

Bangabandhu's arrival

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politics during my student years but I did never behave like this," the prime minister adds.

SUHARTO FAILS TO PERSUADE SAMAD

Indonesia's President General Suharto fails in a 75-minute talk held today in Jakarta to persuade Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad that a meeting should be arranged between Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. President Suharto explains to the Bangladeshi foreign minister that Indonesia is concerned only with the interests of Bangladesh and Pakistan. Abdus Samad Azad reiterates Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's stance that there can be no meeting between himself and Bhutto until Pakistan recognises Bangladesh. Indonesia Foreign Minister Adam Malik says after the meeting that Indonesia's offer to bring Pakistan and Bangladesh at a discussion anywhere at any time is still valid.

USSR TO SUPPLY ELECTRONICS PLANT MACHINERY

Bangladesh and the Soviet Union today sign a Tk 9.30 crore agreement under which the Soviet Union will supply machineries and construction materials for setting up an electronics plant in Chattogram. This is a part of the Soviet-Bangladesh Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement signed in Moscow by the prime ministers of the two countries in March, 1972.

INDIA, BANGLADESH TALK ANTI-SMUGGLING MEASURES

Senior officials of the Indo-Bangladesh border districts of Nadia and Kushtia today reaches an agreement on measures directed to promote border trade and check smuggling on either side. The agreement is reached following a four-day conference of officials from both the countries held in Krishnanagar, Nadia.

SOURCES: July 21, 1972 issues of *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Dainik Ittefaq*.

We're ready to monitor

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Attending the webinar, DCCI President Shams Mahmud said they were going through a tough time because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We're in such a crisis... it may spread Covid-19 and if we do not allow cattle markets, it may cause a huge loss to the animal farmers," said the DCCI president.

To maintain a balance in this situation, "Digital cattle market would be a better option," he said, adding that the organisers should be more cautious about health safety issues.

Zia Rahman, Prof and founding chairman of criminology department of Dhaka University, presented the keynote paper.

"We cannot avoid health risks in the upcoming cattle market, but we

might be able to minimise the risks as best as we can through abiding by health safety measures," he said.

Shaheen Ahmed, chairman of Bangladesh Tanners Association, said although it was hard to maintain health safety in the cattle markets, they have no other alternative to awareness.

He also suggested imposing a penalty if anyone does not wear a mask.

Halal Uddin, former vice-president of FBCCI and president of Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity, recommended that all take several masks with them while buying animals from the cattle market.

Attending the webinar, Shomim Kaiser, president of e-CAB and director of FBCCI, said lockdown helped e-commerce thrive.

Most people uninterested

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Prof Ridwanur Rahman, an infectious disease specialist who conducted the survey told The Daily Star.

Some 16 percent of the respondents said social stigma and late or unreliable test reports were to blame for the decline in test number while five percent pointed finger at the unsafe sample collection.

Other reasons mentioned by the respondents include cost for the test, decreasing trend of daily cases, and confusion over whether to be tested or not.

The number of daily Covid-19 tests yesterday was the lowest in July.

On July 1, a total of 17,875 samples were tested and it rose to the highest 18,362 on the following day.

Since then, the number of daily tests has been declining.

"Human resource shortage and people's unwillingness to be tested are among the main reasons behind the low number of tests," Prof Nasima Sultana, additional director general of the DGHS, told this newspaper recently.

Experts, however, said, the authorities need to motivate people to get tested.

"When the DGHS and the health ministry are busy in a blame game, it is no wonder that the situation has

taken such a turn," Prof Nazrul Islam, member of the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19, told The Daily Star recently.

During yesterday's briefing, Prof Nasima Sultana informed that 37 more people died of Covid-19 while 2,459 new cases were reported.

With this, the death toll rose to 2,618 while the total number of confirmed cases reached 204,525 -- around 19.89 percent of all tests done so far since January 21.

Yesterday, the positivity rate was 23.14 percent, according to the DGHS.

A total of 1,546 Covid-19 patients have recovered in the last 24 hours till 8:30am yesterday, taking the tally to 1,11,642 -- around 54.59 percent of all confirmed cases.

The death rate was at 1.28 percent as of yesterday.

Among those who died yesterday, 29 were males and eight were female.

Of them, 15 were from Dhaka, eight from Chattogram, two from Sylhet, three from Rajshahi, seven from Khulna and one each from Mymensingh and Rangpur division.

One of them was aged between 21 and 30 years, one between 31 and 40, three between 41 and 50, six between 51 and 60, 20 between 61 and 70, four between 71 and 80, one between 81 and 90 and another was over 90 years old.

Tiny cameras on beetles

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Computer Science & Engineering and senior author of the study published based on these results.

"Vision is so important for communication and for navigation, but it's extremely challenging to do it at such a small scale. As a result, prior to our work, wireless vision has not been possible for small robots or insects."

The camera weighs about 250 milligrams, which is about one-tenth the weight of a playing card, and was placed on the back of two beetles: a death-feigning beetle and a Pinacate beetle.

It transmits images at one to five frames per second and sits on a mechanical arm that can rotate 60 degrees.

Using this mechanism, researchers can get a high-resolution, panoramic shot of the beetle's environment.

The challenging in developing the cameras was not image quality or weight, but battery life.

Smartphone cameras, while small, require batteries too big to be carried around by insects. As such, the researchers had to use a tiny, low-power black and white camera which moves when a high voltage is applied to it.

War criminal

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leadership of the Jamaat-e-Islami party's UK branch and is not and never has been a senior leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami.

Seven years ago, Mueen-Uddin was convicted in his absence of crimes against humanity for allegedly leading a militia said to have killed 18 intellectuals while it fought the split from Pakistan.

He was sentenced to hang by the International Crimes Tribunal-2 in Bangladesh, reports the Mail Online.

But he says the tribunal has been widely condemned and discredited, citing Liberal Democrat peer Lord Carlile, who described the tribunal as "not fit for purpose" and the case against Mueen-Uddin as "nothing short of farcical".

In 2012, The Mail on Sunday revealed that Mueen-Uddin, who at the time had a senior role with the NHS, was facing prosecution by the tribunal which is based in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka. His writ, submitted to the High Court last month, also claims that the Challenging Hateful Extremism report breached European data protection regulations and that his personal information was unlawfully used.

The report, originally published in October last year, remained on the Government's website until March 20 after the Commission initially dismissed Mueen-Uddin's complaint. It later removed references to him and deleted his personal data.

Mueen-Uddin, who fled Bangladesh after the war and gained British citizenship, claims the report's publication caused him severe distress and embarrassment which was aggravated by the Commission's failure to contact him before publishing the allegations.

He says he suffered further when the Home Secretary's lawyers wrote to him in February, suggesting it was "fanciful" that the report had seriously harmed his reputation. A Home Office spokesman said: "This relates to claims made within a report published by the Independent Commission for Countering Extremism.

"However, given the Home Office is the sponsoring department for the commission, we are unable to comment further while legal proceedings are ongoing."

56 relatives

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According to the complainant, the relatives of Kajal, who are solvent, were enlisted for the government's cash assistance of Tk 2,500 allocated for each of the 50 lakh poor families hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

Payel Hossain Mridha, a resident of Noaagon village and member of Brahmanbaria Zilla Parishad, said, "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has provided cash assistance to the poor affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. But Kajal has included the names of his solvent relatives and followers on the list with an ulterior motive."

Sarail Upazila Parishad Chairman Rafiq Uddin Thakur said it was unfortunate that Kajal committed a misdeed which has called a noble initiative of the government into question.

Contacted, Kajal said, "There are over 400 voters in my family, most of them are poor. Their names have been included on the list in compliance with the rules. Some of them already got Tk 2,500 each. The mobile numbers of the remaining beneficiaries have been collected and they will get the money soon."

Sarail Upazila Nirbahi Officer ASM Musasaid he got a written complaint from some poor people against Kajal. A two-member probe committee had already been formed.

No anomalies in preparing the list of the government's cash assistance for coronavirus-hit poor people will be tolerated, he warned.

Some 1,100 people of Noaagon Union Parishad's nine wards have been listed for the aid. Of them, 270 are from ward-4 (Ankhitara) -- which is Kajol's area, added the UNO.

On May 14, Hasina announced a package of Tk 1,200 crore cash aid for 50 lakh poor families hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the programme, each family will receive the amount in their mobile numbers through MFS providers.

College

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Many parents, however, expressed concerns over the start of online admission process before improvement in coronavirus situation.

They said many students and guardians would have to visit local computer shops to complete the admission process online as they don't have access to the internet at home. This will increase their chance of being infected with the virus.

According to the results of SSC and equivalent exams, a total of 16,90,529 students came out successful. Majority of them will try to get admitted into colleges. "As the process will be online, we do not think coronavirus would be an issue. Still, we are requesting all to follow the health guidelines properly," Ziaul further said.

People being turned away in Pabna

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her son, a retired college teacher, who did not want to be named.

Without the test, they are not sure if she is virus-free. At the same time, the local administration has not removed their home from lockdown causing trouble in resuming their daily activities, he added.

Pabna civil surgeon Mehedi Iqbal told The Daily Star that Covid-19 patients do not need a further test.

"From July 1, we aren't going for a second test of Covid-19 patients. After detecting the disease, the affected patient will be in isolation for 14 days; later, he or she will be kept seven more days in home quarantine. If there is no problem, there is no need for a second test," Mehedi said.

They are also discouraging patients with no or minimal symptoms from getting tested, he added.

"Many people often come to test for trivial reasons and no symptoms. Now, we are only taking samples of those who have severe symptoms of the disease."

These measures are being taken to avoid pressure on the testing lab at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, where all samples collected from Pabna district are sent, he said.

Due to the test fee now imposed

at public facilities by the government since late June and late results, fewer people are also coming to get tested -- resulting in a lower number of new cases identified, Mehedi added.

A total of 627 Covid-19 patients have been identified in the district -- 548 of whom were detected in June alone -- as of July 16, said Dr Abdur Rahim, Covid-19 control room in-charge of the Pabna civil surgeon's office.

A total of 7,040 samples have been collected in the district till July 16. Of these, 6,530 samples were collected up till June -- meaning just 510 samples have been tested in the first half of this month.

LATE REPORTS: NO OPTION BUT TO TEST ELSEWHERE

An elderly villager from Ekdanta union in Atghoria upazila, suffering from fever and respiratory problems, gave his samples at Pabna Medical College Hospital on June 28. He is yet to receive his report.

"My father is well now but he is still staying inside as he does not know his test results while local people and our relatives are worried about him still being infectious," his son said to this correspondent.

A local photographer in Pabna town, who was suffering from a

urological disease and needed immediate surgery, was told he needed to provide a negative Covid-19 report. Failing to get tested in Pabna, he had to go to neighbouring Kushtia and undergo testing there.

"Hiding my identity and using a fake address, I got tested in a Kushtia lab with the help of my senior colleagues. Now, I am going to Dhaka with my negative Covid-19 report for surgery," he said.

PCR LABS IN DISTRICT ON CARDS

Three PCR machines are likely to be set up in Pabna, according to the health department, though no concrete steps have yet been taken in this regard.

The science and technology ministry has already allotted two PCR machines under the management of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant in Pabna's Ishwardi upazila while the health ministry has decided to set another lab in Pabna," said Dr Mehedi, also the secretary of the district Covid-19 management committee.

Two labs will be set up at the Pabna Medical College Hospital premises and another at the Pabna University of Science and Technology premises. However, a date has not yet been fixed for when these will be operational, he added.

Situation in HK 'really critical'

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reported on Saturday were from the United States, Brazil, India and South Africa.

The United States ended a week in which it registered its highest figures for new cases for three days running, taking its total towards 3.7 million infections and 140,00 deaths.

With clusters cropping up from Spain to Australia, officials were again facing the dilemma of imposing lockdowns to protect public health or loosening restrictions to save struggling businesses.

Illustrating the shrinking room for manoeuvre, angry demonstrators took to the streets in Israel to protest against their government's handling of the crisis.

And scientists too were feeling the pressure, Britain ramping up its tit-for-tat row with Russia yesterday over claims Kremlin agents hacked into British labs where virus vaccines are being developed.

GOOD WILL'

Economic recovery is at the forefront of policymakers' minds in Europe, with the continent facing a crippling recession and still unable to agree on the terms of its massive package to help the most-affected countries.

"I still can't say whether a solution will be found," said German

infections each day and hundreds of deaths, the US is struggling to frame a consistent response to the crisis -- attempting to open up the economy even while the tolls mount.

Other nations are grappling with the same dilemma, Spain opting for local lockdowns and non-enforced stay-at-home advice in its Catalonia region.

Officials in the Australian state of Victoria have taken a tougher approach.

Facemasks will be mandatory for roughly five million people in and around Melbourne from Thursday, with the threat of \$140 fines for transgressors.

"Most of us wouldn't leave home without our keys, we wouldn't leave our home without our mobile phone. You won't be able to leave home without your mask," said Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews.

'HAIL OF BOTTLES'

However, such restrictions have not gone down well with some in Israel -- a second wave of infections emerging after the government allowed businesses to reopen en masse in late April and early May.

Police fired water cannon to disperse thousands of protesters overnight.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh