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COVID-19 TESTS

# People being turned away in Pabna

Health authorities reluctant to collect samples; only test 510 samples in 16 days

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

While Covid-19 cases continue to pile up in the districts as well as in cities, detection of Covid-19 has actually deteriorated in Pabna due to low testing since the first week of July.

Local health officials said they are discouraging patients with no or minimal symptoms from getting tested as well as refusing Covid-19 patients from getting retested to see whether they are virus-free.

Locals say they were refused outright or discouraged from testing if they are not presenting severe symptoms -- leading to uncertainty over their status, late results, and possible under reporting of cases in the district.

An 80-year old woman living on Nimtola road in Pabna town received her positive test results on July 5, after her samples were taken on June 14.

Her house was locked down and she was in isolation, said her son, but even though she is now feeling better she hasn't been able to get tested again to see if she is fully recovered.

"We are trying to get her tested again but the health department is not interested in testing her again," said

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COVID-19 TESTING

## Most people uninterested to get tested

Finds survey; record low tests done yesterday

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

As the number of Covid-19 tests across the country yesterday dropped to a record in recent times, about 54 percent respondents -- mostly doctors -- of a survey said people were not going for tests due to unavailability and inaccessibility of the testing facilities.

Only 10,625 tests were carried out across the country yesterday, according to health directorate.

Considering the recent declining trend of daily tests, a total of 1,202 people -- of whom around 85 percent were doctors -- responded to eight specific questions online.

"This survey was not conducted following a strict survey method. It, however, reflects the opinion of a significant number of physicians who have been dealing with patients every day during this pandemic,"

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Many will not remember that this is Jahangir Fakir, the father of Dia Khanam Mim, 17, the 11th grader who was crushed to death by a rashly driven bus in Dhaka about two years ago. The death of Mim and her college mate triggered a firestorm of nationwide protest demanding road safety. Jahangir, a professional driver himself, had then said, "Many bus owners recruit drivers considering relationship and recommendations of known people without properly examining their driving skills. By doing this, they [recruiters] are virtually giving them [unskilled drivers] the licence to kill." Since his daughter's death, Jahangir has not touched the steering wheel. Now, he sells tea at Mohakhali Bus Terminal to drivers and their helpers, who always get advice on driving safety as they sip on their tea.

LIBEL DAMAGES

# War criminal Mueen sues British home secretary

AGENCIES

Chowdhury Mueen-Uddin, a British Muslim leader facing the death penalty in Bangladesh for alleged war crimes, is suing Home Secretary Priti Patel for £60,000 in libel damages.

Mueen-Uddin, 71, alleges that he was defamed in a Home Office report last year.

The lawsuit says the Challenging Hateful Extremism document by the Commission for Countering Extremism was shared on the Home Office's Twitter account, which has almost one million followers, and re-tweeted by Patel and others -- including BBC journalist Mishal Husain and the human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell.

Mueen-Uddin alleges the report libelled him by stating that he was responsible for serious criminal violence, including crimes against humanity, during the Bangladeshi war of independence in 1971.

The father-of-four, who lives in North London, insists he has not committed war crimes, is not a link between the perpetrators of the 1971 violence and the

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FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH BANGABANDHU'S NATION-BUILDING CHALLENGES

## Bangabandhu's arrival ends blockade

July 20, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

AUTO-PROMOTION SEEKERS GHERAO DHAKA UNIVERSITY VC

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's appearance on the scene ends a six-hour long blockade of Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Dr Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury and his colleagues by the students seeking auto-promotion. On reaching the University Bangabandhu asks the demonstrators to withdraw the blockade and expresses his resentment at the disrespect shown to the teachers. "I was in

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College online enrollment from Aug 9

STAR REPORT

The government is going to start the online process for enrolling students to Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent courses for the next academic session from August 9, amid the pandemic.

"We have taken the decision that online admission process for enrolling class XI students will begin on August 9," Prof Ziaul Haque, head of the intra-board coordination committee, said.

He said that details of the admission process will be uploaded on the websites of education boards soon. But the process will be completed by September 15, said Ziaul, also Dhaka Education Board chairman.

The decision was taken after Education Minister Dipu Moni held an online meeting with top education officials.

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## Tiny cameras on beetles stream footage

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Researchers from the University of Washington have developed tiny backpacks for beetles so they can film their surroundings.

Miniature cameras, which stream to a linked smartphone, gives researchers insights into the lives of the creatures. It has a range of 120 meters, a little longer than a football pitch.

"We have created a low-power, low-weight, wireless camera system that can capture a first-person view of what's happening from an actual live insect or create vision for small robots," said Shyam Gollakota, UW associate professor of

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## We're ready to monitor cattle market

Says home boss

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said they were ready to strongly monitor the cattle market, but awareness among the people would be much more effective.

"This year, the challenge is new for us," he said, adding that maintaining law and order is always a challenging task.

Asaduzzaman made the remarks while addressing a webinar arranged by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) on current law and order and health safety issues at cattle markets and during the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha.

He said the government was committed to strictly maintaining the law and order.

"Our police department is working hard. They have discharged their duties continuously during the lockdown," he added.

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PM'S CASH AID

## 56 relatives of B'baria UP chairman on the list

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

As many as 56 relatives of a union parishad chairman in Brahmanbaria's Sarail upazila have been allegedly enlisted for the government's cash aid allocated to reduce the sufferings of poor people during Covid-19 pandemic.

Bringing the allegations of nepotism and irregularities against Kajal Chowdhury, chairman of Noagaon Union Parishad, several deprived people lodged a written complaint with the upazila nirbahi officer on July 16.


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PRAYER TIMING JULY 20

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-15	12-45	5-00	6-54	8-15
JAMAT 4-50	1-15	5-15	6-58	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Only the corrugate iron sheet roofs of homes can be seen with water for miles at Gapshara Char Union in Tangail's Bhuapur upazila yesterday. Every home in the union is under water as the flood ravages the district.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Situation in HK 'really critical'

Says the city's leader after sudden surge in virus infections; WHO reports record single-day rise in global cases

AGENCIES

The deadly coronavirus is spreading out of control in Hong Kong with a record 100 new cases confirmed, the finance hub's leader said yesterday as she tightened social distancing measures to tackle the sudden surge in infections.

The finance hub was one of the first places to be struck by the virus when it emerged from central China. But the city had impressive success in tackling the disease, all but ending local transmissions by late June.

However, in the last two weeks, infections have spiked once more and doctors fear the new outbreak is now spreading undetected in the densely packed territory of 7.5 million people.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam said yesterday more than 500 infections had been confirmed in the last fortnight alone, nearly a third since the outbreak began.

"I think the situation is really critical and there is no sign the situation is being brought under control," Lam told reporters.

She announced even more regulations, including plans to make it compulsory to wear masks inside any public indoor venue -- and a new order for non-essential civil servants to work for home.

The virus has now infected over 14 million people and killed more than 602,000 worldwide.

The World Health Organization reported a record increase in global cases for the second day in a row, with the total rising by 259,848 in 24 hours. The biggest increases

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