

New plan

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President Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury has promulgated an order establishing the Bangladesh Freedom Fighters Welfare Foundation for the welfare of disabled freedom fighters and dependents of the martyrs of the Liberation War. SOURCES: August 20, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Woman gang

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of her neighbours, Habibur Rahman, 45, tricked her into going to his house on Thursday. Later, Afil Hossain, 20, Faruk Hossain, 22, and Shakil Hossain, 21, all residents of the same village, appeared there and confined her welding fire arms. The four raped her multiple times. On Sunday night, the victim managed to flee the house and file the case. Md Tazul Huda, officer-in-charge of the police station said, quoting the victim.

Trial against

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25 for next hearing of the case. In his statement, Anti-Corruption Commission's director Syed Iqbal Hossain told the court that during his inquiry he found that two persons -- M Shahjahan and Niranjana Chandra Saha -- opened two current accounts at Gulshan Corporate Branch of the bank on November 6 of 2016.

The following day they submitted two separate applications for sanctioning an amount of Tk 4 crore as loan. Soon after getting the applications, the then branch manager and others, without scrutinizing the applications, signed and the same day and they forwarded those sanction letters to the concerned principal office for next course of action. The principal officer, violating the bank rules and regulations, on November 8, 2016, issued two pay orders of Tk 4 crore in the name of M Shahjahan and Niranjana Chandra Saha to their current accounts.

On November 9, 2016, the amount of money was deposited to a savings account of SK Sinha at Sonali Bank Ltd's Supreme Court Branch in the capital.

SK Sinha had withdrawn the money in cash and through pay orders on different dates and transferred those money to different places.

So the bank officials, in collusion with other accused, sanctioned the loan even though they had no sole power to do so, the complainant continued.

The complainant also said that Shahjahan and Niranjana were very poor and they have no ability to run any business even though they have introduced themselves businessmen.

Moreover, the accused submitted a deed of 32 decimal property of Sashtri Roy situated in Savar which does not fulfil the terms and conditions of the bank rules.

After getting their involvement with money laundering through fake documents, the inquiry report was submitted to the commission officer in July last year.

Justice Sinha resigned from his post on November 11, 2017, from abroad.

US, S Korea begin joint military drills after virus delay

AFP, Seoul
South Korea and the United States began annual military exercises yesterday following a coronavirus delay, with the drills likely to infuriate the North which has long considered them rehearsals for invasion.



Rescue workers evacuate a resident stranded by floodwaters following heavy rainfall in Neijiang of Sichuan province, China yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Lost' elephant shrew found in Africa

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with powerful legs that allow it to run at speeds of nearly 30 kilometres (20 miles) an hour. The Somali sengi has been lost to science since the 1970s, leaving just the 39 preserved specimens held in the world's natural history museums as the only physical evidence that it ever existed. The Global Wildlife Conservation group even included it on its "25 most wanted lost species" list. But during an expedition last year scientists found the animals still roaming the wild, discovering that the Somali sengi is not confined to

Somalia at all. The research mission was looking for different kinds of sengis in Djibouti, the small Horn of Africa coastal nation that borders Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea. The team set up more than 1,250 traps filled with peanut butter, oatmeal and yeast extract in 12 areas in Djibouti, buoyed by speaking to local communities, where people could readily recognise the animals from photographs. "Our interviews with local nomadic and pastoralist people indicated that they see sengis regularly and we were

consistently told the same common name (Wali sandheer)," said Houssein Rayaleh, of Association Djibouti Nature, who was on the team. The conservationist said he too had seen sengis during his 21 years doing fieldwork in the country. But no one knew whether they were the long-lost Somali sengi. "Without formal documentation, the species of the sengis in Djibouti was unknown," Rayaleh told AFP. The team also included global elephant shrew expert Galen Rathburn, who had been studying the creatures for decades but had never

seen a live Somali sengi, according to researcher Steven Heritage, of the Duke University Lemur Center. "So when he opened the first trap and looked over at me, and he had seen the cute tufted furry tail of the animal and he looked at me and said 'I can't believe it, I've never seen one before,'" Heritage told AFP. The researchers collected twelve specimens of the mammal. Their findings prove that the Somali sengi "is currently extant" and lives far beyond the boundaries of Somalia, the researchers said in a study published in the journal PeerJ.

Flood in new areas in south

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In the southern region, water of rivers has been rising for the last two days due to heavy rain, high tides and water from upstream, said Mohammad Masum, assistant engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board in Barishal.

The rivers include the Kirtonkhola, Burishwar, Tentulia, Meghna, Payra, Biskhali, and Kacha. They go through Barishal, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barguna, Jhalakathi, and Pirojpur.

The rivers were flowing 2cm to 68cm above the danger level at different points, said Dipak Das, executive engineer of WDB.

The rivers have inundated vast areas of land, houses, roads, and kitchen

markets. All 16 unions under Barishal's Mehendiganj upazila have been submerged, said Upazila Nirbahi Officer Pijush Chandra Dey. Many areas in the district's Gournadi and Agailjhara upazilas have gone under water, said Gournadi UNO Israt Jahan.

Most of the 19 slums in Barishal city have been flooded. In Bhola, many low-lying areas of Manpura, Doulatkhan, and Charfession have been flooded.

In Gaibandha, water levels of the Brahmaputra and Ghaghat rivers have been increasing over the last four days. But the water levels were stable yesterday and there was no possibility

of further increase in the next 10 days, said Mokhlesur Rahman, executive engineer of WDB. In Sirajganj, the flood situation remained unchanged, though water of the Jamuna slightly increased. "The flood situation may improve next week ...," said KM Rafikul Islam, sub-divisional engineer of WDB.

In Nilphamari, the flood situation remained stable in the Teesta basin area as the river was flowing 25cm below the danger mark at Dalia point yesterday.

There is a possibility of rain upstream. In that case, the river may swell again, said Rashedin Mowla, sub-divisional engineer of Dalia

division of WDB. In Manikganj, water level of the Jamuna increased 5cm in the last two days at Aricha. But it is still below the danger level, said WDB officials. In Tangail, water levels of major rivers have slightly increased over the last two days. "There is no forecast of further deterioration of the flood situation in the district, said Sirajul Islam, executive engineer of WDB.

However, stagnant water in low-lying areas remains a problem for many. [Our correspondents in Barishal, Bogura, Nilphamari, Pabna, Tangail, and Manikganj contributed to this report]

Pandemic now driven by younger adults

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"Acting) strategically and globally is actually in each country's national interest - no one is safe until everyone is safe," he told a virtual briefing calling for an end to "vaccine nationalism". Surges in infections have been reported in countries that had appeared to have the virus under control, including Vietnam, which until recently went three months without domestic transmission due to its aggressive mitigation efforts.

"What we are observing is not simply a resurgence. We believe it's a signal that we have entered a new phase of pandemic in the Asia-Pacific," Kasai said. He said countries were better

able to reduce disruption to lives and economies by combining early detection and response to manage infections.

While mutations had been observed, the WHO still saw the virus as "relatively stable", Kasai said. WHO also reminded drugmakers to follow all necessary research and development steps when creating a vaccine.

Socorro Escalante, its technical officer and medicines policy adviser, said the WHO was coordinating with Russia, which this month became the first country to grant regulatory approval for a Covid-19 vaccine.

"We hope to get the response in terms of the evidence of this new

vaccine," Escalante said.

TWO-PHASE ROLLOUT

Some 92 countries are signed up to COVAX -- an effort to pool the costs and rewards of finding, producing and distributing effective vaccines -- while a further 80 have expressed interest but are yet to come fully on board.

The WHO is looking for countries to signal a firm interest by August 31.

"The COVAX Global Vaccines Facility is the critical mechanism for joint procurement and pooling risk across multiple vaccines, which is why today I sent a letter to every member state encouraging them to join," Tedros said.

He specified that the allocation of vaccines would be rolled out in two

phases.

In the first, doses would be allocated proportionally to all participating countries simultaneously, in order to reduce the overall global risk.

In the second phase, individual countries' threat and vulnerability level will come into play.

Tedros said front-line workers in health and social care settings would get first phase priority, "as they are essential to treat and protect the population, and come in close contact with high-mortality risk groups" he explained.

He said initial data showed that adults over 65 and those with particular pre-existing conditions were at the highest risk of dying from Covid-19.

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি
নর্থ সাউথ ইউনিভার্সিটি

নর্থ সাউথ ইউনিভার্সিটিতে নিম্ন বর্ণিত পদসমূহে লোক নিয়োগের জন্য প্রকৃত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

সিকিউরিটি সার্জেন্ট (Security Sergeant): পদ সংখ্যা ০৩

শিক্ষাপত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা: প্রার্থীকে বি.এস.সি./বি.এ./বিক্রম পাস হতে হবে। সিকিউরিটি সার্জেন্ট পদে যে কোন বৃহৎ প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মপক্ষে ৫ (পাঁচ) বৎসরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে এবং কঠোর পরিশ্রমী এবং সিকিউরিটি সুরক্ষা সম্পর্কিত কার্য সম্পাদন এ সক্ষম হতে হবে।

সিসিটিভি অপারেটর (CCTV Operator): পদ সংখ্যা ০২

শিক্ষাপত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা: প্রার্থীকে কমপক্ষে এস.এস.সি পাস হতে হবে, ইয়া ছাড়া কোন বৃহৎ প্রতিষ্ঠানে সিসিটিভি অপারেটরের পদে ৩ (তিন) বৎসরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।

বর্ণিত পদ সমূহে সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে কারিগরি দক্ষতা এবং অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন সশস্ত্র বাহিনী/রাব/গোয়েন্দা সংস্থার অবসর প্রাপ্ত সদস্যদের অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করা হবে।

বয়স: সকল পদের জন্য সর্বোচ্চ ৩৫ বৎসর। (আবেদন জমা দেওয়ার শেষ তারিখ ০২/০৯/২০২০ ইং)। বর্ণিত সকল পদে অধিকতর যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স সীমা শিথিল করা হতে পারে।

মাসিক বেতন ও অন্যান্য সুযোগ সুবিধা:

উপরে বর্ণিত পদ সমূহে নিয়োগপ্রাপ্ত প্রার্থীদের আকর্ষণীয় বেতন ও ভাতাদি প্রদান করা হবে। ইছাছাড়া ইউনিভার্সিটির প্রচলিত নিয়ম অনুযায়ী প্রতিভেদে ফান্ড, গ্র্যাডুইটি, উৎসব ভাতা (২টি), ছুটিবন বীমা এবং চিকিৎসা পরামর্শ সুবিধা প্রদান করা হবে।

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীপনকে খামের উপর স্পষ্টাক্ষরে পদের নাম, ২ কপি পাসপোর্ট আকারের রঙিন ছবি এবং শিক্ষাপত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত কপিসহ আবেদন পত্র আগামী ০২/০৯/২০২০ ইং তারিখের মধ্যে ইমেইল এর মাধ্যমে অথবা নিম্নে উল্লিখিত ঠিকানায় পৌছাতে হবে।

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Government distorting history to stay

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The BNP leader further alleged that the government is trying to involve Ziaur Rahman in the August 15 killing. "The case of killing Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members has already been resolved in court and nothing was found regarding Ziaur Rahman's involvement," he said. Fakhru said neither Ziaur Rahman nor his close associates were accused of the case. "But now they [ruling Awami League] are conspiring to implicate Ziaur Rahman." Fakhru alleged that a video containing "false and baseless hate speech" by Bangabandhu's

convicted killer Abdul Majed was recorded "illegally" in custody before his execution and the government has forced the media to air it and made it viral on social media by recruiting a paid cyber force. "This move could lead to new controversies over the judicial process and the verdict. Such an illegal move is, in fact, nothing more than bad politics." He said the propaganda against Ziaur Rahman by airing killer Majed's statement is purely a politically motivated lie. "Historical facts cannot be denied by putting a gun to Majed's neck."

Why Harun still an MP?

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made the respondents. A regular HC bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice AKM Zahirul Huq came up with the rule after a writ petition was filed by Abdul Wadud, a resident of Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila, on August 13. In the petition, he challenged the legality of Harun serving as a lawmaker. Petitioner's lawyer Dewan Md Obayed Hossain told The Daily Star that a special judge court in Dhaka on October 21 last year convicted and sentenced Harun to five years' imprisonment for indulging in corruption by selling his duty-free car to a company.

The court also fined him Tk 50 lakh and ordered that he will serve six months more in jail if he did not pay the fine. Harun obtained bail from the HC on October 28 that year, but the court did not stay his conviction, the lawyer said. Obayed said as per the article 66 (2) of the constitution, if a person is convicted and sentenced to more than two years in prison for moral turpitude, he or she is not eligible to participate in elections in five years after serving the jail term. The trial court has sent copies of the judgement to the offices concerned of the Jatiya Sangsad and the EC, but they did not declare his parliamentary seat vacant, the lawyer added.

Owners want

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it has been on the rise at the district and upazila levels. "In this situation, allowing full-scale movement of public transport will definitely increase the transmission of novel coronavirus." He said it seems there are no visible government activities to curb the spread of the virus.

The government apparently wants to show that the situation is becoming normal, Ridwanur said, adding that the government may be doing this to achieve herd immunity.

"Achieving herd immunity looks easy in theory, but practically it is very difficult. If the government wants to adopt the strategy, the outcome would be very bad," he warned.

Services of public transport, including buses and minibuses, resumed on June 1 after more than two months. The government had suspended the services on March 26 to contain the spread of the virus.

Following demands by transport leaders, the government hiked bus fares by 60 percent from June 1 on the condition that buses would carry passengers at half capacity and follow other health safety guidelines.

But complaints on breaching the conditions kept pouring in.

Between July 22 and August 12, BRTA mobile courts filed 787 cases against more than 100 bus operators, mainly for violating health safety guidelines and charging passengers extra fares, said BRTA officials.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader on several occasions had asked the authorities concerned to take action for charging passengers extra fares. His ministry in June directed the BRTA to cancel registrations and route permits of those vehicles who violated health guidelines.

But the situation did not improve much. Rather, it became worse since the Eid-ul-Azha holidays and the passengers are bearing the brunt of the situation.

Sabur Islam is one of such passengers who was charged double the regular fare for three tickets of a Purbasha Paribahan bus for a trip to Dhaka from Magura.

Before the 60 percent hike in ticket fares, the price of each ticket was Tk 400. Yesterday, he was asked to pay Tk 800.

"I was ready to pay, but they [the bus operator] did not want to keep vacant each of two seats as per the government's decision," he told this correspondent over phone.

Instead, the operator said since three passengers are from the same family, they would issue three tickets to him against two seats in a row and one separately. The operator asked Sabur to pay Tk 700 each for two tickets and Tk 800 for one.

"I had to buy the three tickets for Tk 2,200 as I need to go to Dhaka tomorrow [today]," said Sabur, a private tour operator.

Asked, Khandaker Enayet claimed bus operators followed the government's guideline properly before Eid-ul-Azha. But the situation changed when more passengers hit the roads ahead of the Eid.

"We've held many meetings and asked the bus operators to follow the health guidelines. Is it possible to make the passengers follow the guidelines by deploying guards? So, we want to go back to the pre-coronavirus system," he said.

Contacted, BRTA Chairman Nur Mohammad Mazumder admitted receiving complaints of violation of health safety guidelines and charging extra fares.

"We have written to all the stakeholders, including police, transport owners and workers' leaders, to follow the health guidelines. Besides, our mobile courts are conducting drives against irregularities," he said.

Mentioning that 787 cases were filed, the chairman said, "We have called a meeting of all the stakeholders tomorrow [today] to discuss how to implement the guidelines fully."

High-tech farmers sow seeds of revolution in Dubai desert

AFP, Dubai
An ultra-modern vertical farm in the middle of the desert stands as a testament to Dubai's determination to spark a "green revolution" to overcome its dependence on food imports.

Al-Badia market garden farm produces an array of vegetable crops in multi-storey format, carefully controlling light and irrigation as well as recycling 90 percent of the water it uses.

"It's a green revolution in the middle of the desert," the farm's director Basel Jammal tells AFP.

"Each plant is given the amount of light, humidity, heat and water it needs. It's as if it were a guest in a five-star hotel," he says.

The Covid-19 pandemic, which disrupted global supply chains, has refocused attention on food security in the United Arab Emirates.

The UAE is rich in oil and ingenuity, but has little arable land and endures dry, baking summers.