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## COVID TEST IN KHULNA

# Of long wait and BACKLOG

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

For more than two weeks, Champa Raptan and her husband Uttom Mondol from Khulna's Dacope upazila have been waiting anxiously for their coronavirus test results.

The couple had given their samples at Khulna Sadar Hospital on June 23, after developing Covid-19 symptoms.

Since then, Champa called Khulna Sadar Hospital's resident medical officer, as well as the district's civil surgeon a couple of times, but neither of them could give her any information about the test result.

Like Champa, hundreds of people in Khulna district are waiting for their coronavirus test results.

On Tuesday, around 3,000 samples were waiting to be tested RT-PCR lab at the microbiology department of Khulna Medical College's (KMC), according to Prof Shahnaz Parvin, head of the department.

Among those samples, some were collected more than two weeks back, said lab sources.

Around 2,000 samples were sent to Dhaka and testing of 750 are still pending, Prof Shahnaz told this correspondent yesterday afternoon.

Dr Mehedi Newaz, vice principal of KMC, said since early July, they were receiving 450 to 500 samples every day, whilst they can test 288 samples per day, running three shifts.

He suggested setting up RT-PCR labs in Satkhira, Narail and Bagerhat to reduce the pressure on the KMC's lab.

From April 7 till yesterday, KMC's lab tested 16,694 samples, of which 3,577 or 21 percent, came out positive.

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Many cobblers sit idle and call customers for polishes at the capital's Mirpur-1. There has been a drop in people's movement on roads due to the pandemic, hitting their income badly. Earlier, a cobbler earned Tk 600-800 a day, but now they barely make Tk 100, some of them said. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

AIR TRAVELLERS  
Italy bars entry from Bangladesh till Oct 5  
Cites fake Covid reports as reason

STAR REPORT  
In a major setback for many Bangladeshi expatriates waiting to return to their workplaces in Italy, the European country yesterday put restriction on entry of passengers from Bangladesh into its territory till October 5.

Earlier on July 7, the Italian government imposed the restriction for a week after a significant number of passengers of a special flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines tested positive for Covid-19 once they landed at the airport in Rome on July 6.

The passengers had documents certifying that they had tested negative for Covid-19 and were safe to travel.

Later, Italy on July 8 denied entry to around 151 Bangladeshi passengers --  
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HANDLING OF COVID PANDEMIC

## WHO sets up review panel

Hits out at divisions in int'l community, urges solidarity

AGENCIES

The World Health Organization, which faced fierce US criticism over its handling of the coronavirus crisis, launched an independent panel yesterday to review its response to the pandemic.

The Independent panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response will be headed by former New Zealand prime minister Helen Clark and former Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

"Through you, the world will understand the truth of what happened and also the solutions to build our future better as one humanity," World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at the UN agency's headquarters in Geneva.

At their annual assembly in May, WHO member states agreed to an independent probe into the UN agency's coronavirus response, following repeated US attacks.

US President Donald Trump had accused the WHO of botching its handling of the pandemic and of being a "puppet of China".

The resolution, tabled by the European

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## FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES Bring back university autonomy

July 10, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU RESUMES OFFICE TODAY  
Feeling still very week, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman comes to his official residence, the Gono Bhaban, today and immerse in work and meetings with political leaders. He spends more than 10 hours in the office. The prime minister, it may be mentioned, had been taken ill on July 5 with pain in the abdomen and is still under the treatment of his personal physician.

### WITHDRAW UNIVERSITY ORDINANCE

The teachers' associations of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar, and Engineering University in a joint statement demand the immediate withdrawal of 1961 University Ordinance which was imposed by the Pakistani regime to suppress freedom of expression in academic institutions. Terming it to be an encroachment on the autonomy of the universities the association maintains that political parties were in support of its withdrawal since its first imposition. During the 1969 mass movement the demands of its withdrawal was raised by the political parties, it adds.

### 20,000 EVACUATED IN SIRAJGANJ

Erosion by the Jamuna has become severe at Sirajganj town and various other places of the subdivision. So far four villages adjacent to Sirajganj town are completely washed away and 20,000 inhabitants are evacuated to safer places.

### CHITTAGONG PORT IN FULL SWING

The war-affected and crippled port of Chittagong has made not



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'GUNFIGHT' WITH BGB  
3 Rohingya  
'yaba dealers'  
killed in  
Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Cox's Bazar

Three Rohingya men, suspected to be yaba smugglers, were killed in a "gunfight" with members of Border Guard Bangladesh in Ukhia upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

The dead are Noor Alam, 45, of Tumru Rohingya camp in Ghumdhum, Hamid, 25, of Balukhali camp, and Nazir Hossain, 25, of Kutupalong camp, BGB said.

Lt Col Ali Haider Azad, commander of 34th BGB battalion, said the border guards took position on Tukatoli frontier on information that a big consignment of yaba from Myanmar will enter Bangladesh.

When a gang of 10 to 12 were entering Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Rodents feel peer-pressure to be helpful



AFP, Washington

Rats are less likely to assist a fellow rodent in need if other members of their group are being unhelpful, according to a study that sheds new light on the so-called "bystander effect."

Peggy Mason, a neurobiologist at the University of Chicago and the senior author, told AFP the findings helped explain certain human behaviors such as why police officers fail to intervene when one of their own is engaging in brutality.

In an experiment published in Science Advances on Wednesday, scientists found that when a rat encountered a distressed peer in a restrainer, they were generally interested in opening a door and rescuing them.

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## 10 more die with Covid symptoms in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Ten more people died after showing coronavirus symptoms at the Covid-19 unit of Cumilla Medical College Hospital in the last two days.

According to the hospital authorities, six people breathed their last in the last 24 hours as of 8:00am yesterday and four others from 8:00am Tuesday to 8:00am Wednesday.

The victims were admitted to the hospital



### PRAYER TIMING JULY 10

Faz Juma Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:10 12:30 5:00 6:55 8:17  
JAMAAT 4:45 1:15 5:15 7:00 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Thousands out of work in flood-hit areas

STAR REPORT

People in the flood-hit districts of northern Bangladesh are struggling to survive with their families as a wave of unemployment hit them hard.

To face this crisis, in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram, many were borrowing money from local lenders at a high interest rate and some were taking advance payment from local farmers against their labours.

Abdal Hossain, 56, of Char Sholmari in Lalmonirhat's Kaliganj upazila, said unemployment and flood made their lives miserable.

"I need money to repair my damaged house and survive with my family. I was forced to take loan from a local moneylender at a high interest," he said.

Mazibar Rahman, 52, of Char Parbati in Kurigram Sadar upazila, said he and five other members of his family were suffering due to lack of jobs at the time.

In Bogura, over 400 families live in Nawapara Char and Chakratinatha Char in Sariakanddi upazila. Almost all of them remained unemployed due to flood.

Bipul, 38, of the Nawapara Char, said they had no work in the Char area and they could not even go outside the upazila due to restrictions for Covid-19.

"I used to earn Tk 300 every day before coronavirus and flood hit us. Now, I earn nothing. No one gave us relief even in the flood. I am passing the hardest days of my life with six of my family members," he said.

Hosneara, 40, of Nawapara Char, said they did not receive any flood relief from anyone and were barely surviving by lending money from others.

More than 55,000 people in Bogura have been affected by floods and the worst affected people are those living in

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LAUNCH ACCIDENT  
Owner of Mayur-2 arrested in capital

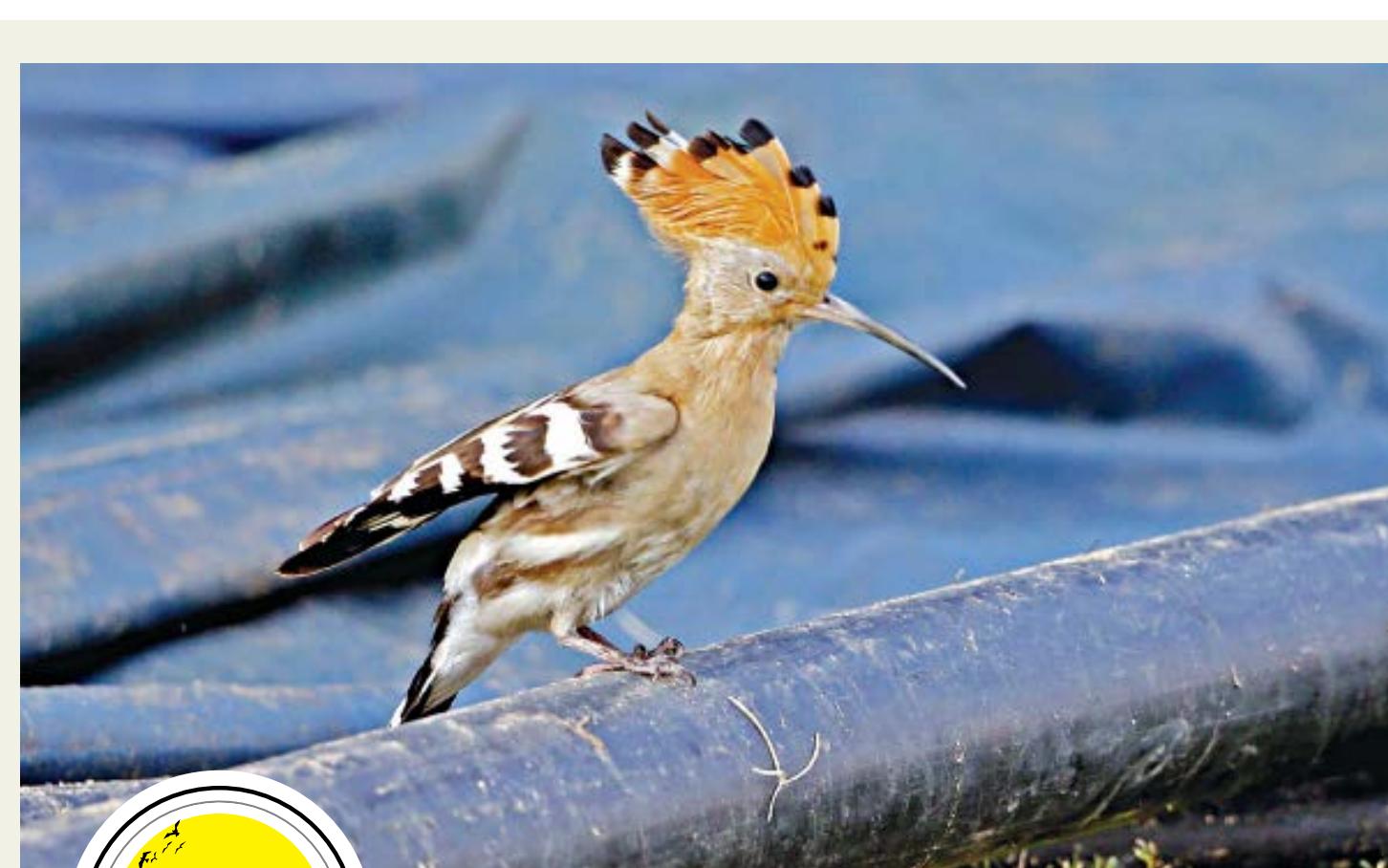
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested the owner of Mayur-2 launch, which hit another one causing the latter to sink in the Buriganga late last month, from the capital's Sobhanbagh area early yesterday.

A team of River Police picked up Mosaddek Hanif Swad, 33, from a house around 3:00am, Khondoker Faridul Islam, superintendent of River Police in Dhaka, told The Daily Star.

Later in the day, senior judicial magistrate of Dhaka, Monika Khan, placed the arrestee on three-day remand after River Police Sub-Inspector Shahidul Alam produced him before the court with a seven-day remand prayer.

Mosaddek was placed on remand in a case filed by River Police on June 30 in connection with the incident. SI Shahidul is the SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



A hoopoe, which is distinctive for its "crown" of feathers, spotted at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. This bird having barred black-and-white wings and tail is found across Asia, Africa, and Europe. It lives on different kinds of insects.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED