared for Mahbubul Islam, Barrister Mahfuzur Rahman Million argued for Justice Watch Foundation, Advocate Yeadia Zaman stood for Dr Sheikh Abdullah Al Mamun and other lawyers, who are petitioners, placed arguments in support of their own petitions.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, Additional Attorney General Murad Reza and Deputy Attorney General Amir Talukder represented the state during the virtual hearing on the petitions.

Sylhet city ex-mayor Kamran

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Later, the body of the veteran AL leader was brought to Sylhet by an ambulance. He was laid to eternal rest at the graveyard at the shrine of Hazrat Manik Pir in Sylhet around 3:00pm yesterday after two namaz-e-janazas were held.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed deep shock at the death of the former Sylhet mayor.

In a condolence message, she said Kamran would remain alive in the hearts of the masses through his works.

She prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

The first namaz-e-janaza of Kamran was held at a mosque in Sylhet city's Chhararpar area after Johr prayers. Only a few family members and relatives of the deceased took part in it.

The second janaza was held at the shrine of Hazrat Manik Pir, which was attended by some politicians, including Sylhet Mayor Ariful Haque Choudhury, and senior officials of the district administration and Sylhet City Corporation.

Although the local administration and Kamran's political colleagues had planned to arrange the namaz-e-janazas following the Covid-19 health guidelines, several hundred people gathered in front of the graveyard before the funeral prayer.

According to family members, Kamran's wife Asma Kamran, general secretary of Sylhet City Mahila Awami League, also tested positive for Covid-19 on May 27. She is now undergoing treatment at her city home.

Kamran was born on January 1, 1951 at his ancestral home in Chhararpar of Sylhet city.

He was elected Sylhet municipality's

youngest commissioner in 1972 when he was a college student. He served as a municipality commissioner for 15 years.

Kamran was elected general secretary of Sylhet town AL in 1989. He was re-elected to the post in 1992 and 1997.

After staying abroad for several years, he returned home and won an election to become Sylhet municipality chairman in 1995.

In 2002, the municipality was upgraded to a city corporation and Kamran was made the acting city mayor.

The following year, he was elected the first mayor of the city. In 2008, he won a second term in office despite contesting the polls from behind bars.

Kamran had led Sylhet city AL from 2002 to 2019 as its president.

The ruling party leader had survived a grenade attack on a meeting of its city unit at Hotel Gulshan of Taktola area on August 7, 2004. The attack had left many injured, said media reports.

He escaped another grenade attack on December 2, 2005, during the prize giving ceremony of a badminton tournament in Sylhet city's Tlagarh area. The grenade did not blast.

Both the attacks were carried out by banned militant outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad, according to confessions by some arrested militants.

Yesterday, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun, Law Minister Anisul Huq, Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam and Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh expressed deep sorrow at the death Kamran.

Confusion reigns supreme

FROM PAGE 1

It also identified as red zones 11 areas in Chattogram city, the entire Gazipur district, and several upazilas in Narsingdi and Narayanganj.

According to the meeting minutes of the committee, if 60 or more people per one lakh in a city are infected within 14 days, it will be declared a red zone.

Once finalised, the public administration ministry will issue a gazette notification mentioning when the lockdown will be enforced.

Asked about the list of areas, DGHS Director General Prof Abul Kalam Azad said, "No, it has not been finalised yet. It's a draft."

About enforcing lockdown, he said, "I cannot say when such lockdown will start. It could take two or three days. But we don't think that many areas will be put under lockdown at the same time."

The authorities concerned will find which area should be under lockdown. "Then we will see whether that certain area meets the criteria for being classified as red zone. If so, we will give the nod."

Asked whether an entire area would be put under lockdown at one go, the DG said, "Is it logical if the entire Bangladesh is put in the red zone at the same time? It will not happen simultaneously. It is a continuous process."

To check the spread of coronavirus, the government had earlier decided to categorise areas into red, yellow and green zones on the basis of mortality and infection rates. High-risk areas will be in red zone, moderate-risk ones in yellow zone, and low-risk ones in green zone.

The government has already started enforcing lockdown on a pilot basis in some areas of four districts, including Dhaka. In the first phase, two areas in the capital - East Rajabazar and Wari - were put under lockdown with strict restrictions.

"WE SOUGHT SPECIFIC ZONING MAP"

DNCC Mayor Atiqul Islam said it's essential to provide them with zoning maps specifying particular areas so that they can take proper steps.

"We sought zoning maps from the authorities concerned as areas like Uttara and Mirpur are very big," he told The Daily Star.

He pointed out that it would require at least 48 hours to enforce lockdown after they get the maps.

The mayor also mentioned that they were facing many challenges while enforcing the "experimental lockdown" in East Rajabazar.

"We will have to know how much food is needed [for the residents] before enforcing lockdown," he said, adding that they would hold discussions with councillors and take steps after getting the maps.

DSCC Chief Executive Officer Shah Md Emdadul Haque said they received a letter from the DGHS about the red zones but were yet to get any instructions.

A lot of things need to be done before enforcing lockdown in a specific area, he said.

RESTRICTIONS TILL JUNE 30

The government yesterday extended countrywide restrictions on movement of people and "all types of activities" till June 30.

It, however, didn't clarify what it meant by "all types of activities".

No one will be allowed to leave homes from 8:00pm to 6:00am except for emergency. People must wear face masks and follow health guidelines outside their homes, said the revised circular issued by the Cabinet Division yesterday.

The officials and employees of all military or paramilitary, government, semi-government, autonomous, semi-autonomous and private offices in the

red zone will enjoy "general holiday" during the period, it mentioned.

This will also be applicable to the residents of these areas, who work in any of the aforementioned offices outside the red zone.

The public administration ministry will take necessary steps in this regard.

However, the government, semi-government, autonomous and private offices in the yellow and green zones will remain open on a limited scale.

"No one will be allowed to leave their workplaces while the restrictions are in place," said the circular.

Those who are sick or at health risks and pregnant women living in these zones will be on leave.

The offices of law enforcement agencies and emergency services and movement of their staffers and vehicles will remain outside the purview of the restrictions.

Markets, groceries and shopping malls must close by 4:00pm and social distancing has to be maintained in those places during the opening hours, said the circular.

HC ORDER

The High Court yesterday refrained from passing any order on the writ petition that sought a directive on the government to put the entire Dhaka city under lockdown to contain further spread of Covid-19.

As the government has decided to categorise the Dhaka city areas into red, yellow and green zones, this court will not interfere with the matter, the HC said in the order.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim held a virtual hearing and passed "no order" on the writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Mahbubul Islam on June 11.

(Helemul Alam and Moudud Ahmed Sujon contributed to this report)

Situation dire due to incoordination

FROM PAGE 1

personnel were resulting in almost 30 percent false negative results, it said.

The pandemic has laid bare the weaknesses in the health sector, lack of planning over a long time and absence of good governance, it added.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, said, "This crisis in the health sector has negatively impacted socio-economic sectors."

The government claimed that there are 399 ICUs for treating Covid-19 patients across the country, but the study found less than 140 functional ones.

The government also claimed that there were 500 ventilators for Covid-19 patients, but the study found only 190.

Treatment of general patients was being disrupted in 53 percent of the hospitals while treatment stumbled due to substandard protective equipment in 71 percent.

No doctor in 25 percent of the hospitals and no nurse in 34 percent of the hospitals got PPE.

Medical waste from Covid-19 units were dumped in the open by 30 percent of the hospitals.

The report highlighted that the

Disaster Management Act, 2012 and the Communicable Disease (Prevention, Control and Elimination) Act, 2018 were not properly followed.

"As the Disaster Management Act, 2012 and the Standing Orders for Disaster (SOD) were not used, the opportunity of utilising different institutional set up, ministries and departments could not be used; rather only a few committees at district and upazila levels were instructed to take action," it said.

It also observed that information of all the deaths from the coronavirus was not available, because information of people who did not test, or did not report the death to the authorities were not included in the official data.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman said, "There has been a tendency to make bureaucratic decisions by ignoring specific opinions in all cases, including lockdowns."

"Due to lack of widespread social participation and proper information dissemination, the government failed to create public awareness which made the lockdown ineffective."

According to the study, no preparation was taken in distribution of relief goods in 20 percent of the 43

districts whereas the list of beneficiaries were not updated in 22 percent districts.

He also said that the tendency to cover up irregularities, corruption and mismanagement through restrictions on disclosure of information encouraged corruption in various ways.

The study found that only five lakh tests were done against 1.1 crore phone calls in the hotline numbers as of June 14.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The TIB made a 15-point recommendation, including arranging adequate tests, reconsidering the decision to revoke the lockdown, coordinating different ministries and government departments, increasing the budget for the health sector by five percent, and ensuring accountability and exemplary punishment against corruption, and triage management in hospitals.

Since the Covid-19 outbreak, a total of 37 journalists have been sued in 67 cases under the Digital Security Act.

"If the government wants to tackle this crisis, the right to get and publish accurate information must not diminish," Dr Iftekharuzzaman said.

OIC COVID-19 RESPONSE

KSA seconds Bangladesh's plan

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Saudi Arabia has endorsed Bangladesh's proposal to form a Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan to save lives and livelihoods in the member countries of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud agreed to the proposal during a phone conversation with his Bangladeshi counterpart AK Abdul Momen yesterday, said a foreign ministry statement.

He told the Saudi minister that a special virtual meeting was imperative to discuss and finalise the issues for creating the fund, an idea that was floated by Bangladesh during the meeting of the OIC Executive Committee at the Level of Foreign Ministers on the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic and joint response on April 22 via video conference.

Momen said Turkey, a powerful member of OIC, has already agreed to establish the fund, which is important to recover the economy, socio-economic stability, and save the lives and livelihoods.

A response and recovery plan, among others, can play a crucial role in training and jobs creation of the migrant workers who could be jobless due to the pandemic, the minister told his Saudi counterpart.

Several lakh Bangladeshi migrants could face forced return after losing their jobs in the Middle East and Southeast Asian countries.

As operations of international flights have been suspended for nearly two months, many of the passengers, especially the migrant workers, remained stranded in those countries.

Momen said as the international travellers need to go through quarantine, Bangladesh would bring its nationals, who want to return, in phases. His Saudi counterpart also consented to it.

Those who had gone to Saudi Arabia for performing umrah or hajj, students, and women domestic workers stranded there would be given priority, he said.

During the conversation, Momen said Saudi Arabia could redeploy the Bangladeshi migrants in the farming and fisheries sectors for food production as food shortage looms large because of coronavirus pandemic.

If the Saudi companies invest in agriculture in other countries, Bangladeshis can be a great help in that, he added. Besides, Bangladesh also has a huge pool of IT professionals who could be recruited by the Saudi companies, he said.

The Saudi minister has shown interest in the proposal, said the foreign ministry statement.

Momen also proposed that Saudi Arabia can import halal meat from Bangladesh.

Besides, the two countries can also go for a joint venture project in meat production. Saudi Arabia can also import vegetables and personal protection equipment from Bangladesh, Momen added.

US Air Force F-15 fighter jet crashes in North Sea

AFP, London

A US fighter jet on a training mission from a British Royal Air Force base in eastern England crashed in the North Sea yesterday.

"A US Air Force F-15C Eagle crashed at approximately 0940 (0840 GMT) today (Monday) in the North Sea," said USAF Captain Miranda T. Simmons, from RAF Lakenheath.

"The cause of the crash as well as the status of the pilot are unknown at this time, and UK Search and Rescue have been called to support."

The plane took off from the RAF Lakenheath base, near Mildenhall, in Suffolk, which hosts the 48th Fighter Wing of the US Air Force.

The BBC said the plane was believed to have gone down 74 nautical miles (137 kilometres) off the East Yorkshire coast.

Citing a flight tracker website, Sky News television said the plane circled in the area before disappearing.

2 more cops die

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Mukul of Gopalganj's Charkhuli village left behind his wife, three daughters, and a son.

The other victim, constable Abul, tested positive while performing his duties at Azampur police outpost of DMP's Uttara division.

He was undergoing treatment at Rajarbagh Central Police Hospital and he died around 4:12am, said PHQ officials.

Abul from Netrakona's Joypasha village left behind his wife and two daughters.

The victims' bodies were sent to their respective villages and they will be buried in their family graveyards following WHO protocols.

Meanwhile, the number of police personnel contracted the virus across the country reached 7,703, according to the PHQ.

Of the infected, 1,949 are from the DMP only, it added.

Police officials said the number of infected among police is on the rise as it is quite difficult for the law enforcers to carry out their duties without coming into regular contact with people.

The good news is that around 3,014 police personnel have so far recovered. The recovery rate is about 52 percent, said PHQ officials.

MP Shahid 'spills the beans'

FROM PAGE 1

The Anti-corruption Authority issued a statement announcing that it had begun an investigation to unearth the whole illegal nexus.

The Public Prosecution decided to continue Papul's detention, after listening to the testimony of 11 Bangladeshis who had bribed their way into Kuwait through Papul.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Interior Minister Asan Al-Saleh in a tweet said on Saturday that "Kuwait security is a red line, and maintaining its safety is the ultimate goal. This is what we pledged to His Highness, the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, and His Highness the Prime Minister and the noble Kuwaiti people."

In a statement issued on the same day, Al-Saleh said that this was one of the largest cases of human trafficking and residence for an Asian expatriate.

Combating human trafficking and

illegal residence is one of the main priorities of the Ministry of Interior and the efforts made by security men made a lot of progress in terms of pursuing the suspects or in terms of reforming legislation, it said.

Investigations revealed the existence of suspicious financial transactions carried out by a network of officials with weak souls in cooperation with companies that facilitated these operations, the statement added.

Be it a government official or a prominent person, if involvement is found, they will face the investigation authorities of the Ministry of the Interior and will be referred to the Public Prosecution.

Papul and a Kuwaiti citizen co-own a big recruitment company named Marafie Kuwaitia.

He is accused of charging each foreign worker, mostly Bangladeshis, up to 3,000 dinars in exchange for going to Kuwait.

The workers also paid huge sums to the company in exchange for renewing their residency every year.

In response to a complaint filed on February 16, Bangladesh's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) opened an enquiry into an allegation that Shahid Islam amassed Tk 1,400 crore by trafficking people to Kuwait and laundered the money to different countries.

Also in February, Kuwaiti media reported that three Bangladeshis were operating a human trafficking racket in the Middle Eastern country. On February 12, a report in the Arab Times said one of the three was a "member of parliament in Bangladesh".

According to the report, the trio "occupied sensitive positions" in three major companies that brought over 20,000 Bangladeshi workers to Kuwait in exchange for an amount believed to be more than Tk 1,391.6 crore.



Amid the pandemic crisis, mismanagement of non-Covid-19 patients at Chattogram Medical College Hospital has reached a whole new level in the last few weeks, according to many who brought patients to the hospital. During a two-hour visit to the premises on Sunday, our photographer found attendants struggling with their patients. (1) A hapless Moriom Akhter sits on a road divider in front of the hospital, clutching onto her 10-month-old daughter Rafa. Moriom has already lost two children to liver complications, and she is worried that she's about to lose her youngest the same way, as CMCH denied to admit the infant. (2) Didar carries his injured father Ramjan Ali inside the hospital, failing to find a gurney or wheelchair on the premises. They came all the way from Fatikchhari, only to face more trouble at the hospital. (3) Md Yusuf from the port city's Sagarika area faced the same issue, even after his family completed all formalities for admission at the hospital. They gave up after trying for an hour to find a wheelchair, and decided to take the injured patient to a private hospital instead. (4) Family members of Md Saber, who suffered a stroke and was brought in from Cox's Bazar, said they wandered for hours from ward to ward as no one gave them the correct information for admission.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Goods worth Tk 200cr locked as warehouse owner goes missing

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Ctg

An owner of around 60 warehouses in Chattogram has been missing since Thursday, worrying importers and traders as they said goods worth Tk 200 crore remained stocked there.

Traders said Abdul Malek was last seen at his office in the city's Khatunganj, one of the largest wholesale markets in the country, where 35 importers stored 1.2 lakh tonnes of rice, wheat, flour, bitumen, cardamom, cumin and other spices and essential commodities.

All 60 warehouses situated at Khatunganj, Asadganj and Sadarghat are locked, said importers and businesspersons. Several traders fear this situation may create instability in the market as they cannot access the goods.

Ali Ahmed, general secretary of Chattogram Warehouse Commission Agents Association, said the association had been searching for Abdul Malek since Saturday.

Two of his employees, who used to handle the keys of the depots, are also missing, he said.

Seeing the warehouses closed, the workers are also not coming to work, the general secretary said. He mentioned that Malek had around 200 workers handling his operations at the warehouses.

"More than 35 importers and traders of spice, essential commodities and bitumen are in trouble due to the warehouse owner's sudden disappearance," he added.

About breaking open the doors, he said it may create untoward situations as traders keep variety of goods inside the depots, and the quantity of products continue to change as they keep on taking them out or adding more to the inventory. "We have informed the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry regarding the matter," Ahmed said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

RURAL ROAD NETWORK EXPANSION

ADB grants \$100m loan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 100 million loan to expand coverage of an ongoing rural road network improvement project in Bangladesh. This network will connect the rural population to agricultural development zones.

The additional financing will scale up current road network development, under Rural Connectivity Improvement Project, from 1,700 km to 2,630 km of rural roads.

It will build on the USD 200 million financial package approved in 2018, aimed at upgrading rural roads in 34 districts to all-weather standards with climate resilience and safety features, says a press release.

The impact and outcome of the overall project are expected to be further enhanced with coverage of additional geographic areas and increase in beneficiaries. The expanded project will benefit 40.2 million inhabitants.

"The increased support brings more rural communities closer and faster to economic development activities, which accelerates the delivery of produce and services from

agricultural lands to markets," said ADB Senior Water Resources Specialist Olivier Drieu.

"Women and children will have easier and safer access to education, employment, health, and other essential social services in any weather condition," he said.

Inadequate rural transport and poor market infrastructure remain a challenge to Bangladesh's rural development. The situation is further worsened by recurrent flooding and disasters that paralyse agricultural value chains. Less than half of the rural population has access to all-weather roads, which make up less than a third of the total length of rural roads in the country.

The Rural Connectivity Improvement Project supports the government's Seventh Five Year Plan, aiming to increase the percentage of the country's rural roads from 43 percent in 2016 to 80 percent in 2020.

The total cost of the project, expected to be completed by 2024, is USD 449.23 million, with the Bangladesh government contributing USD 149.23 million.

Declare remittance service providers essential: UN body

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the significant decline in money sent home by migrants due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the United Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) yesterday called for governments across the world to declare remittance service providers essential businesses in times of crisis.

"Remittances are a lifeline for poor families in low and middle income countries. Governments should take measures and do everything possible to facilitate the flow of funds during crises like the Covid-19 pandemic," said Gilbert F Houngbo, president of IFAD, on the occasion of the International Day of Family Remittances.

Personal remittances account for a significant portion of the GDP in most South Asian countries, the UN agency said in a statement.

It said the Covid-19 restrictions have hit the economic sectors that employ migrant workers, such as tourism, hospitality and agribusiness, hard.

As a result, many migrants have become underemployed or unemployed. Remittance flows are projected to make

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

From retired educator to auto-rickshaw driver

A teacher's story of survival amid pandemic

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

As a 65-year-old retired school teacher, Md Abul Kalam Azad was looking forward to a relatively comfortable ride into the horizon. While he wasn't expecting a life of grandeur and indulgence, he wished to see out his last days finally free from the grips of poverty.

But then the Covid-19 pandemic hit, and now Azad has to work back into life like the previous 39 years did not even take place.

"As an assistant teacher in English, I joined Julikuri High School in Sarishabari upazila of Jamalpur in 1981. I taught there for 29 years, retiring in 2010," Azad said.

As luck would have it, the school became eligible for the Monthly Payment Order (MPO) after Azad's retirement. If it had happened before, he could've made slightly better salaries and a better retirement payday. Instead, after retiring, the school authorities gave him a paltry Tk 2,87,000.

"All of the money went into maintaining my family as I have no other property to live off," Azad said.

Following retirement, Azad left his village in Sarishabari to come to Mymensingh city, with hopes of giving his five children better education and a better life. The family had been living at a rented house in Baghmara area.

His two daughters did their masters from Govt Ananda Mohan College in Mymensingh and now live with their own families. Among the three sons, one is a second-year student of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University while the other two are honours first-year students at Govt Ananda Mohan College.

To support the family, Azad used to work as a house tutor. He earned some Tk 10,000 per month. This was sufficient to maintain the family, especially as his sons also tutored to carry their own educational expenses.

But then the Covid-19 hit and everything changed. All of the families financial support was gradually cutoff, and there was no one who would help them. After the Eid, he three sons tried their luck by moving to Dhaka, but was unable to find any.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

4 held for selling doctored Covid-19 certificates in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday raided a photocopy shop in the capital's Mugda area and recovered a huge number of fake Covid-19 certificates.

They also arrested four people on charges of being involved in making and selling illegal certificates, Rab-3 Commanding Officer Lt Col Rakibul Hasan told The Daily Star. They are: Fajal (40), Sharif (32), Jamshed (30), and Liakat (43).

Since the beginning of the shutdown, the gang had been collecting certificates of coronavirus positive patients, scanning and selling those by putting people's name there.

For those who need a negative report, they have been making fake Covid-19

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

A literary hub pushed to closure

NILIMA JAHAN

In just three years of its launch, Dipanpur -- a book store in Dhaka's New Elephant Road -- became a hub for literature aficionados.

"Dipanpur was a place where many literary events would take place. People would come to read books, but also to chat-while sipping on their coffee. The space accommodated children too, who would come to learn painting and read books," said Razia Rahman Jolly, one of the owners of Dipanpur.

"But all of it had to be stopped for the past three months," Jolly said, speaking of the Covid-19 induced countrywide shutdown.

Jolly is the wife of Faisal Arefin Dipan, the publisher of Jagriti Prokashoni who was killed by militants in October of 2015. It was in his memory that Jolly and some friends launched Dipanpur on July 12, 2017, on the eve of his 45th birthday. The café sought to carry his legacy and dream of enlightening people.

Alas, after three years of successful existence, Jolly and the partners have decided to put an end

to their endeavour. As revenues kept falling during the lockdown, there was no way that the owners could keep the café afloat.

"Our income had come down to zero. Yet, we had to bear rent, utilities, staff salaries -- it all added up to a pretty big amount. The rent was being paid from the advanced we paid when we first rented the place. But this month, the landlord notified us to vacate the space within 15 days," Jolly told this correspondent.

This is a difficult task, Jolly admits. Along with the sentiments that come from closing down one's own business, Dipanpur was always an emotional venture to the core, and forsaking its trajectory comes with a lot of pain.

But the current situation has proven to be too uncertain, leaving little room for the emotions behind this business. No one really knows when or if everything will be alright. "This uncertainty has forced us to make this difficult decision," she said.

What added to the woe was how the business had been running low on profits even prior to the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



After 29 years of serving in a high school as a teacher, Md Abul Kalam Azad has been forced to drive an auto-rickshaw in Mymensingh to provide for his family, as the coronavirus pandemic has taken away his other means of livelihood -- private tutoring.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



These secondhand tires, kept for sale on a low-lying roadside at Shonir Akhra, have become the perfect mosquito breeding hotspot after the past few days rain and an algae proliferation. As monsoon promises to bring more showers, the fear of mosquito-borne diseases remains ever so real. The photo was taken on Sunday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

52 held in cases over Libya killings

Says Police Headquarters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Police have so far arrested around 52 people in 26 cases filed across the country over the killing of 26 Bangladeshis in Libya on May 28, Police Headquarters (PHQ) said in a statement yesterday.

Under strict guidelines of Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed, all police units including Rapid Action Battalion, Criminal Investigation Department, Police Bureau of Investigation and Dhaka Metropolitan Police started the drive to arrest those responsible behind the trafficking and made the arrests, reads the statement.

Earlier, in an emergency video conference with all police unit chiefs and higher officials, the police chief expressed his firm determination to take strict action against perpetrators of human trafficking.

The IGP directed commanders of concerned units of Bangladesh Police to take strict and exemplary legal action in this regard.

according to the PHQ statement. Bangladesh Police is always vigilant for the interests, welfare and protection of the country and the people, the statement added.

COVID-19 RESPONSE EFFORTS

US declares \$173m fund

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The US has announced \$173 million in new funding to support Bangladesh's Covid-19 response efforts and the development and economic recovery plan in the aftermath of the pandemic.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller made the announcement at a virtual press conference following a ceremony to recognise the completion of 1,000 doctors' training on Covid-19 prevention and control yesterday.

The \$173 million US funding to Bangladesh, through USAID, is in addition to the nearly \$37 million already provided to Bangladesh's Covid-19 response efforts.

"I am especially pleased our new USAID funding will provide life-saving food assistance to thousands of urban under-privileged people in Dhaka," said Miller.

It will support a new programme to provide cash-based transfers for food to thousands of urban poor, living in low-income areas of Kalyanpur and Sattala Bosti, and help re-establish linkages between markets and farmers, by improving supply chains affected by this pandemic, he said.

USAID has recently partnered with Save the Children to support case management in Covid-19 hospitals in Bangladesh. USAID also developed an online reporting system for Covid-19 commodity management, Miller added.

Six hundred and thirty-nine health facilities out of 658 -- 97% of health facilities in the country -- are now using this online system for managing supplies used to treat Covid-19 patients. DGHS is also using this data management system to help ensure rational distribution of personal protective equipment and other Covid-19 response items, he added.

"I wish the doctors joining us today every success in this training program. And, I wish all the doctors who have participated in this program since its inception and all the frontline medical care workers who will receive training from them, my best wishes and heartfelt thanks."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Fake medicine, cosmetics worth Tk 10cr destroyed

Two sentenced to jail, fined Tk 10 lakh in Barishal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

A mobile court of Barishal district administration yesterday found a makeshift factory running inside a residence, and seized fake medicines, cosmetics and sanitiser worth Tk 10 crore at the city's Sagardi Darga Bari.

The court, led by Magistrate Zia Ur Rahman, sentenced Masum Billah, who ran the operation, and his associate Nurul Alam Gaji to one year's imprisonment and fined them Tk 5 lakh each.

They also confiscated raw materials and heavy machinery used in manufacturing.

Zia told The Daily Star that the detainees said they were producing fake medicine for two years with help from the landlord.

They were making fake products of renowned companies like ACL, Chemist, Jitson and Global, and supplied them to Mitford wholesale medicine market in the capital, he said.

"We contacted Sadek Ahamed, the landlord, but he denied involvement, saying he did not know anything about the fake medicine operation, and refused to come to the location," the magistrate informed.

Authorities, however, claimed such a

large operation cannot be run without the landlord's knowledge.

When the drive was ongoing, owners and representatives from different pharmaceutical companies came to the spot.

Kajol Ghosh, manager of Chemist Laboratories in Barishal, said they were astonished after learning about the huge quantity of fake medicines that was produced there.

Biplob, a local shopkeeper, said they had no idea such an operation was being run inside a residence.

The court was conducted with help from Directorate General of Drug Administration's superintendent office in Barishal.

Audit Swarna, superintendent of drugs in Barishal, said, "We had detained two men from Barishal launch terminal with fake medicines yesterday morning. After they confessed about selling the counterfeit products, they pointed us to this place."

"We are investigating to trace the whole fake medicine syndicate. The makeshift factory has been sealed, and the fake products were later destroyed."



After seizing the counterfeit products from a residence in Barishal city's Sagardi Darga Bari, authorities destroyed them yesterday. The criminals ran the operation for the last two years, supplying fake products to the capital's Mitford wholesale medicine market.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

HC petition filed against Wasa's 25pc tariff hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking its order of injunction on the Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority's (Wasa) decision to hike the water price by 25 percent from April 1 this year.

Advocate Tanvir Ahmed submitted the petition as a public interest litigation to the HC through virtual system, and also prayed to the court to declare Dhaka Wasa's move illegal.

Citing the petition, Tanvir told The Daily Star that Dhaka Wasa had increased the water tariff by 5 percent on September 1.

It has further increased price by 25 percent since April 1 this year, which was reported in different newspapers including The Daily Star, he said.

CVF PRESIDENCY

Abul Kalam Azad named special envoy

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Abul Kalam Azad, former principal secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, has been appointed as special envoy of Climate Vulnerable Forum's (CVF) presidency.

Azad will serve as key representative of Bangladesh prime minister, who is also the CVF chair, to support realisation of CVF's objectives and priorities.

He will work closely with the presidency to actively promote interests of climate vulnerable countries and take initiatives for global partners and other stakeholders, said a foreign ministry statement yesterday.

Bangladesh assumed presidency of CVF and Vulnerable Twenty Group of Finance Ministers, which had been announced through an online event, chaired by Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen on June 9.

Goods worth

FROM PAGE 3

Malek has been running those depots for almost 30 years with good reputation, he said. "We have contacted his family. They also don't know about his whereabouts."

Imported goods are stored in more than 1,000 warehouses in Chattogram, said importers. Later, they sell those to wholesalers. But since Thursday, many wholesalers have not getting required goods.

On Saturday afternoon, the warehouses were found shut, said importers. The disappearance and subsequent closure have made traders anxious, said Abul Bashar Chowdhury, managing director of BSM Group.

Abdul Matin, a bitumen trader in Khatunganj, said most of the bitumen traders cannot sell their imported goods as those have been kept in Malek's warehouses. "It has created a crisis in the market as well," he said.

The trader said the price of bitumen has already gone up by Tk 50 per drum (50kg).

Mahbul Alam, president of the CCCI, said, "After receiving complaints from traders, I have informed the police administration as well as the commerce ministry of the matter. Attempts are being made to find the warehouse owner."

Contacted, Kotwali Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mohammad Mohsin said they have taken into account the traders' concerns. A general diary was filed in this connection on Saturday.

Until yesterday, they were unable to trace the warehouse owner, said the OC.

4 held

FROM PAGE 3

certificates and selling them for a hefty sum of money, the Rab official added.

Rab said individuals without visible symptoms of coronavirus are buying fake negative certificates for traveling and attending offices and courts.

Meanwhile, many are collecting fake Covid-19 positive certificates, in a bid to avail public holidays and various benefits.

Rab seized two computers, two printers and two scanners from the shop.

On June 4, two youths were arrested from Savar for selling fake Covid-19 certificates.

Declare

FROM PAGE 3

their sharpest decline in history, falling by 20 percent in 2020.

"IFAD is now tracking the impact of declining remittances on the 'receiving end' in developing countries, where typical remittances of \$200 to \$300 per month account for about 60 percent of household income," said Pedro de Vasconcelos, the head of IFAD's Financing Facility for Remittances.

"While the reduction in remittances will not fall evenly across countries and communities, the impact is likely to be substantial in rural areas where remittances count the most."

To address the situation, IFAD called on governments to develop more conducive policies and regulatory environments that enable competition, regulation and innovation on the remittance market and declare these services essential.

Private sector entities should invest in developing innovative technological

solutions for remittance transfers to reduce costs, improve speed, enhance security and increase flows through digital means to remote areas, it said.

Access to remittance services, especially in poor rural areas, needs to be improved. There should also be incentives to develop and use digital products that link remittances to a full range of financial services, so that migrants and their families can be encouraged to save and invest their money.

Since March, IFAD has led a global Remittances Community Task Force comprised of 35 international organisations, inter-governmental bodies, industry and private sector groups, and networks of diaspora organisations, which is working on a series of concrete measures to help mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the lives of the one billion people directly involved in sending and receiving remittances, the statement read.

From retired

FROM PAGE 3

The situation, in fact, turned so dire that Azad is now driving a battery-run rickshaw on the city streets, even at his age. The family had to leave their rented house and moved into a relative's house at Kewatkhali.

When this correspondent contacted him on Friday, he was out with his vehicle.

"After paying the vehicle's rent, I can earn some Tk 200 per day. It's not bad, except at this age, I can't drive every day," Azad said.

Informed about the state of the family, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Mymensingh Sadar upazila Sheikh Hafizur Rahman Sajal visited their residence recently and helped the family with daily essentials.

The UNO also handed over a sewing

machine to the family. In addition, he told them that he'll try to get work for one of the daughters so that the family can see out the present crisis.

Praising the prompt initiative taken by the UNO, advocate Shibbir Ahmed Liton, secretary of Poribesh Rokhha O Unnyan Andolon Mymensingh unit, said such activities by government officials will surely inspire others to help people like Azad, who are struggling to survive amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Seeking blessings from all, Azad said he is in his last mission to support his sons' education so that they can lead a decent life and avoid the brunt of poverty he had to bear all his life.

A literary

FROM PAGE 3

lockdown. "Last year, we had spent a good amount [of money] to renovate the space to attract more people, but that didn't quite work out," Jolly lamented.

However, after posting a Facebook status about the closure from Dipanpur's official page, bookworms and literature lovers flooded social media with words of grief, bringing some much needed enthusiasm in Jolly and Co.

"I got many phone calls and text messages. Those who were touched by our efforts are inspiring us to continue with our dream. If I am able to get any support -- be it a regular order of my caterings or a bank loan -- Dipanpur might even survive this time," Jolly said with a little bit of optimism.

Following the post, some observers of the book industry have pointed out that the shutdown of Dipanpur should serve as a wake-up call for other bookstore chains in Bangladesh to rethink their strategies during this pandemic.

Meghna Petroleum Limited
(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)
58-59, Agrabad Commercial Area, Chattogram

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following work. Details are given below:

Sl No	Tender ID	Procurement title	Schedule price in BOT	Tender security in BOT	Tender last selling (date & time)	Tender closing & opening (date & time)	Procurement method
1.	469537 (Pur. 069)	Construction of 02 Nos. 700 M Ton Capacity PCL Storage Vertical Steel Tank Including Pipe Line Drainage System and Other Related Works at Barishal Depot, Barishal.	3,000.00	8,00,000.00	9 July, 2020; 15:00 Hrs	12 July, 2020; 12:00 Hrs	OSTETM
2.	469770 (Pur. 069) Re-Tender 1st Call	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Internal Floating Roof Including Calibration of PCL Storage Tank No. 07 At ML, Chattogram.	2,500.00	1,75,000.00	7 July, 2020; 15:00 Hrs	8 July, 2020; 12:00 Hrs	OSTETM

This is an online tender where only e-tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

GD-991

US declares

FROM PAGE 3

"You're truly Bangladesh's finest heroes," he added.

The 1,000 doctors were provided two-day in-person training under a joint USAID-DGHS initiative focused on Covid-19 infection prevention and control and case management.

The training, implemented by international NGO Management Sciences for Health, will enable participating doctors and nurses to effectively treat infected persons while keeping themselves safe and helping to reduce the spread of the virus.

The 1,000 trained doctors will train 3,000 newly recruited nurses and other health care practitioners in their respective hospitals.

Prof Dr Sania Tahmina, additional director general at the DGHS, USAID Mission Director Brown and USAID Health Adviser Dr Riad Mahmud were also present at the conference.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the (APO)
Dairy and Cattle Development Farm, Hathazari, Chattogram
Department of Livestock Services (DLS)
Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
Phone: 031-2601152
www.dls.gov.bd

Dated: 16/06/2020

This is an online tender where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no hard copy will be accepted. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP portal from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sl. no	Tender ID and Ref. no.	Name of Tender	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing Date and Time
1	468787 33.01.0000.340.54.027.18-102	Procurement of Wheat Bran, Lime Stone and Soybean Meal under the Office of the Animal Production Officer Dairy and Cattle Development Farm Hathazari Chattogram.	06-Jul-2020 12:00	06-Jul-2020 13:00
2	468799 33.01.0000.340.54.027.18-103	Procurement of Maize, salt, DCP, premix and Dry Straw under the Office of the Animal Production Officer Dairy and Cattle Development Farm Hathazari Chattogram.	06-Jul-2020 12:00	06-Jul-2020 13:00

Dr. Md. Nabil Farabi
APO (Incharge)
Dairy and Cattle Breed Development Farm
Hathazari Chattogram
Telephone: 031-2601152
e-mail address: pe.dldf@dls.gov.bd

GD-995

বিনা টিকেটে রেল ভ্রমণ থেকে বিরত থাকুন
দুর্ঘটনা এড়াতে রেলের ট্রিপ ও যাত্রাংশ চুরি রাখে এগিয়ে আসুন

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বিজ্ঞাপন প্রকৌশলী-৩ এর দপ্তর
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম-৪০০০
ফোনঃ +৮৮০৩১২৮৬৩১৮২ ই-মেইলঃ den3ctg@railway.gov.bd
নং-ডিইএন-৩/সিটিজি-৪৬৮৭২৬/২০১৯-২০ তারিখঃ ১৫-০৬-২০২০খ্রিঃ

ই-জিপি টেন্ডার নোটিশ

বিজ্ঞাপন প্রকৌশলী-৩, বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, কর্তৃক National Electronic Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) এ নিম্নলিখিত সরঞ্জাম আহ্বান করা হয়েছেঃ

ক্রমিক নং	টেন্ডার আইডি, নথি নং	দরপত্র পদ্ধতি	দরপত্র প্রকাশ, দাখিলের তারিখ ও শেষ সময়
1.	468726, DEN-3-CTG-468726-2019-20	OTM, NCT	15-June-2020 13:55:00 01-July-2020 12:30:00

বিঃ দ্রঃ

১. শুধুমাত্র ই-জিপি সিস্টেমে নিবন্ধিত eligibility শর্তাবলী পূরণকারী সরদারগণ সারসরি অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।
২. নিবন্ধিত ও অগ্রাধী সরদারগণ বিনা খরচে দরপত্র দাখিল দেখতে পারবেন; তবে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য দরপত্র আমানত বাবদ অর্থ নির্ধারিত ব্যাংকে জমা করতে হবে।
৩. অগ্রাধী সরদারগণকে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের পূর্বে দরপত্রের আবশ্যিকীয় প্রতিপালনীয় শর্তাবলী যথাযথভাবে প্রতিপালনের বিষয়টি নিশ্চিত করে দরপত্রের নোটিশ বোর্ডে বিজ্ঞাপিত নির্দেশনা সম্বলিত অনুরোধ অবলোকনের জন্য পরামর্শ দেয়া হলে।

আহসান হাবিব
বিজ্ঞাপন প্রকৌশলী-৩ (৩য় সার) বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম

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বাংলাদেশ কৃষি গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
Joydebpur, Gazipur-1701

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Date: 14 June 2020

e-GP: Re-Tender Notice No. 44 (2019-2020)

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods. Details are given below:

Sl No.	Package No.	Tender ID & Ref No.	Description of goods	Tender documents last selling (date & time)	Tender closing date & time	Tender opening date & time
1.	PN GD-03 Lot-A	468985 & IRN: 374	Laboratory Equipment (05 Items)	23.06.2020 17:00	24.06.2020 11:55	24.06.2020 11:55

The interested persons/firm may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Project Name: "Strengthening of Spices Crop Research in Bangladesh" Project.

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BARI, Joydebpur, Gazipur

GD-993

Afghan gov't, Taliban agree to Doha talks

Afghanistan's government and the Islamist Taliban group have agreed that Doha will be the venue for the first meeting in their peace talks. The talks, known as the intra-Afghan dialogue, will be the first high-level meeting between the two sides after years of fighting. No date has been announced for the meeting, but it is expected to take place after the two sides settle differences on the release by the Afghan government of 5,000 Taliban prisoners, which could be as soon as the end of next week. The Afghan government has released 3,000 Taliban prisoners so far under an agreement signed between the United States and the insurgent group in February. That deal outlined a roadmap for withdrawing foreign forces from Afghanistan and peace talks to end the 19-year war.

China to handle some Hong Kong national security cases

China will have jurisdiction over "some extremely rare" national security cases in Hong Kong, a senior official said yesterday as Beijing prepares to unveil its new anti-subversion law for the semi-autonomous business hub. Deng Zhonghua, deputy head of China's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, said enforcing the national security law would largely fall to Hong Kong's local authorities and police. "However, the central authorities should also reserve jurisdiction over some extremely rare cases when an offence takes place in Hong Kong and poses a serious threat to China's national security," Deng said. Under a "One Country, Two Systems" agreement ahead of the handover by Britain, China said it would let Hong Kong maintain certain liberties and autonomy until 2047, including legislative and judicial independence. But Deng's comments are the first time a Beijing official has made clear that mainland authorities will have jurisdiction over some national security cases once the law is passed.

Russia jails ex-US marine for 16 years over espionage



A Russian court found former US marine Paul Whelan guilty of spying for the United States yesterday and sentenced him to 16 years in jail, a move the US ambassador to Moscow called an egregious violation of human rights that would harm ties. Whelan, who holds US, British, Canadian and Irish passports, was detained by agents from Russia's Federal Security Service in a Moscow hotel room on Dec. 28, 2018. Russia says Whelan, 50, was caught red-handed with a computer flash drive containing classified information. Whelan, who pleaded not guilty, said he was set up in a sting and had thought the drive, given to him by a Russian acquaintance, contained holiday photos.

SOURCE: AFP, ANN



Nurses stage a flashmob protest over contracts, wages, precarious employment and job rights yesterday on Piazza del Popolo in Rome, Italy as the country eases its lockdown aimed at curbing the spread of the Covid-19 infection, caused by the novel coronavirus.

PHOTO: AFP

Nuke arms control outlook bleak: report

AFP, Stockholm

Nuclear powers continue to modernise their arsenals, researchers said yesterday, warning that tensions were rising and the outlook for arms control was "bleak".

"The loss of key channels of communication between Russia and the USA... could potentially lead to a new nuclear arms race," said Shannon Kile, director of the nuclear arms control programme at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and co-author of the report.

Kile was referring to the future of the New START treaty between the US and Russia, which is set to expire in February 2021. It is the final nuclear deal still in force between the two superpowers.

At the same time, nuclear powers continue to modernise their weapons while China and India are increasing the size of their arsenals.

The number of nuclear warheads declined in the past year. At the start of 2020, US, Russia, Britain, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea together had 13,400 nuclear arms, according to SIPRI's estimates, 465 fewer than at the start of 2019. Russia and the US account for more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons.

The number of nuclear arms worldwide has declined since hitting a peak of almost 70,000 in the mid-1980s.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The five original nuclear powers -- Washington, Beijing, Moscow, Paris and London -- in March reiterated their commitment to NPT.

Atlanta killing a homicide

Medical report says Afro-American man's death caused by gunshot wounds; race protests force governments to rethink policies

AGENCIES

The death of Rayshard Brooks, a black man killed by a white police officer in Atlanta on Friday, was a homicide caused by gunshot wounds to the back, the Fulton County Medical Examiner's office said, as race protests around the world forced governments to rethink on their policies.

Brooks' death reignited protests in Atlanta after days of worldwide demonstrations against racism and police brutality prompted by the death of George Floyd, an African American, in Minneapolis police custody on May 25.

An autopsy conducted on Sunday showed that Brooks, 27, died from blood loss and organ injuries caused by two gunshot wounds, an investigator for the medical examiner said in a statement. The manner of his death was homicide, the statement said.

As demonstrators in Atlanta took to the streets and chanted for the officers in Brooks' case to be criminally charged, at one point late on Saturday blocking traffic on a nearby interstate highway, the Wendy's



Macron rejects removing controversial statues

UK PM to form racism commission

UN rights council agrees to urgent debate on racism, police violence

restaurant went up in flames.

On Sunday, police offered a \$10,000 reward and published photos of what appeared to be a masked white woman being sought in connection with the case, reports Reuters.

Protesters in the United States and elsewhere have targeted statues of historic figures associated with slavery or other past human rights abuses.

French President Emmanuel Macron vowed on Sunday that France would not seek to erase elements of its history or take down statues of controversial public figures, despite growing global scrutiny of former colonial powers in the wake of worldwide protests.

In an address to the nation, Macron said France would be "uncompromising" in its fight against racism after days of demonstrations over alleged prejudice among police forces, reports AFP.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday announced a government review into "all aspects of inequality" following a wave of anti-racism protests in Britain, but was accused of using it to delay real action.

The UN's top rights body yesterday agreed to a request from African countries to urgently debate racism and police brutality this week following unrest in the US and beyond over George Floyd's death.

Ressa found guilty of libel

Duterte-critic journo faces up to six years in jail; media watchdogs say verdict a blow to media freedom

REUTERS, Manila

Veteran Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, whose website has put President Rodrigo Duterte under tough scrutiny, was convicted of libel yesterday and faces up to six years in jail, in a ruling widely seen as a blow to media freedom.

Ressa, chief executive of Rappler (www.rappler.com) and a former CNN journalist, was charged with "cyber libel" over a 2012 article that linked a businessman to illegal activities.

Reynaldo Santos, a former Rappler researcher and writer, was also found guilty. Both were granted bail pending an appeal.

After the verdict, Ressa a dual US-Filipino citizen, vowed not to be silenced and accused the judiciary of becoming complicit in a campaign to stifle press freedom in the Southeast Asian nation.

"We're at the precipice, if we fall over we're no longer a democracy," she told reporters.

The decision fuelled concern over human rights in a country where Duterte's war on drugs has



left thousands dead and he recently renewed a threat to kill drug dealers, despite condemnation in a UN report.

He is soon expected to sign an anti-terrorism law his opponents fear could target them, but which he says is needed to fight extremism.

To the shock of many, leading broadcaster ABS-CBN Corp, which had criticised Duterte, had to stop broadcasts last month after its licence expired.

Human rights lawyer Amal Clooney, part of a legal team representing Ressa, called the conviction "an affront to the rule of law, a stark warning to the press, and a blow to democracy in the Philippines".

The cyber libel case is one of numerous lawsuits the government

has filed against Ressa and Rappler that have spurred global concern about the intimidation of reporters.

Media watchdogs and human rights groups condemned Monday's verdict, which Amnesty International called a "sham" that "should be quashed".

The Philippines slipped two places in the World Press Freedom Index this year to 136 among 180 countries, down from 134.

Media watchdogs have said numerous charges against Ressa, including alleged foreign ownership violations and alleged tax evasion, aimed to intimidate critics of Duterte.

Rappler has questioned the accuracy of Duterte's public statements and scrutinised his war on drugs and foreign policies. Duterte has lashed out at the news site in public speeches.

Presidential spokesman Harry Roque said Duterte supported freedom of speech and it was a previous administration that pushed for the "cyber libel" law. Duterte had never filed a libel case against a journalist, he added.



Supporters of US President Donald Trump wave flags as they participate in a boat rally to celebrate Donald Trump's birthday in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, US on Sunday. President Trump turned 74 on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

'Trump Heights' in Golan Heights

Israel to build new settlement named after US president

AGENCIES

An Israeli cabinet minister said the government has approved plans to build a new illegal settlement in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights named after US President Donald Trump.

Settlements Minister Tzipi Hotovely wrote on Facebook that her ministry will start preparations for Ramat Trump - Hebrew for "Trump Heights" - to house 300 families. The Jewish settlement is currently known as Bruchim and is more than 30 years old and has a population of 10 people.

Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it in 1981. The vast majority of the international community considers the move illegal under international law.

But during a visit to Washington, DC by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in March last year, just weeks before the Israeli elections, Trump changed decades of US policy by signing an executive order, officially recognising the strategic mountainous plateau as Israeli territory.

The decision, the latest in a series of US diplomatic moves benefiting Israel, was widely applauded there. It followed Trump's controversial decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital and relocate the US embassy to the city, sparking outrage across the region.



According to Israeli media, the plan will involve earmarking 8 million shekels (\$2.3m) for developing the settlement.

At a cabinet meeting on Sunday, Netanyahu said Israel would "begin practical steps in establishing the community of Ramat Trump on the Golan Heights, Israel's sovereignty over which was recognized by President Trump".

Developing Trump Heights will not be easy. Ringed by high yellow grass and landmines, it is located roughly 20km (12.5 miles) from the Syrian border and a half-hour drive from the nearest Israeli settlement, Kiryat Shmona, where 20,000 Jewish settlers live near the Lebanese border.

According to Israeli figures, almost 50,000 people live in the occupied Golan Heights, including about 22,000 Jewish settlers and nearly 25,000 Arab Druze residents.

Last month, Israel pressed ahead with plans to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank in line with Trump's so-called Middle East plan - unveiled in January - which strongly favours Israel and was rejected by the Palestinians. The plan gives Israel settlements and strategic areas of the West Bank.

For much of the international community, such a move by Israel would amount to a grave violation of international law and crush hopes of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It could also further inflame regional tensions.

TERRITORIAL DISPUTE WITH NEPAL

India pushes talks to resolve issues

THE STATESMAN/ANN

Indian Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh yesterday said the relation between India and Nepal is not an ordinary one and any dispute between the neighbours will be resolved through dialogue.

Addressing a virtual conference, Singh reiterated that the 80 km-long new road connecting the Lipulekh pass in Uttarakhand with Kailash Mansarovar route in Tibet inaugurated by him on May 8 is built on Indian territory.

Rajnath Singh further said that some misconceptions have risen in Nepal regarding the road and added, "But I would like to say that as far as Nepal is concerned, we not only have social, geographical, historical or cultural relations with them but also a devotional relation. India can never forget this".

Singh further assured that if any misconception has risen among people of Nepal due to the construction of road from Lipulekh to Dharchula, then the Government of India will find a solution through dialogue.

In a major setback for India, the parliament of Nepal on Saturday voted in favour of the constitutional amendment bill in a special session to update the country's map. The updated map claims over the strategically key areas of Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura along the border with India, despite strong protest by New Delhi.



'Hug curtain'

AFP, Sao Paulo

A retirement home in Brazil has come up with a creative solution to allow friends and families to enjoy personal contact with aging residents particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus: a "hugging curtain." The large plastic curtain, installed in a retirement home in the city of Sao Paulo, allows residents on one side and visitors on the other to engage in the sort of comforting hugs that COVID-19 has made impossible for months.

The curtain has pockets through which resident and visitor can insert their arms, and they are outfitted with shoulder-length black gloves for added protection. "It really feels good; I missed her so much!" 68-year-old Silvio Nagata told AFP after enjoying a long, emotional hug with his sister, Luiza Yassuko, who is 76, at a retirement home in the affluent Morumbi neighborhood.

REVIEWING THE VIEWS

Bangladesh needs to revisit old investment treaties

ASHFAQUZZAMAN CHOWDHURY

DURING the current pandemic, apart from all Covid-19 related disheartening news from in and outside of the country, Bangladesh has received some good news too. The rift between the United States and China resulted in problems for foreign investors in China. Many foreign-owned companies are reframing their business strategy to overcome the ongoing trouble. As a part of new business strategy, many companies have decided to relocate part or full of their production plant to some other countries with the favourable business environment. Fortunately, Bangladesh is in the list of those few countries where foreign investors from some capital-exporting countries are showing interest.

Recently, the Japanese entrepreneurs have expressed their interest to invest in Bangladesh. Bangladesh holds a friendly relationship with Japan since long. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has financed many significant development projects in Bangladesh. Worldwide Japan is



among countries and provide the definition of investment, investors, and the level of protection investors from contracting parties will receive in the territory of host State and if anything adverse happens then what remedy the investor can resort. When such agreements are signed between a capital-exporting and a capital importing country, the trend so far has been to provide expensive unconditional protection in the treaty to foreign investors.

Treaties that provided expensive protection to the foreign investors have drawn much debate in the last decade or more and continued to be subject of criticism from a group of scholars mostly from developing countries. Foreign investors dragged many States to international forum based on the protection that the host State promised to it but did not provide or violated. One of the popular destinations of investors in resolving their dispute with the State is the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). The ICSID arbitration has produced many awards in favour of investors upholding their claims against State. Bangladesh has also experienced such move by the foreign investor in *Saipem v Bangladesh* (ICSID Case No. ARB/05/07).

Due to the asymmetric nature of the investment treaties, foreign investors hold an advantageous position in investment arbitration. However, in the last several years, many countries have brought significant change in their foreign investment policy and treaties. They updated treaty provisions in rebalancing the system. Bangladesh has signed around 34 BITs so far. However, the provisions of most of these BITs are old fashioned and tilt too much towards the foreign investors. The current situation signals that in the coming years, Bangladesh will be able to attract and accommodate new foreign investments from different capital-exporting countries who want to avoid their damage

due to rift between global powers. Therefore, Bangladesh needs to revisit its existing BITs to ensure in the one hand, just and adequate protection to the foreign investors is provided, and on the other hand, State's power to regulate also saved.

Based on the experience of the outcome of investment arbitration, new developments have taken place in the investment treaty drafting. These developments broadly include the insertion of specific provision relating to corruption, corporate social responsibility related obligations to the investors, human rights and labour protection-related provision, sustainable development and environmental protection related provision, limiting the scope of most favoured nation (MFN) provision, the provision on the scope of third party funding and inclusion counterclaim provision. In this process, some States have taken the extensive protectionist approach (for example, Brazil) and most others though brought change but cannot be labelled as too protectionist.

At present, almost all the BITs of Bangladesh belong to the categories of first and second generations BITs that hold less regulatory scope for the host State and provide only rights to the investors, impose no obligation on them. As there is a possibility of attracting new foreign investment in the coming days, therefore, it is the best time to revisit the BITs of Bangladesh to update and adjust their provisions considering the new developments and clarifying the meaning of some provisions considering their evolution in the arbitral jurisprudence. This update could be done either by holding fast track renegotiation of old BITs or by adopting additional protocol to the existing BITs and also by adopting joint interpretative note to the existing BITs.

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LAW OPINION

Stalemate with regard to the MP's vacation of seat upon foreign court's conviction

MD. IKRA

OF late a sitting-member of the current parliament named Mr. Shahid Islam alias Papul has been arrested in Kuwait on charges of human trafficking and money laundering. An application for bail was immediately placed at local court, but his legal attempt to get released from the detention fell through. According to media reports, he was not there on his official capacity rather he was staying there for business purposes. The indictment, if convicted, may result in an imprisonment of minimum seven years and maximum fifteen years under section 178 of the Kuwaiti Penal Code, 1960.

Article 67 of the Constitution to be read with Article 66(2) provides certain situations where a seat in the parliament may get vacated. These grounds include conviction for a criminal offence involving moral turpitude of which the sentence of imprisonment must be for two years at least and a period of five years must elapse since his release. The competency for an election and the capacity to hold the seat after taking the oath – both must satisfy the stated criterion set by the Constitution.

To date, we have not seen an instance where a sitting MP had to vacate his office upon conviction pronounced by a court. Not to be confused, in *Janata Tower Corruption Case*, the Appellate Division upheld the Sessions Court's conviction against HM Ershad on corruption charges and the final sentence of imprisonment exceeding three years prospectively disqualified him to contest the 8th parliamentary election in 2001.

Linking it to MP Papul's context, the court dealing with the case is situated in a foreign state and regulated under different laws than those of Bangladesh. Since our Constitution did not specify which court conviction will result in the vacation of seat, the prime question now stands whether our Constitution intended to attract the jurisdiction of both domestic and foreign courts in this regard. The case would have been a straightforward one if it had been a case under domestic jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the words inscribed in the Constitution are not enough to draw a definite conclusion to this question. Interpretations coming from legal scholars are polar opposite to each other. It is either foreign court's conviction for a criminal offence calls for vacation of seats or it does not. The word 'court' should be construed as a court of competent jurisdiction. Since he was physically present during the commission of alleged crime in a foreign country, he must accept the foreign laws as obligatory upon him and violation of

which legitimately calls for foreign court's jurisdiction over him. There is simply no other way to deny the jurisdiction of Kuwait over MP Papul.

Once the question of jurisdiction settles down, the question of enforceability stands up. In order to establish a nexus between these two, the first inquiry should be into whether a foreign court's criminal conviction is enforceable in Bangladesh or not. If the answer is in the negative, how does it carry the same weight as a competent domestic court does? Wanting to remove an MP based on an unenforceable foreign verdict would be profoundly unfair. However, the entire scenario needs to be more cautiously interpreted in light of the Constitution and relevant practices.

Though we do not have any provision where the domestic law permits to execute foreign court's criminal judgment, there are instances where the execution of foreign judgments of civil nature is permitted. Under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 foreign judgments are deemed to be judgment pronounced by a domestic court upon fulfilling



court's satisfaction thus enforceable in Bangladesh. Foreign arbitral awards are also recognised and enforceable under Section 45 of the Arbitration Act, 2001. Section 4 of the Digital Security Act, 2018 confers an extra-territorial jurisdiction where the court can take cognizance of crimes committed outside the territory of Bangladesh. So, the enforcement of foreign judgments in our country is not alien to our legal system.

In this very case, MP Papul has been allegedly partaken in human trafficking and money laundering which are both punishable offences under our domestic law. If the request for repatriation fails, it is likely that he is going to face the prosecution. If the charges are proved beyond reasonable doubt, he will be imprisoned for a period to be determined by the court. As our current parliament is in the middle of its second year, longer sentence will put a bar to his returning home and who can tell for sure that this parliament will still be there when he gets back. However, this is certainly not an incident of one-off kind, and the repetition of the same incident is unexpected but not unlikely. A proper guideline in this regard is necessary and if the same incident takes place in future, it will establish a perilous precedent.

THE WRITER IS A FINAL YEAR LAW STUDENT, BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY OF PROFESSIONALS (BUP).

LAW WATCH

Preventing pharmaceutical malpractice

FARZANA AKTHER

INFODEMIC and alluring false drugs' promise to cure pandemic COVID-19 are compounding the ongoing public health crisis gradually. Unapproved and unregulated online business of selling the fake drugs are adding fuel to the existing fire. Fake face mask, counterfeit test kits, misbranded medicine are also on the rise. So, these phenomena should be addressed with strong medical ethics and state regulation.

In Bangladesh, the State mandate of preventing drug malpractice can be extracted from article 18 of the Constitution which bolsters adopting effective measures to prevent drug consumption injurious to public health. This constitutional provision is proliferated in policy no. 4.7 of the National Drug Policy 2016 which says that "the selling of fake, adulterated, expired, unregistered, counterfeit, misbranded drug are punishable offenses due to hindrance of good governance in the drug sector, consequently, drug manufacturers, organisation, wholesale and retail seller are all accountable". Any person or organisation associated with production, marketing, sale, distribution, and/or storage of such drugs is to be subjected to stringent legal action and the respective license is also to be revoked by the Directorate General of Drug Administration. Moreover, the right to health as an extension of the fundamental right to life has acquired a new dimension due to the spread of deadly diseases across the world as well as in our country.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that one in 10 medical products circulating in low- and middle-income countries are either substandard or fake, which is both dangerous and a waste of money. Various academic studies have put the prevalence at between 11% and 48%. Of 1,500 reports of such products, most came from Africa (42%), with south-east Asia also a major hotspot for fake medications.

As per section 8 of the Drugs Act 1940, the standard quality of the drug denotes the drugs which comply with the standards set out in the schedule of the Act. Section 9 of the said Act launched the idea of "misbranded drug". It implies if the drug is an intimation of, substitution for, or resembles in a manner likely to deceive, another drug or bears upon it or its label or container the name of another

drug unless it is plainly and conspicuously marked as to reveal its true character and its lack of identity with such other drug. Prohibition is imposed on the manufacturing and selling of substandard and misbranded drugs in section 18 of the Act. The corresponding section 28 refers that whoever in respect of any drug sold by him whether as principal or agent gives to the purchaser a false warranty that the drug does not in any way contravene the provisions of section 18 shall unless he proves that when he gave the warranty he had good reason to believe that the same to be true be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to one year with fine or with both.

The existing legal sanction is not comprehensive enough to address the issue of exposure of fake and substandard drugs during the pandemic. The increased punishment scale with precise determinants should be introduced for controlling this quasi-pandemic phenomenon. The High Court Division (HCD)'s observation to the effect that "production, sale, and storage of fake and adulterated medicine should be dealt with maximum punishment resonates with the sentiments of most people in the country". The remark was made at the time of hearing submissions following a writ petition filed with HCD on June 17, 2019, seeking confiscation of time-barred, fake and adulterated medicine from drug stores all over the country.

According to section 7 of the Infectious Diseases (Prevention, Control, and Eradication) Act 2018, the functions of the advisory committee constituted under the Act include observing and reviewing the antibiotics with other medicines which are used in the treatment of communicable diseases. Section 9 of the Act emphasised to comply with the health instructions and regulations of WHO for protecting public health during the pandemic.

Making false medicine is an opportunistic crime, more common in places where regulatory oversight is weak or inconsistent. In this unforeseeable situation, stakeholders from all corners should consider the development of effective communication and training programmes for consumers and health workers on understanding the quality and safety of the medicine.

THE WRITER IS A LECTURER AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS, UNIVERSITY OF ASIA PACIFIC.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Human rights violations against student protesters

CIVIL society groups Front Line Defenders, CIVICUS and South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) have jointly published a report highlighting the use of excessive force, arbitrary arrests and allegations of torture and ill-treatment by the Bangladesh security forces during student protests. The report also sheds light on attacks by non-state actors perpetrated with impunity against the students.

The report titled 'Crushing Student Protests' has come out on 10 June 2020. It discusses the government's response to two major student protests (quota reform and road safety movements) in 2018. The report states that both movements were faced with excessive use of force by law enforcement agencies. It also states that unidentified armed individuals – associated with the ruling party – attacked protesters with wooden logs, sticks, iron rods, and sharp weapons. Multiple cases were filed by the police against protesters,

journalists were assaulted and detained; many student activists, their friends and family members continued to face surveillance, intimidation and harassment. The report states that these patterns portray how repression is continued for a longer period of time and effectively silences future dissent.

One such arrested journalist was Shahidul Alam, a well-known photojournalist and activist. Mr. Alam was arrested by plainclothes policemen on 5 August 2018, a few hours after giving an interview to Al Jazeera English on the student protests. The next day, he was charged under the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act for making "false" and "provocative" statements.

The report observes that the crackdown on protests is indicative of a broader pattern of aggression and attacks by the Government against critics to silence dissent. The ICT Act (previously) and (now) the Digital

Security Act, have been used to charge and convict human rights activists, journalists and government critics for speaking up. Incidents of forced disappearance are also found.

Based on the study, the report opines that human rights defenders in Bangladesh have been subjected to 'unprecedented attacks' over the last ten years. Some of the human rights defenders have even left the country for safety after being targeted by extremist groups or even the State. They have not received proper support from the police and authorities. Others have been publicly smeared or have faced false accusations.

These violations are inconsistent with Bangladesh's Constitution and its international human rights obligations under the ICCPR and Convention against Torture, and other international laws and standards.

—COMPILED BY LAW DESK (SOURCE: FRONTLINEDEFENDERS.ORG).

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR
LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA TUESDAY JUNE 16, 2020, ASHAR 2, 1427 BS

We have to know when infections will peak

Let the health experts lead

WE are extremely worried by the exponential increase in infection rates and the rising number of daily deaths due to Covid-19. What is even more concerning is that we seem to be going into a blind alley with no clue regarding when the infection rates will peak—which is essential to predict the downturn. Experts have alluded to the government's "unscientific" and "vague" strategy as the cause for this uncertainty, which has left us completely in the dark regarding how long it will take for infection rates to fall.

Calling the lockdown from March 26 extending to May 30 a "holiday" for example, led to confusion and indiscriminate movement of people, thus spreading the virus to the districts. Then, announcements of partial reopening without clear guidelines brought another influx of people, mainly garment workers, to join the factories. Despite efforts to enforce lockdowns, with police trying to ensure social distancing, people have been moving about within their localities, crowding kitchen markets and other public places, as well as moving in between the districts and the cities.

In the last 14 days, the DGHs officially reported 40,366 Covid-19 cases and an official death toll of over 1,200. Unfortunately, the actual numbers are most likely many times higher due to the low rate of testing. Without widespread testing, how can we determine the infection rates and the number of deaths due to Covid-19? Measures such as hoisting red flags in front of buildings with Covid-19 patients by the police have resulted in many people hiding their symptoms to avoid being stigmatised, complicating the situation further.

At this point, the government must listen to public health experts and adopt a scientific, specific strategy with clear guidelines to the public. The categorising of areas into red, yellow and green zones must be done in an organised manner, and the level of testing must be scaled up according to the rates of infection.

We urge the government to heed the advice of health experts, which includes immediately forming a national committee headed by such experts with at least 500 subcommittees to oversee the various zones, and include local police, administration and representatives, with health officials taking the lead. These subcommittees would be responsible for all the steps needed to contain the spread of the virus—identifying positive cases, contact tracing, ensuring daily necessities for city dwellers as well as hospital facilities for critical patients, and so on.

Communicating these strategies to the public is crucial since there are still major gaps in understanding among people regarding the importance of lockdowns and social distancing. People also have to have confidence that the government is taking the right steps to contain the virus. Only a well-planned out, coordinated strategy that is based on a holistic, scientific approach with the help of experts and other specialised groups can lead to progress in the fight against Covid-19.

Nurse dies after being denied treatment at her own workplace

Hospitals still not held accountable for turning away patients

AT a time when our healthcare sector is entirely overwhelmed and struggling to provide treatment to the escalating number of patients (Covid-19 positive and negative), we are disheartened to learn about the demise of yet another frontline worker, who was refused treatment at her own workplace because the doctors feared she was coronavirus positive—Habiba Sultana, a 22-year-old nurse of Ibn Sina Hospital who graduated from Ibn Sina Nursing Institute's diploma programme in nursing and midwifery in 2018.

On June 10, Sultana suffered a stroke and was admitted to the National Institute of Neurosciences (NINS), but soon enough, her condition deteriorated and she required immediate ICU support. As there was no bed available at the institute's ICU, her family took her to Ibn Sina Hospital hoping they would admit her, since she was their employee and also because she tested negative for Covid-19. Upon reaching the hospital, Sultana's family realised that her Covid-19 test report was missing. While she lay unattended fighting for her life, her family tried desperately to convince the doctors at the emergency to give her some primary treatment. Despite the doctors from NINS confirming to Ibn Sina doctors that Sultana was Covid-19 negative, they refused to treat her for hours. Finally, her family called the 999 emergency hotline and officers from Dhanmondi Police Station arrived, but by then it was too late, and Sultana had already passed away.

There has been an alarming regularity of reports about patients being denied treatment at different private hospitals across the country, despite the health ministry's circular stating that all private hospitals and clinics should have separate arrangements for treating "suspected" Covid-19 patients and that they cannot refuse any patient if they have the particular treatment facilities, and that failure to comply with the order will result in legal action. The health sector is already struggling to cope with the huge number of coronavirus cases, and we need all hands on deck—no hospital can leave resources unutilised and refuse care to the people who need it because of fears of coronavirus. The government must hold to account the hospitals that are blatantly ignoring their duty of care, and mandate the hospitals to accept patients requiring emergency medical services. There is an urgent need to ensure uninterrupted delivery of healthcare services to every patient during this critical time.

THE GRUDGING URBANIST



ADNAN ZILLUR MORSHED

CITIES have generally been the epicentres of the devastation caused by Covid-19, fuelling debates around the world on how to make cities more resilient against future pandemics. A range of questions are being asked—What can we learn from the ways cities responded to past pandemics? How do we achieve quality public health through city design? How would the nature of public squares be complicated by the needs of "social distancing"? How do we minimise the risks of such disease hotspots at high-density public transportation, markets, workplaces, schools and entertainment venues? How do we reimagine the relationship between cities and nature as a way to make cities greener and healthier? How can we leverage urban data to provide efficient and equitable public health services? What kind of urban lifestyles can city design foster that would reduce pre-existing health conditions of vulnerable people? And how can we employ urban design to mitigate economic, social and racial injustices that the coronavirus crisis has both revealed and augmented?

There is, of course, no universal formula for a city's pandemic preparedness. Cities vary in terms of their population density, culture, economy, public health, governance and resources. Dhaka's preparation strategies may not be the same as those for New York City. For example, social distancing can present a very different set of urban meanings and public receptions in different cities. How would you socially distance yourself if the space isn't there in the first place? In a poverty-stricken, ultra-congested slum, social distancing could be a cruel joke. If the footpath is four feet wide, how do two people stand six feet apart, as recommended by public health officials?

Yet, there are shared experiences that could be instructive for cities across regions, economic geographies and cultures. For instance, learning from history matters for all. Crises inspired creative solutions in the past. In the mid-19th century, the urban impacts of the Industrial Revolution were revealed by the shockingly unsanitary living conditions of the working class poor who came to cities to work in the factories. Infectious diseases, particularly cholera, were rampant. One author wrote in 1883 about the human horrors inside the workers housing in London: "Every room in these rotten and reeking tenements houses a family, often two. In one cellar a sanitary inspector reports finding a father, mother, three children, and four pigs!" In his novel *Oliver Twist* (1837-38), "the spokesman of the poor" Charles Dickens hauntingly portrayed the dark underworld of London.

In response to deplorable urban conditions, the cities of London, Paris and New York sought housing reform and modernised their sewage infrastructures to contain cholera epidemics. These metropolises gradually devised new urban zoning laws to prevent unhygienic overcrowding that frequently led to disease outbreak. Thus, the modern era of urban sanitation began. At the height of anti-British agitation in India, Gandhi proclaimed: "Sanitation is more important than political independence."

The birth of urban planning was tied to the growing awareness of sanitation as the foundation of public health around the turn of the 20th century. The discipline

emerged as a result of the overlapping works of three groups of people: architects, public health professionals and social workers. Architects were concerned with improving and reorganising the physical conditions of the city. Public health professionals focused on the city's poor infrastructure—water supply, sewage collection or waste disposal—as a way to prevent epidemics. And, social workers sought to improve the lives of the urban poor by promoting housing reform and reducing their gruelling work hours. The efforts of these groups ushered in the idea of comprehensive urban planning, powered by a universal sense of moral economy.

That was over a hundred years ago. Today, we have become accustomed to the concept that each city has its own political economy, social and cultural character, and anthropological challenges. It is in this context we need to reimagine post-Covid-19 cities in Bangladesh.

Most importantly, we should see city design as a public health initiative, wherein "public health" implies a fusion of physical and mental wellbeing, aesthetic

and fish stored in polluted water, the traditional *kacha* bazar could easily become a pandemic tinderbox.

Should they be removed from congested urban areas or should they be redesigned to meet public hygiene standards? Like the rickshaw debate (whether they should be taken off city streets or not), *kacha* bazars can present a policy dilemma. On the one hand, the livelihoods of local traders and community values are at stake and, on the other, there are public health risks.

The wet markets are not a problem of developing countries alone. There are over 80 wet markets in New York City. A nonprofit group called Slaughter Free NYC is working to have them banned on the grounds that they pose serious public health risks. We need to start reimagining wet markets in the midst of our cities. Similarly, the placement of public toilets in busy urban intersections should be examined closely. As much as they serve the public interest, they could also be air- and water-borne virus factories. Is the unsanitary public toilet a design problem

are occupied by informal markets. Furthermore, an entrenched bourgeois class element makes walking in city streets a socially incriminating subject. Creating a true pedestrian culture would require no less a behavioural revolution. Urban administrators, planners, architects, healthcare professionals and social workers should come together to re-conceptualise the footpath as a public health infrastructure that can help reduce obesity, resist diabetes, and encourage people to better experience their city. Being healthy means not having preexisting health conditions, thereby reducing people's vulnerabilities during the pandemic. Should footpaths be covered or arcaded, so that people can use them in all seasons, during the monsoon and scorching summer?

Pandemic preparedness would require a careful consideration of the city's economic geography and how it might perpetuate discriminatory public health policies. It is typically the urban poor, ghettoised in their impoverished, unhygienic and overcrowded squatter colonies, who



"In a poverty-stricken, ultra-congested slum, social distancing could be a cruel joke".

STAR FILE PHOTO

and cultural fulfilment, the ability to live life without fear, and social conditions in which all people have equal access to opportunities. When public health is understood as a collective social contract, hospitals, urban trees, playgrounds, footpaths, clean rivers and *kacha* bazars can all be considered public health amenities.

Speaking of *kacha* bazars, we all know how important they are in our cities as "informal" marketplaces that serve as community junctions where local people buy fish, meat, spices or vegetables at affordable prices. The alleged origin of Covid-19 in a Chinese *kacha* bazar or wet market in Wuhan has provoked questions as to how safe it is to allow this type of informal, and almost always unsanitary, marketplace inside dense urban neighbourhoods.

But think about it. Who wouldn't enjoy going to the *kacha* bazar in Mohammadpur or New Market in Dhaka and experience their poetic insanity, their intoxicating hustle and bustle? Even though they don't trade exotic animals like their Chinese counterparts, wet markets in Bangladeshi cities warrant a new scrutiny from a public health perspective. With the health hazards of exposed meat and drying blood, severed

or a behavioural problem? Would toilet hygiene in our country require a cultural revolution? In 1925, Gandhi wrote: "... a lavatory must be as clean as a drawing-room." It was a pointed critique of South Asia's toilet hygiene.

Another issue that comes up frequently in debates on post-pandemic urbanism is crowding in public transportation. What can Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet or Rajshahi do about it? Our buses, tempos and trains are jam-packed. Social distancing is both a luxury and an impossibility. Should facial masks be made legally mandatory in mass transit? Alternatively, should we promote personal mobility by means of biking and walking? European cities are aggressively championing biking as a triple-win proposition. Biking is healthy; it reduces crowding in mass transportation; and it doesn't discharge any carbon into the city air. But how safe are our already packed streets for biking? Maybe in Barishal, but not in Dhaka. What will it take for us to reimagine Dhaka as a South Asian Amsterdam?

Walking in our cities has never been a pleasurable or efficient urban activity. Footpaths often either don't exist or

bear the brunt of a pandemic. Covid-19 killed people in the Bronx, the poorest of New York City's five boroughs, at a much higher rate than other boroughs. Grinding poverty, lack of quality hospitals, racial discrimination and social alienation made the Bronx more vulnerable than any other borough. Bangladesh can learn from the Bronx experience.

Urban resilience needs meaningful investment in public health infrastructures, including affordable hospitals. In the 2020-21 budget, Bangladesh's expenditure on health is a little over one percent of GDP (India's is similar to Bangladesh; Norway's is over 10 percent, one of the highest in the world). The truth is that our development vision prioritises flyovers but not public hospitals. As the coronavirus crisis rages in Bangladesh, hospitals, more specifically oxygen, have literally become the fault line that separates the haves and have-nots. Eliminating this fault line would require envisioning a new moral economy as the bedrock of development.

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Holding companies liable for death by negligence

What legal actions can be taken?

'JUSTICE' IN PRACTICE



TAQBIR HUDA

ON May 27, 2020, a devastating fire broke out in the corona isolation unit of United Hospital in Gulshan, which claimed the lives of five patients who were receiving treatment there. On

June 6, 2020, the five member committee established by the Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) to investigate the incident reported that they found evidence of "negligence and indifference of United Hospital". Since their report is yet to be made public, we may turn to the evidence of negligence found in prior inspections by the Dhaka North City Corporation mayor and FSCD, as announced in press briefings.

Firstly, the corona isolation unit was a makeshift structure, detached from the main building and made of extremely flammable materials, such as Partex boards, while the presence of disinfectants inside the unit added to the risk of flammability. Secondly, the corona isolation unit did not have any fire exits, fire hydrants or fire extinguishers and was built without obtaining a fire safety clearance from the FSCD. Therefore, the unit was "built in violation of the [National] Building Code", as stated by Debashis Bardhan, deputy director of FSCD, Dhaka Division.

Thirdly, eight out of the eleven fire extinguishers that were available in the main building were expired, while the

hospital's fire safety officer was not on duty when the fire broke out. The fourth piece of evidence—the fire service mentioned that they only came to know about the fire at 9:55 PM, 25 minutes after the fire broke out, although the hospital authorities maintained that they had placed the call much earlier.

Finally, two out of the five patients killed in the fire had actually tested negative for Covid-19, but were still being kept in the corona isolation unit despite repeated requests by family members for their transfer. These findings naturally led to widespread discussion on social media about the lack of accountability for corporate negligence in our country. The questions therefore arise—can companies be held to account for causing death by negligence, and how? There are at least three ways this can be done: by filing a criminal case, a writ petition and a tort case.

Under section 304A of the Penal Code 1860, causing death by negligence is punishable by a maximum of five years or with fine or both. While criminal cases are sometimes filed against CEOs or MDs of companies or entities, they often do not get justice. This is because proving that death occurred as a consequence of corporate negligence is extremely difficult to establish in criminal law, due to the higher burden of proof and its general focus on intentional wrongdoing. Even if fines are imposed on the company, this money would not go to the victims' families unless the court converted the fine to an award compensation (which seldom happens). Additionally, since fines are punitive

in nature, the amount could never be considered as adequate compensation, even when converted.

The constitution guarantees certain fundamental rights (such as right to life) for all people within the territory of Bangladesh, and relief can be sought by petitioning the Supreme Court when any of these rights are breached, in the form of writ petitions. Previously, such petitions were only filed against public bodies but more recently, private bodies, such as private companies, are also being impleaded. If the Supreme Court is satisfied that there has indeed been a violation of fundamental rights, it can issue any "order or directions" against "any person" as it deems "appropriate", including an order of compensation to be paid to a private party.

In some recent high profile negligence cases, the Supreme Court has exhibited willingness to award compensation quite speedily (such as the road crash cases of Rajib, Jabal E Noor and Greenline, along with the earlier death of four year old boy Zihad). However, there are also other cases where the compensation has not been received despite writs being filed seeking it (such as the Chawkbazar fire case and FR Tower case). Crucially, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in Bangladesh vs Nurul Amin made it clear that compensation for violation of fundamental rights through writ petitions will be an exceptional remedy. This is because generally, tort law is considered to be the appropriate forum for filing compensation cases.

The less explored option is a tort case.

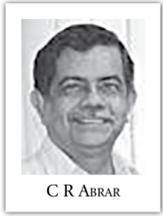
Tort law is the specific branch of law designed to deal with compensating harms suffered by individuals due to the actions of others. In Bangladesh, while tort cases remain quite rare, the Fatal Accidents Act 1855 (FAA) would allow family members of anyone who has died due to a company's negligence to claim compensation, and such compensation will be assessed at a much higher scale than in writs and criminal cases. In tort law (and therefore FAA), as soon as negligence is proved (and no valid defences are applicable), the court would be bound to award compensation to the victims as a matter of right, which is not the case in writs or criminal cases. Furthermore, in contrast to criminal law, the burden of proof is much lower in tort law and employers can be held vicariously liable for the negligence of their employees. Together, these two differences mean that it would be more possible to prove corporate negligence in tort cases than in criminal cases.

So while there are at least three different ways in which victims' families can hold companies to account for causing death by negligence, the third and most advantageous option tends to remain unexplored in our country. It must be remembered that the law does not require victims' families to choose only one out of the three options as they have the right to bring all three forms of legal action simultaneously.

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COVID-19 AND MIGRANT WORKERS

The great wage robbery



C R ABRAR

“GULF countries are highly dependent on migrant workers in almost every major sector... and yet they have utterly failed to protect migrant workers, and treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve”—these words

were spoken by a representative of Amnesty International while highlighting the plight of migrant workers during Covid-19 times.

In a letter to the UN Secretary General, Bangladesh Civil Society for Migrants expressed concern that during the pandemic, some destination countries are exerting pressure on the origin countries to take back the latter's nationals, and appealed to him to exert his influence on those governments “to take the responsibility of this group of vulnerable workers at this time of crisis”.

Despite migrant workers' colossal contribution in building the edifices of and shoring up the economies of the Gulf and other Arab countries for decades, coronavirus has betrayed the ill treatment and injustices that have been structurally embedded in this labour market. If anything, thanks to the pandemic, the reality that has thus far remained behind the scenes has been laid bare. Neither the opulent host countries nor most of the countries of origin (in their rush to secure the flow of remittances), have ever cared to duly acknowledge the problems that over time became well entrenched, let alone put in place mechanisms to address them.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, narratives (largely on social media) of migrants located in various destination countries convincingly conveyed the dire quandary they are in. Many are without adequate food for days or even weeks, crammed in unhygienic and unsanitary quarters, some even without proper shelters, making a mockery of the WHO call for social distancing. A large segment remains idle as construction sites and other production facilities, restaurants and markets remain shuttered. Faced with a situation of possible deportation, many were forced to accept withholding or reduction of wages without any guarantee of whether they would be reimbursed at all, a measure that is in breach

of labour standards. Bereft of any earnings and with fast depleting savings (if they had them at all), they face virtual starvation and are trapped in great uncertainty. Those lucky to retain jobs are unable to send money to their loved ones at home as remittance transfer facilities in destination countries remain closed. The diplomatic missions of their respective countries command meagre resources—far less than the amount the distressed migrants need.

In this grave uncertainty, what has come as a bolt from the blue is the arbitrary termination of contracts by employers. Like aftershocks during an earthquake, a large number of migrant workers were speedily notified that their services are no longer required. It was done at a time when their contracts remained valid. This was not the end of their affliction. To their bewilderment, not only did the workers not receive a penny as compensation for arbitrary termination, but they faced the loss of all outstanding dues as well—wages, benefits and the like.

Taking advantage of their governments' plans to send workers back to their countries of origin, the employers who could still manage to run their enterprises are terminating the contracts of migrant workers. Covid-19 for them is a God-sent opportunity to rob the workers of the huge sums of money that they are owed. A huge number of cases were reported where months of due wages and benefits have been withheld.

Employers in destination countries know quite well the iron grip they command over the market. They are also aware that if they require the services of migrant workers in future, their own governments would have no issues in granting them work permits. Yet again, the recruiting agencies at both ends would work in unison to get big cuts from the exorbitant costs of the new visas that they would sell to aspirant migrants as manna from heaven, and the authorities in the countries of origin would be too keen to see one more worker go abroad, with the anticipation of an additional amount, however small, in the flow of much coveted remittances, deemed as an important indicator of national development.

The relatively well off migrants also appear to be sinking into hardship. Migrant workers who over the years acquired specialised skills and graduated to become independent contractors, have also been adversely affected. With the stagnation in economic activities, they

are worried about recouping the amounts spent for work that has already been completed.

The conditions of long term enterprising labour migrants who managed to mature through the ranks and subsequently become co-owners of enterprises, such as tailoring shops, motor garages and convenience stores, are no better. They are worried that the headline policies (of sending back migrants to their countries of origin) may act as an inducement to their Arab partners (in whose

outbreak of the pandemic, more than 200,000 have been sent back to their countries of origin in Asia. In all likelihood, the figure will “rise exponentially” when the flights resume over the next few months. Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) predicts countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh and the Philippines will experience eventual return of a massive number of their migrant workers—“millions will be repatriated to situations of debt bondage as they will be forced to pay off recruitment fees and costs,

repatriated migrant workers, states ... became complicit in overseeing procedures where millions of workers will be returning without their earned wages ... nor seeing justice”. Those workers were not provided with any document (contract, pay slip, attendance roll etc) by their employers, through which in future they can lodge legitimate claims of compensation for the harm they have been subjected to, if ever a justice mechanism is put in place. While the workers endure unparalleled hardships without any possibility of redress, unplanned facilitation of “repatriation” frees employers from any accountability.

The psychological toll of deportations on the pauperised and debt ridden migrant workers can never be accounted for. As yet, no exercise has been initiated to assess the measurable potential loss of remittances, to the tune of tens of millions of dollars, through this wage thuggery by the countries of destination. The much celebrated Global Compact for Migration, New York Declaration, 2016 and regional (Colombo Process and Abu Dhabi Dialogue) and international processes (Global Forum on Migration and Development) have thus far failed to generate even a dim ray of hope for the millions of aggrieved migrants.

Today is the International Day of Family Remittances. It is observed to celebrate migrants' contributions to millions of households, and also to communities, countries and entire regions. Covid-19 has disrupted the flow of resources, eroding the resilience of migrant households. On March 19, 2020, the UN Secretary-General has called for global solidarity in responding to the coronavirus crisis, stating “remittances are lifelines in the developing world—especially now”.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has proven the brittleness of the cherished concepts of “global solidarity and cooperation” on migration. If the call for Build Back Better is ever to succeed and if the attainment of the SDGs still remains a target from the precipice where it stands now, if the globalisation process is ever to matter to the marginalised of the world, then it is incumbent on all states and international actors to ensure accountability of the wage robbers. Otherwise, in all likelihood, the painstakingly built migration-development nexus will suffer a brutal jolt.

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Asian workers at a construction site in the Gulf emirate of Dubai. Dubai is one of the locations for some of Bangladesh's 10 million migrant workers who are mostly employed in the Middle East.

PHOTO: AFP/KARIM SAHIB

names the enterprises are registered) to dump them. Needless to say, the legal regime of the Gulf and other Arab states do not provide any protection to foreigners who make such investments. Despite prohibitions in the law, this practice is largely abetted by the authorities, to the huge benefit of the non-investing local partners. Covid-19 may have come as a boon to these rent-seekers, allowing them to strip the entrepreneurial migrants of their *de facto* ownership.

Large scale return, deportation or repatriation of migrant workers during the times of Covid-19 is a reality. Since the

despite returning empty handed”.

Under duress from destination countries, the countries of origin reluctantly became party to repatriation (in effect deportation) procedures conducted hastily, without any redress mechanism. Such procedures have been put in place when courts and other dispute settlement mechanisms in the countries of destination remain closed.

A joint statement issued on June 1 by five leading INGOs and trade unions observed that “Without ensuring companies and employers are doing their due diligence to protect and fulfil the human rights and labour rights of

Transitioning to online teaching

JUDE WILLIAM GENILO and ARIFA GHANI RAHMAN

ON March 16, 2020, amidst fears of the coronavirus outbreak, the Bangladesh government issued a directive decreeing all educational institutions under the Ministry of Education to close. To minimise possible academic losses, the University Grants Commission (UGC) declared that all universities introduce online teaching of courses. This directive resulted in universities, particularly some private ones, to quickly shift courses online. We consider ourselves lucky that our university had the infrastructure, the technical knowledge and the experience to make this move smoothly. However, not all universities were so fortunate, resulting in many debates over the issue.

The UGC's directive to shift classes online came when we were in the first half of the term, with midterm exams looming. Faculty members were instructed to give assignments, take home exams, and viva exams in lieu of synchronous online written examinations. Online teaching and assessment strategies had to be rethought given the levels of students' Internet accessibility. A survey revealed that 60 percent of our students had reliable Internet access, 30 percent had intermittent Internet access, and 10 percent had no Internet access. The students without Internet access could not participate in the online sessions and therefore, special policies needed to be formulated to accommodate them.

It should be noted that a Quacquarelli Symonds Limited (QS) survey conducted among 16,000 students and 400 university administrators worldwide showed 54 percent of respondents shifted to online teaching and 63 percent of student respondents expected their universities to move online. The data was gathered from February to March 2020. Regarding infrastructure, we had integrated a

learning management system (LMS), Moodle, an open-source learning platform used worldwide, in 2007. After intermittent training, the LMS was officially launched in Spring 2014. Initially, our faculty members used the platform as an additional support to teaching and not as a replacement for classroom or face-to-face classes. The system, thus, was being used as a supplementary space to upload helpful, additional course materials, distribute and collect assignments, record grades, take attendance, conduct quizzes, and chat with students so that learning continued beyond the classroom.

Newly hired faculty at our university are trained in Moodle every semester and refreshers offered for others. In September 2018, we formed an Online Education Study Group to recommend measures on how to move forward with online teaching and learning at the university. The group suggested assessing the impact of online education at our university and others; prioritising online education strategies that build upon our core values; limiting online engagements to those instances that yield clear benefits to students and relevant stakeholders; and undertaking consultations with faculty members regarding online learning strategies.

Given these, various departments and centres at the university have made inroads in conducting online learning. Much of these have been instrumental in facilitating the shift from face-to-face classrooms to online teaching during this critical time, while prior familiarity with an LMS among faculty members and students became the most important factor in facilitating this shift.

Despite this familiarity, however, Moodle was never used for teaching exclusively. So, options to use other mediums to complement Moodle were recommended when the emergency situation arose. The goal was

to reach and accommodate as many of the students in a course as possible, and to prioritise the delivery of the course content, rather than focus on the platform used. For video conferencing, the faculty opted to use Zoom, Meet and Hangouts. For students with intermittent access to the Internet, documents and other materials were uploaded not only

For students with intermittent access to the Internet, documents and other materials were uploaded not only to Moodle, but to Google Drive and Facebook groups, or emailed directly to them. Faculty members also recorded their synchronous lectures and uploaded them to the course-related Facebook private groups or YouTube.

to Moodle, but to Google Drive and Facebook groups, or emailed directly to them. Faculty members also recorded their synchronous lectures and uploaded them to the course-related Facebook private groups or YouTube so that students who could not login at the time could view them later while others could use them for review.

In addition to the use of a full-fledged LMS,

an initiative was taken to link up with Coursera to allow students and faculty members access to other online courses from universities worldwide. In April 2020, Coursera granted us access to more than 4,600 free certified courses for 1,000 of our community members for the next six months. This agreement with Coursera proved beneficial not only to the students but to faculty and admin members as well, many of whom are taking advantage of this opportunity.

When the lockdown began and educational institutions shut down, faculty members at our university formed a Facebook group to serve as a platform to exchange notes regarding online teaching and learning. This group proved extremely useful in collaborating on different practices regarding student management, assessments, pedagogy, course syllabi writing, online learning platforms, cyber security, and other concerns. In a sense, the platform became a community of practices as well as a support group of the Teachers Helping Teachers kind.

We think it safe to say at this point that our university has achieved a good measure of success in transitioning to online teaching/learning. A report from the university's Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) verifies that 94 percent of classes were held successfully in the Spring 2020 semester. But since this is the first time we conducted classes online, we needed to also gather data to explore ways to improve the experience for all concerned as we move forward and prepare for the upcoming semester. The first step was a broad-based student survey to gain some insight into our primary stakeholders' experiences, as mentioned earlier. This survey revealed that 75 percent of our students live in Dhaka and 92 percent have smart phones. This, of course, augurs well for our next semester. This data will help in choosing alternatives for students in remote areas with limited or no access to the Internet.

Second, the university's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) also conducted a survey of the faculty members to gauge their physical wellness, mental wellbeing, financial status, online class response, and the support they need to improve online participation. Data from this survey is being used to plan for training sessions and seminars.

Third, course and teacher evaluations were conducted online through the University's Resource Management System. Typically, every term, faculty members are evaluated by students for their knowledge of the subject matter, teaching styles, learning assessments, professional behaviour and student development. Courses are investigated in terms of content/organisation, learning environment, learning resources, teacher contributions, and student contributions. These evaluations are compiled and sent to faculty members to help them reassess their course contents and teaching styles for an improved experience in the next semester. The same process will be followed this time too.

As we move on through this pandemic, we feel it is important to support each other every step of the way—not only within our individual institutions, but across universities, because there is always scope for improvement and learning. If we, as faculty members, model supportive behaviour amongst ourselves, it is only natural that our other stakeholders will follow suit. This step by step breakdown of the measures adopted by our university, therefore, will, we hope, serve as a support to others who may be struggling to adapt to the “new normal”.

Dr. Jude William Genilo is Professor and Head of the Department of Media Studies and Journalism, and Director, IQAC, at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh. Arifa Ghani Rahman is Associate Professor of English and Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



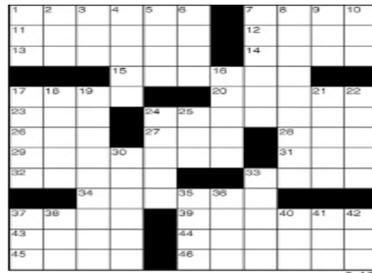
FIRST WOMAN IN SPACE

June 16, 1963

On this day in 1963, Soviet cosmonaut Valentina V Tereshkova became the first woman to travel in space, having been launched into orbit aboard the spacecraft Vostok 6, which completed 48 orbits in 71 hours.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Climber's descent
 - 7 Glade grazer
 - 11 Change over time
 - 12 Jane of fiction
 - 13 Hold back
 - 14 Feudal farmer
 - 15 Necklace parts
 - 17 Like Solomon
 - 20 Pound resident
 - 23 Squid's squirt
 - 24 "Understood!"
 - 26 Cunning
 - 27 Sedan or SUV
 - 28 Relatives
 - 29 Keep at it
 - 31 Termination
 - 32 Go piece
 - 33 Order to Spot
- DOWN**
- 1 Warning color
 - 2 Broad st.
 - 3 Poker prize
 - 4 Site
 - 5 Wicked
 - 6 Singer Home
 - 7 Tyrant
 - 8 Hole in the head
 - 9 Mess up
 - 10 Game caller
 - 16 Soccer or softball
 - 17 Bits of smoke
 - 18 Bay
 - 19 Shoot up
 - 21 Panda's home
 - 22 Convenient
 - 24 Less friendly
 - 25 Argon or ethane
 - 30 Looks of scorn
 - 33 Bed boards
 - 35 Tombstone name
 - 36 Open space
 - 37 Some music
 - 38 Time to prepare
 - 40 Except
 - 41 Hot blood
 - 42 Linking word



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

CAMUS MINOR
OHARE AROMA
MORNINGSTAR
EYE ZIG ZAG
CASES EAGLE
OXEN VAIN
DECOR GILDS
HOP SUN DOE
EVENING GOWN
MASON HAZED
SLOWS OPEDES

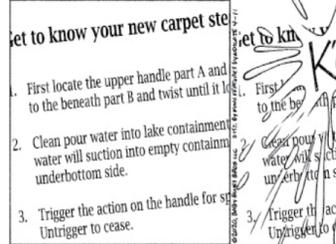
BEETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT



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Anti-hoarding

FROM PAGE 12
goods. 10 hoarders are arrested in these drives. The anti-hoarding operations are run following Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's ultimatum to hoarders to return stocked goods to market. Due to mindless hoarding by a certain group of businessmen, prices of essential goods have skyrocketed in recent times. Even government-imported stainless blades are smuggled out of the country.

REHABILITATION CENTRE FOR INJURED FREEDOM FIGHTERS
The government begins construction of a 300-bed hospital and service centre in the capital for treatment and rehabilitation of injured freedom fighters. They will also be provided vocational training at the centre. It is named Sushree. Earlier, the prime minister pledged construction of such a rehabilitation centre for reintegration of these valiant fighters into the workforce.

JUTE EXPORT BRINGS TK 69 CRORE
Despite poor infrastructure and communication in the war-ravaged country the government has successfully exported 87,000 tonnes of raw jute in the first five months of this year and earned Tk 69 crore. Currently, jute is the only source of foreign currency for the country. The government has recently taken a decision to nationalise export of jute. A Jute Export Corporation will also be set up soon which will handle all export of jute.

SOURCES: June 17, 1972 issue of Purbodesh.

Zafrullah

FROM PAGE 12
pneumonia. The infection had aggravated his condition and he had to be put on extra oxygen. Plasma therapy was also administered to him. "He has pneumonia, but he is feeling much better now as he doesn't need extra oxygen," Farhad said, quoting Gonoshasthaya Kendra Nagar Hospital's Dr Mamun Mustafir as saying.

Schools

FROM PAGE 12
On April 27, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said all educational institutions may stay closed until September if the situation caused by the coronavirus outbreak does not improve.

Educational activities of about four crore students are being hampered due to coronavirus crisis. Holding of HSC exams has been deferred for an indefinite period.

The government started TV education through Sangsad TV for secondary students on March 29, for primary students on April 7, and for technical and madrasa students on April 19 so that students can make up for some of the losses due to the closure of their educational institutions.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey-2019 of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics showed that 50 percent households of the country do not have television sets.

Many college teachers are taking classes via Facebook live. Many public universities are in fear of session jams caused by the closure of universities for about six months. Most private universities are conducting online classes to complete the ongoing semesters and thinking of continuing the system until the next semester begins.

Airport offers

FROM PAGE 12
International tourism has been effectively stopped in most of the world as countries shut their borders to try and avoid outbreaks of the novel coronavirus, which has already infected more than 7 million people globally.

Some countries are already looking into innovative ways to boost their travel industries. In one example, Australia and New Zealand are working to organize a "travel bubble" between the two countries.

Taiwan locked down its borders in March amid the growing coronavirus pandemic, and foreign nationals are still banned from visiting the island.

Innovative way to reduce exposure

FROM PAGE 12
become well-known for his humanitarian works at Mitford hospital, and shared with him the idea of developing the device in Bangladesh.

Muhibbullah was fascinated by the idea and he instantly communicated it to Mahmudur, a computer science and engineering graduate from Buet. Muhibbullah, a former student of Barishal Cadet College, and

installed inside a metal box. Besides, an oximeter was locked with the trolley with a long chain so that the small device does not get stolen. Patients' heart rates would be seen in both the BP machine and the oximeter, he said.

While using the newly-developed device, doctors will have to fix the cuff of the BP machine on a patient's hand and touch the oximeter only once. The readings will come within seconds and doctors will be able to check the results of BP, oxygen saturation and heart rate standing remotely.

"Actually, the device reduces the exposure time of a doctor by 90 percent," Sabyasachi told this correspondent. Mahmudur said they have customised the trolley so that it can be used on beds and floors.

The planning took a week. They prepared the device at a workshop in the capital's Banashree area in the next three weeks, he said, adding that each trolley costs Tk 18,000 to Tk 20,000.

Mahmudur said they assembled the device using high quality oximeter and automated BP machine and were hoping that each device would last at least for five years.

Muhibbullah said they conducted a trial run of the device at a unit of Mitford hospital for three days and found the outcome to be satisfactory.

"We [Muhibbullah and Sabyasachi] were discussing about doing something for Mitford hospital and the health sector for many days. Later, we decided to develop the device. After Mahmudur bhai got involved, it took us around a month to complete the project," he said.

"I feel very happy to be a part of the initiative," he told this newspaper.

Sabyasachi said, "Although I am now living abroad, I always feel the urge to do something for my country. I am happy that something like this has been done."

FROM PAGE 12
infected and dying as they remain highly exposed to the deadly virus. At least 40 doctors have so far died of Covid-19, according to Bangladesh Doctors' Foundation (BDF). As many as 1,210 doctors got infected and 669 of them recovered as of yesterday, it said.

Talking to The Daily Star over phone, Sabyasachi said usually in hospitals in Bangladesh, a doctor or an intern has to use a manual machine to check blood pressure. They need to go very close to a patient and the process takes more than two minutes.

But at UK hospitals, doctors use automatic BP machines, which also show patients' heart rate. It requires lesser time.

Besides, doctors in Bangladesh face difficulties to get oximeters at hospitals as the small device, used to measure oxygen saturation, is often kept hidden in fear that it will be stolen, he said.

"These things were popping up in my mind for long ... After Bangladesh was hit by the pandemic, many doctors eventually got infected. It is believed exposure to patients for a longer period is one of the reasons for it," he said.

So, Sabyasachi started thinking about using a trolley-supported automatic BP machine in Bangladesh to reduce the exposure time.

In the meantime, Sir Salimullah Medical College Alumni, UK, which has around 100 members, began collecting funds to help Mitford hospital doctors and other health professionals in this regard and asked its members to find a way.

A few days later, Sabyasachi contacted some Bangladesh importers who bring in medical equipment, but they told him they were not interested in importing such an automated BP machine.

Sabyasachi then talked to Muhibbullah, who had already



Mahmudur, an ex-student of Rangpur Cadet College, had met on Facebook.

"Based on discussions and other efforts, we finally managed to develop the device," Sabyasachi said, adding that they have plans to modify it to make it even better.

He said Mahmudur, who led the physical works, was asked to build the trolley strongly so it does not get damaged even if it falls on the ground. The automated BP machine was

Bangladesh made great

FROM PAGE 12
electricity access in Bangladesh has reached 95 percent in 2019, up from only 47 percent in 2010.

"The availability of off-grid solar and mini-grid technologies, coupled with new business models that make productive uses of energy affordable, have accelerated the demand for such applications in Bangladesh in recent years," the report lauds.

It said, "For example, some 1,500 solar pumps were deployed between 2013 and 2019 under the IDCOL Solar Irrigation Program."

The report, however, expressed concern as the country still lacks widespread access to clean cooking facilities, and in 2018, the number of people relying on the traditional use of biomass, coal or kerosene to meet household needs was 81 percent.

The concerns about imports of sub-standard solar products that are threatening the sustainability of the domestic market, however, have led the national government to introduce minimum quality standards for solar modules, inverters, charge controllers and batteries in 2019, warned the report.

Siddique Jubair, former additional secretary and member of Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA), give mixed reaction over the report.

"Two years ago the solar market

was different but now as the market is competitive and customers knowledge on solar has improved a lot, the situation has changed. Now the products have more quality," he said.

Siddique, also an energy expert, also said it is true that there is still a large number of people who use biomass in cooking.

And it is very difficult to attract these people into clean cooking solutions from biomass as the latter requires no cost.

"We are lagging in this sector. The government should give more focus on the issue to create a sustainable environment," he added.

The report said growth in renewable power has been impressive over the past five years but global hunger for energy keeps increasing and eats up the progress.

It said despite significant progress in renewable power generation, the share of renewables in total energy demand has barely increased (9.6% in 2013 to 11% in 2018).

While some countries are phasing out coal, others are continuing to invest in new coal-fired power plants.

In addition, funding from private banks for fossil fuel projects has increased each year since the signing of the Paris Agreement, totalling USD 2.7 trillion over the last three years.

Police pressure mounts against Germany's far-right AfD

AFP, Berlin

An entire regional chapter of Germany's far-right AfD party has been placed under police surveillance because of its extremist tendencies, local authorities said yesterday, as pressure against the anti-migrant group mounted.

The Brandenburg chapter of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party is now "a suspicious case and an object of surveillance", said a spokesman for the region's interior ministry.

The decision will give officials in

Brandenburg far-reaching powers to monitor the AfD's institutions and officials in the state, where the party came second in 2019 elections with 23.5 percent of the vote.

Such surveillance is reserved for groups or organisations that are deemed to pose a threat to democracy and the rule of law.

The latest official move to keep tabs on the group came three months after the party's most radical fringe known as the "Wing" was also placed under police surveillance due to its association with known neo-Nazis.

Two accused of rapes killed in 'gunfights'

STAR REPORT

Two men accused in different gang rapes were killed in separate gunfights with Rab and police yesterday in Chattogram's Bashkhali upazila and Noakhali.

Both of them were the prime accused in two different rape cases, law enforcers said.

In Chattogram, the prime accused in a gang-raped case filed with Bashkhali police station, Md Abdul Mazid, 30, was killed in a gunfight with Rab-7 at early yesterday.

Rab claimed to have recovered firearms and bullets from the sport after the gunfight.

Mahmudul Hasan Mamun, assistant superintendent of police (ASP) of Rab-7's media wing, said the gunfight took place in Mia Bazar area at midnight after a patrol team went there to arrest the accused.

"Acting on tip-off, Rab personnel went to the area to arrest him but sensing the presence of law enforcers, the accused and his cohorts opened fire," he said, adding that Rab officials retaliated, triggering the gunfight.

After the gun battle ended, Mazid was found bullet-hit while his cohorts fled the scene.

Law enforcers rushed Mazid to the upazila health complex, where he was declared dead, the Rab official said.

According to Rab, Mazid and his

men picked up a woman from the streets on April 7 and gang-raped her. Later, a case was lodged with Bashkhali Police Station in this regard.

In Noakhali, Mizanur Rahman, the main accused in a rape case of an adolescent girl who was arrested on Sunday evening, was killed early yesterday in an alleged gunfight in Noakhali's Senbagh upazila.

Abdul Baten Mridha, office in charge of Senbagh Police Station said, Mizan picked up a 15-years old worker of a bakery in Sonaimuri upazila while she was returning home in Kabirhat upazila on Saturday evening.

Along with two friends, Mizan took her to a rickshaw garage and raped her.

The girl filed a case on Sunday morning and police arrested him from Senbagh that evening.

At around 2:00am, police took him to Sonakandi area of the upazila to recover the illegal arms that Mizan confessed of having in his possessions.

When law enforcers arrived at the area, Mizan's cohorts opened fire on police and wounded Mizan.

He was rushed to Noakhali General Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

Alamgir Hossain, police superintendent of Noakhali, said apart from the rape case, there are multiple cases against him of collecting illegal tolls and drug trading.

China battles new outbreak

FROM PAGE 12

the first country to implement extreme restrictions on movement early this year, forcing local transmission down to near-zero as the crisis hammered the rest of the world.

But health officials yesterday reported 75 cases of the respiratory illness in Beijing where the fresh cluster has been linked to a wholesale food market.

Streams of people queued in a Beijing stadium as mass testing was carried out, and a strict lockdown was extended across 21 Beijing neighbourhoods.

LOWEST DAILY TOLL IN US
More than 433,000 people worldwide have died from Covid-19, nearly halfway through a year in which countless lives have been upended and the global economy ravaged by the crisis.

The United States -- by far the hardest-hit country with more than 115,700 recorded fatalities -- on Sunday reported its lowest 24-hour death toll since its infection rate peaked in mid-April.

President Donald Trump's administration has noted that some states have seen new flare-ups, but insists there will be no shutdown of the economy even if a new wave arises.

But stock markets tumbled again yesterday on fears that an upsurge of infections could put the brakes on the easing of lockdowns and dash hopes of economic recovery.

'MICRO-OUTBREAKS INEVITABLE'
The Middle East's worst-hit country, Iran, reported an uptick on Sunday, recording more than 100 new virus deaths in a single day for the first time in two months.

Ghostwriter gets copyright

FROM PAGE 12

while 7 books were released in 2015.

"We have given the copyright to the ghostwriter Sheikh Abdul Hakim because beyond receiving a lump sum for writing the first book, he never received any royalty for any of the reprinting. There were no contracts at any point stating that Hakim would not hold copyright, or that Hakim is being given a one-time payment for writing the books," said Jafor Razz Chowdhury, registrar of the Sheba Prokashoni office.

In addition to the copyright of 260 Masud Rana books, the office also gave Hakim the copyright of 50 books of the Kuasha series. Before this verdict he held the copyright of one Masud Rana book titled "Jaal" and six books of the Kuasha series.

"The complaint was first filed in 2010 but it had gone nowhere, so Hakim filed a fresh complaint on July 29 last year," Jafor said. Hakim had stopped working for Sheba in 2008.

Ekushey Padak winning author Bulbul Chowdhury, noted translator Shawkat Hossain, Masud Rana's cover illustrator Hashem Khan and former

sales manager of Sheba Prokashoni Israil Hossain khan gave witness statements.

"We wanted to know what the relationship between the two [authors] -- we found that the relationship can be best described as writer and publisher and for 39 years they have been working together. Hakim was neither an employee or staffer nor did he have a freelance contract," said the registrar.

"September 11 was the first hearing. There were three hearings where Hakim and Anowar's lawyers came face to face," he added.

He said that Hakim can seek compensation to the copyright board. "Most Masud Rana books have had 6 editions but he only got a lump sum for the first edition and got no royalty from reprints. He used to get Tk 800 per part [of the series] in the beginning, and Tk 4000tk per part towards the end," said the registrar.

Besides being the ghostwriter of Masud Rana, Hakim is a well published author and writer of regular thriller novels in Prothom Alo's Eid special editions.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Mymensingh
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.6100.000.07.001.20.2026

e-Tender Notice: 64/2019-20

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Sr. No.	Package No. & scheme name	Tender ID	Last selling date & time	Closing/opening date & time	Tendering method
1	SuppRBMymensinghMandir19-2019-26 1. Major maintenance of 13.0m long RCC Girder Bridge on Madhupur Badda Tarakanda UP to Kanaria Bazar Rd. via Chalkikanda Bazar at Chainage 7060m Road ID 361183035 under Tarakanda Upazila District Mymensingh. 2. Minor maintenance of 7.0m long Box-Culvert on Dhaka-Mym. Highway Seed Store GC-Shaktipur HIQ road Bhalka portion at Chainage 5670m Road ID 361132007 under Bhalka Upazila District Mymensingh. 3. Minor maintenance of 17.5m long Box-Culvert on Dhaka-Mym. Highway Seed Store GC-Shaktipur HIQ road Bhalka portion at Chainage 10222m Road ID 361132007 under Bhalka Upazila District Mymensingh. 4. Major maintenance of 6.8m long RCC Girder Bridge on Khamser Bazar GC-Foklagari Bazar Road via Toral UP at Chainage 40m Road ID 361183019 under Muktagacha Upazila District Mymensingh. 5. Minor maintenance of 10.2m long RCC Box-Culvert on Mymensingh-Sherpur R&H Anusakanda to Huga GC road via Badda at Chainage 2660m Road ID 36112005 under Phulpur Upazila District Mymensingh. 6. Major maintenance of 6.9m long RCC Box-Culvert on Mymensingh-Sherpur R&H Anusakanda to Huga GC road via Badda at Chainage 5962m Road ID 36112005 under Phulpur Upazila District Mymensingh. 7. Major maintenance of 10.0m long RCC Box-Culvert on Mymensingh-Sherpur R&H Anusakanda to Huga GC road via Badda at Chainage 7150m Road ID 36112005 under Phulpur Upazila District Mymensingh.	456409	Date: 06-Jul-2020 Time: 17:00	Date: 09-Jul-2020 Time: 13:45	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The e-Tender security submitted last date & time from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches 08 Jul 2020 17:00 respectively. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) also from E-mail: eprocure@eprocure.gov.bd or Call to 091-66378, 991-99110, 091-64365.

Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Md. Nur Hossain Bhuiyan
Executive Engineer
LGED, Mymensingh
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GD-994

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
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River Research Institute, 72 Green Road, Dhaka
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Memo No.-RR/Pra. Unnoyon/13/12/2018/1020 Date: 15/06/2020

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

E-Tender Notice No.: Memo No.- RRI/WD-1/14/008/20/688 Date: 31/05/2020 published in the National and Local News Papers have been amended as below:

Tender ID No.	Old Value	New Value
451390	In ITT Sub clause 9.1 " The minimum specific experience in construction works of at least 1 contract of road/pavement structures successfully completed within the last 3 years, each with a value of at least Tk.184.00 lac"	In ITT Sub clause 9.1 " The minimum specific experience in construction works of similar nature at least 1 contract of steel structures/pre-fabricated steel structures/industrial type steel structures building successfully completed within the last 3 years, each with a value of at least Tk.184.00 lac"

This corrigendum will be the part of the Tender document. All other terms and conditions and requirements will remain unchanged.


(Dr. Moniruzzaman Khan Eusufzai)
Senior Scientific Officer & Project Director
mkeusufzai@rrri.gov.bd

GD-994



Jayed eager to be back in pack

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI



"It's only for the time being, right?" Abu Jayed asked this reporter when queried about how the saliva ban, ratified by the ICC last week, was going to impact him as the chief proponent of swing bowling in the country.

There was an unmistakable note of concern in Jayed's voice when he asked whether the saliva ban was only temporary, and it was understandable as shining the ball with saliva has been an age-old fixture of cricket. For Jayed however, getting the game back on to the field of play took precedence over any initial difficulties he as a pacer would face.

"Safety comes first. ICC decided to do that keeping the players' safety in mind. Since the game also needs to return to the field, as football is already going on in various countries, I agree with this decision. It will be difficult for us pacers but it's something we have to abide by now," he said.

Pakistan's legendary paceman Wasim Akram had suggested that bowlers will become like 'robots' without swing and Jayed's concern was along those lines. "If the ball isn't shined properly, then it will be hit like [bowling] machine balls."

The balance between bat and ball has long been skewed in favour of the former, so a pacer bowler's concern in the wake of the saliva ban is justified. Yet, not playing cricket for an extended period was a bigger concern and the urgency to get back to his occupation more acute.

"Until I face the situation [of bowling without using saliva] I can't really say much," he added, but was hopeful at the same time. "I was thinking of Vaseline or shoe polish in order to shine the ball. I heard Kookaburra is bringing some new balls which can be shined

without saliva. Well there is going to be some swing but maybe not as much as before. It's a matter of adjustment in the end.

"We have to get used to it and that requires practice. We have to survive and cricket needs to start," he remarked.

For Jayed, the enforced break could not have come at a worse time for Bangladesh cricket. The pacers have been looking to make an impact and with a crop of seamers now beginning to establish themselves, there was real potential



fast bowlers working together in order to catch up to international standards. Jayed said the idea of a pace unit was discussed right after the tour of Pakistan.

"After some time, once you have gotten into the national team, a pace bowling camp doesn't help a lot. In the national team, you should be worried about technical improvements; dealing with basics at that stage is a problem. The eight bowlers that are in the national team, we need to work on our skills and fitness.

"Shafiul [Islam] bhai and others like Taskin [Ahmed] called me during the break and the idea of working together is gaining momentum. It was not there before and now we are talking about what we can do to improve," he said.

As always, Test cricket paved the way for things to start changing in terms of pace bowling.

"In India, we saw how their four pacers work as a unit. They are very connected, something that is changing here now," Jayed, who talked to Mohammad Shami during that tour, reflected.

"A coach can't always develop us and the willingness to work together has to come from within. The likes of Taskin or Mustafizur [Rahman], we all work together now. We think about bowling a certain line for 20 deliveries and we ask each other what to do. Maybe we look at whose bouncers are landing properly and then work on those aspects, things like that."

Jayed's disappointment about the halt was quite evident. "In the Zimbabwe match [one-off

A coach can't always develop us and the willingness to work together has to come from within. The likes of Taskin or Mustafizur [Rahman], we all work together now. We think about bowling a certain line for 20 deliveries and we ask each other what to do. Maybe we look at whose bouncers are landing properly and then work on those aspects, things like that.

Test in February], our Test cricket was undergoing changes. We were wholeheartedly enjoying Test cricket then. The pacers were working together even though two were not playing that match. We sat down after the day's play and talked and worked on fitness."

In more ways than one, the swing specialist seemed eager for cricket to return in order to make the collective leap that Bangladesh cricket now needs.



Real Madrid's Brazilian defender Marcelo takes a knee, showing his solidarity to the Black Lives Matter movement, after scoring during their 3-1 win against Eibar at the Alfredo di Stefano stadium on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

CWAB feels time not right to start DPL

SPORTS REPORTER



The Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB), in a press release on Monday, informed that it would want to observe the situation further before taking any decision over resuming the Dhaka Premier League, which was postponed after the first round due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Former Bangladesh captains Naimur Rahman and Khaled Mahmud along with senior cricketers like Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, Abdur Razzak, Tushar Imran and few juniors were present during a virtual meeting that took place on Sunday.

"We agreed that the current situation in the country is not suitable to resume the Dhaka Premier League as our main focus is to ensure safety of the players as well as of the match officials. In that regard,

we have decided to observe the situation further and will later inform the BCB about our decisions," CWAB general secretary Debabrata Paul told media.

There were talks that the resumption of DPL will depend on the Tigers' upcoming tour of Sri Lanka. However, the BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury had previously stated that the cricketer's decision will be given top priority. Test skipper Mominul Haque also said that they would follow whatever the board decides on this issue.

"Regarding the training of the national cricketers, we have already witnessed that many areas were marked as red zones in Dhaka, and Mirpur is among the red zones. So, it is not possible to continue training in those areas at the moment. Regarding the national team's Sri Lanka tour, we all know it requires mental and physical preparation for any series and the situation at the moment is not ideal in our country. The BCB will talk to the government officials and whatever the government decides, we will follow," Debabrata said.

'Don't compare Babar with Kohli'

AGENCIES

Pakistan batting coach Younis Khan believed young Babar Azam should not be compared to Indian captain Virat Kohli, saying the Lahore-born cricketer has his own class.

"It is unfair to compare Babar with Kohli because the latter has been playing international cricket for more than a decade, whereas Babar has only played just about 4-5 years at the top level," a website quoted the former Pakistan skipper as saying.

"Don't put this thing [comparison with Kohli] in his mind and let him do his wonders. He has his own class and I want him to become a legendary batsman and inspire Pakistan to many victories."

"I was put under pressure when I was compared with Inzamam who debuted in the 1990s and had the 1992 World Cup on his credit," he said.

Younis also called for the resumption of Pakistan-India cricket.

BAF backtracks over resumption of camp

ANISUR RAHMAN



With the coronavirus situation in the country deteriorating, the Bangladesh Archery Federation (BAF) decided to backtrack on their earlier decision of restarting preparation for Tokyo Olympics from July 1. The federation has instead decided to distribute bows among the national archers to help them practice at home.

As the government allowed different offices to reopen from May 31 in limited scales following a two-month shutdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus, the game's local governing body also decided in principle to resume their Olympics preparation with 28 archers and officials in Tongi, subject to the approval from the government, before eventually changing their decision.

"We changed our mind as we think it won't be wise to take the risk at the moment because the archers are like our children," BAF general secretary Kazi Razib Uddin Ahmed Chapal told The Daily Star.

"We have already lost a few months which are not recoverable. But we want to wait for another month to observe the situation. We, however, believe that we can get the approval from sports minister to resume the camp," said Chapal.

"Following advice from our coach [Martin Frederick], I have discussed with our president [BAF president M Moinul Islam] to send equipment without the arrows to the players, so that they can maintain their strength of hands by pulling out the strings of the bow. Such type of training is taking place aboard amidst the coronavirus pandemic. We will send the bows to the national players except for those who are in services teams," said the BAF general secretary.

"We are also thinking of sending target board and arrows to archers who have open space of about 10 metres at their own backyard. As there is risk in throwing arrows and practising in personal space, we will definitely look into the safety of other family members and take approval from the National Sports Council before sending the arrows and target boards to the archers," said Chapal.

Chapal, meanwhile, said that, subject to government's approval, the federation still plans to stage the World Archery-sanctioned joint training camp in Bangladesh in late November with archers from six to 10 countries participating.

The BAF also wants to hold the Bangabandhu ISSF Solidarity Archery Championships from February 22-28 but everything will depend on the improvement of the situation.



'If we were on the moon, we'd start cricket'

AFP, PRAGUE



Hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, cricket resumed in Prague this weekend where players shrugged off the summer rain by declaring: "If we were on the moon, we'd start cricket."

Featuring largely expats, the European Cricket Network's (ECN) Czech Super Series is one of the first cricket events worldwide played in the wake of the COVID-19 lockdowns.

"We've only been able to play here now because of the way the whole country responded" to the pandemic, said Terry O'Connor, Czech cricket league administrator.

He pointed out the recent easing of restrictions taken by the EU member country of 10.7 million people in March when the virus began to spread across Europe.

For the event pitting 16 Czech teams, and spread over five weekends until July 12, the Vinor grounds on Prague's outskirts are divided in three parts to separate the players, the crowd and officials.

"We're keeping everyone distanced -- but cricket is not a contact sport," said O'Connor. "There aren't really any adjustments to play other than following the International Cricket Council's (ICC) guidelines in regards to using saliva on the ball," he added.

For Javed Iqbal, a 39-year-old Pakistani-born bowler with the Bohemian Cricket Club, the virus restrictions pose no problem.

"Yesterday it was very hot so we didn't need saliva, it was enough to wet our fingers against the forehead," said the former athlete and basketball player, who came to Prague in 2014 to get a degree in forestry.

"It's not that difficult, especially here in these wet conditions," he told AFP as the organisers cancelled his team's match against the United Cricket Club amid steady rain. Iqbal let his face mask -- still mandatory in some places in the Czech Republic -- hang loosely down his neck.

"We keep a distance from one another. And we're like a family and in a family you don't need to be restricted," he chuckled.

While Iqbal's native Pakistan, and other cricket powerhouses are still taking a break from the sport, Bohemian Cricket Club -- relying largely on Asian students -- won their two opening matches on Saturday.

"Wherever there are Pakistanis, Indians and Sri Lankans, they will definitely play cricket because it's in their blood," Iqbal said. "Even if they were on the Moon they would start cricket there." Iqbal, who sees his future as the Bohemian Cricket Club manager, has played for the Czech national team in the past.

The Czech Republic team does not rely solely on expats. "It's more common than not that we actually

have Czechs on the team," said O'Connor.

"In the past we would be playing against other European countries and we'd have three, four, five Czechs and none of the other opposition would have native members," the Australian, living in Prague, told AFP.

Czech cricket is pinning hope on its academy which introduces school children to the sport, organises weekly games and runs three junior clubs.

"To me the long-term sustainability of the sport in this country and success at the national level is about getting some of those juniors to keep coming through," O'Connor said.

While in adult cricket Czechs make up only a dozen of 300 players, the proportion is the exact opposite in children's cricket with just over a dozen foreigners among 400 players.

"The best thing is the youngsters, we have really good youngsters who are still under 14," said Iqbal.

"Czech cricket will be on a high level within a few years -- if they show the same spirit, the way they play now."

O'Connor predicted the Czech national team could move to the 40th spot in five years, but Iqbal was even more optimistic.

"We have very close competition with most teams and maybe in the future, when we have the opportunity to play against them, 30 is very easy to achieve within a few years," he said.



Daniel Berger of USA poses with the Charles Schwab Challenge trophy at Colonial Country Club in Texas on Sunday as the US PGA Tour returned after a lengthy break due to Covid-19. Berger staved off challenges from the likes of Jordan Spieth and Justin Rose to win the event.

PHOTO: REUTERS

WHAT TO WATCH

FACEBOOK

LA LIGA

Getafe v Espanyol
Live from 11:30pm
Villarreal v Mallorca
Live from 11:30pm
Barcelona v Leganes
Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

BUNDESLIGA

Star Sports Select 2
Borussia M'gladbach v Wolfsburg
Live from 10:30pm
Werder Bremen v Bayern Munich
Live from 12:30am (Wednesday)
Star Sports Select 1
Freiburg v Hertha Berlin
Live from 12:30am (Wednesday)



PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM
COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT **BSRM** building a safer nation

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES
World's Largest VRM
SHAH CEMENT

Innovative way to reduce exposure

3 Bangladeshi minds build it so that doctors can check on Covid-19 patients remotely

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Here is some good news for healthcare professionals on the frontline against Covid-19.

Three young minds -- one in the UK and two in Bangladesh -- have developed a device that helps doctors check patients' blood pressure, oxygen saturation and heart rate simultaneously.

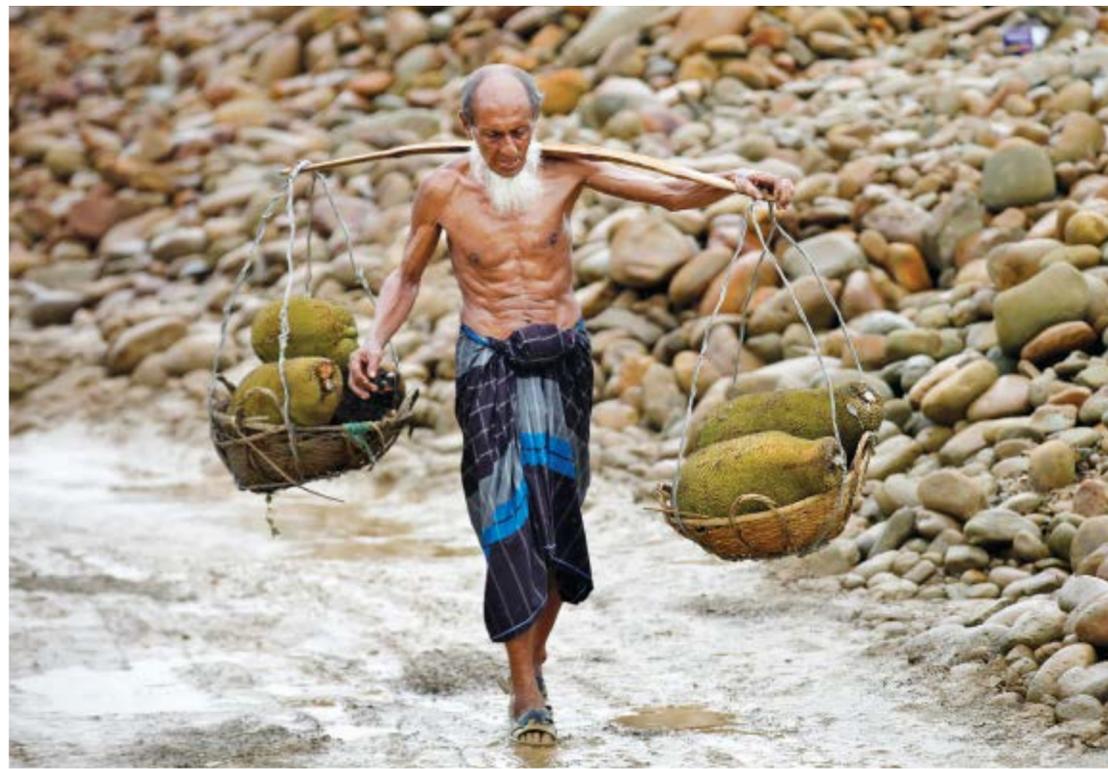
Using the device, physicians and other health professionals will be able to know the three vital readings quickly and more importantly without having to get exposed to patients for a longer period. It will minimise the risks of coronavirus transmission among doctors and the patients they treat.

Sabyasachi Roy, who is now pursuing higher studies in the UK after completing MBBS from Sir Salimullah Medical College and Mitford Hospital, Muhibbullah Saif, an intern from the same medical college, and Mahmudur Rahman, a Buet graduate, have jointly developed the device called Provat Vital Parameter Trolley.

The device has already gone through a successful trial run. Yesterday, 16 pieces of the device were handed to the Mitford hospital authorities for formal use.

The development came at a time when an increasing number of doctors treating Covid-19 patients are getting

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



Monaf Mia, 70, carrying jackfruits grown on his trees to Mulagul Bazar, a marketplace visited by a small number of customers and traders, in Sylhet's Kanaighat upazila. The market is about a kilometre away from his home in Lobhachhara area. He said had there been a road to Kanaighat Sadar, people of his neighbourhood would have been able to sell their produce for good prices.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Schools, colleges to stay closed until Aug 6

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government yesterday extended all educational institutions closure until August 6 as a preventive measure against the further spread of the novel coronavirus.

"We have extended the educational institution closure until August 6. We will issue an order soon," Akram-Al-Hossain, secretary of the primary and mass education ministry, told The Daily Star.

Summer vacation and Eid-ul-Azha holidays will coincide with this closure, he added.

Abul Khair, public relations officer of the education ministry, said educational institutions under their ministry would also stay closed until August 6. They made the decision, keeping mind safety of students.

All educational institutions have remained closed since March 17. Earlier, the closure was stretched to June 15 to stem coronavirus transmission.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Ghostwriter gets copyright of Masud Rana books

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In an unprecedented incident, Bangladesh Copyright Office granted the copyright of 260 "Masud Rana" books to its ghostwriter Sheikh Abdul Hakim on Sunday.

This gives him claim over royalties earned from reprint editions of the series.

That the wildly popular espionage-thriller series has been ghost-written for over four decades is popular lore -- most avid readers of the spy agent know that beyond the first few books, the original author Kazi Anwar Hossain was not the one writing the books.

Many readers say they could even tell just by reading which books was written by Kazi Anwar and which were not. The first two books Dhongsho-Pahar and Bharotnatyam released in 1966, for example, are the author's own work, and to date, the most beloved of the series.

Since then the series has continued by taking "inspiration" from internationally popular spy novels. They were ghostwritten, allowing the publisher Sheba Prokashoni, to churn out several each year. For the last three years, there were four books per year -- in 2016, there were 6,

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

Anti-hoarding drives continue



June 16, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

INDIA-BANGLADESH JOINT RIVER COMMISSION

It is reported that India-Bangladesh Joint River Commission will be formed in July, 1972. BM Abbas, flood control adviser of the Bangladesh prime minister, and Dr KL Rao, water and power minister of India, will jointly hold the chairmanship of the commission. There will be two members from each country. Offices of the commission will be set up in Dhaka and New Delhi.

POLICE RAID WAREHOUSES, 10 HOARDERS ARRESTED
Police conduct multiple raids against hoarders in several places in Dhaka and Chittagong and recover huge amount of essential

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Villagers rush to see the prime minister after the helicopter carrying Bangabandhu to Noakhali makes an emergency landing due to bad weather at Aliganj on June 22, 1972.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Bangladesh made great strides

Reports Paris-based organisation

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Bangladesh has made great strides in power generation in the last decade as about 95 percent of its population now have the access to electricity, thanks to the government's attention to renewable energy sources along with the conventional sources, says a global report.

As of 2017, around 8 percent of the country's total power generation capacity came from the off-grid solar, making it one of the top six countries in terms of generating electricity using solar solutions, according to REN21's Renewables 2020 Global Status Report (GSR) which was released yesterday.

The Paris-based organisation said the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Airport offers 'pretend to go abroad' tours



CNN ONLINE

With planes grounded and most tourism on hold during the coronavirus pandemic, one Taiwanese airport has come up with a unique solution to help citizens get their travel fix.

Taipei's Songshan airport will give 90 people the chance to take a tour of their airport and relive the experience of going through immigration, boarding a plane and then disembarking and returning home.

"Can't leave (Taiwan), then pretend to go abroad at Songshan," a flier posted to the airport's website read.

Songshan is the smaller of Taipei's two international airports and is located in the centre of the city beside the Keelung River.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Int'l flights from HSIA resumes today

RASHIDUL HASAN

Flight operations on the international routes, except China, will resume today on a limited scale after over three months' suspension of flights to and from Bangladesh due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Initially, only two airlines -- Biman and Qatar Airways -- will operate while strictly following health and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh guidelines to contain the spread of coronavirus, Caab Chairman Air Vice Marshal MA Mofidur Rahman told

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PRAYER TIMING JUNE 16

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-50 8-15
JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Zafrullah tests Covid-19 negative in RT-PCR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoshasthaya Kendra Founder and Trustee Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury tested negative for Covid-19 in an RT-PCR test yesterday.

Earlier, the result was similar when his samples were tested on GR-Rapid Dot Blot kit, developed by Gonoshasthaya Kendra.

The 79-year-old physician had tested positive for Covid-19 on May 25. His samples were first tested by the antigen kit and antibody testing kit GR-Rapid Dot Blot. Samples were also tested by RT-PCR.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Gonoshasthaya Kendra Public Relations Officer Mohammad Farhad yesterday said Zafrullah recovered from Covid-19 and his condition was stable.

Apart from the virus infection, he was also suffering from kidney problems and

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



A boy examining the quality of a kite at a toy shop in Chattogram's Bakshirhat area as students are left with plenty of spare time with their schools closed due to the pandemic. Businessmen say kite sales have gone through the roof as kite flying has lately become overwhelmingly popular in the port city. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

China battles new outbreak

Beijing locks down more neighbourhoods as Europe reopens borders

AGENCIES

A raft of EU nations reopened their borders to fellow Europeans yesterday after months of coronavirus curbs, but China was battling a new outbreak that has stoked fears of a second wave.

As caseloads have declined in recent weeks across many parts of Europe, governments have been keen to ease painful lockdowns that have saved lives but devastated economies and wearied confined populations.

Belgium, France, Germany, Greece and Ukraine were among those lifted border restrictions yesterday, while shops and outdoor attractions in England welcomed their first customers since March and in Paris cafes and restaurants were allowed to fully reopen.

"We're desperate about tourists, we need them and we want them. If we don't have the people, how will we survive," says Michalis Drosos, who works in a souvenir shop in Fira, capital of the Greek island of Santorini.

However, the pandemic is gathering pace in Latin America, and Iran and India have reported worrying increases in deaths and infections -- adding to concern over challenges the world will face in the long fight against Covid-19.

An open access study by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said the national lockdown delayed the onset of the peak stage of pandemic in India and gave time to prepare the health system with the curve for infections likely to hit its highest point only around mid-November.

China, where the virus emerged late last year, was

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