



Most of those who were burnt on Sunday night's fire incident at Chattogram city's North Kattoli were in critical condition, according to physicians. Family members took them to Dhaka for better treatment, after they were rushed to the burn unit of Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



### Noor Hossain Day today

CITY DESK

Shaheed Noor Hossain Day, a red-letter day in restoration of democracy in Bangladesh, is being observed today.

On this day in 1987, Noor Hossain, who imprinted his bare chest and back with the slogan “Swaichar nipat jak, gonotatra mukti pak” (down with autocracy, let democracy be freed), was gunned down when police opened fire on an anti-autocracy demonstration in Dhaka’s Zero Point.

The place was renamed “Noor Hossain Chatter”.

The martyrdom of Noor Hossain and others during the mass upsurge of late 1990s expedited the anti-

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## A forgone mandate

Two Dhaka city corporations’ food inspection activities virtually non-existent

MATHEWS CHIRAN

The two Dhaka city corporations have the mandate of keeping a check on food safety, but have been doing next to nothing to this end for several years.

They have facilities like a dedicated food testing lab, a court for filing food safety-related cases, and food inspectors, but data show collection of food samples for testing is abysmal and highly irregular in both city corporations.

While Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) has been collecting samples at fluctuating consistency every year, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has not collected anything for the last three years.

There are 17 food inspectors, known as sanitary officers (SI) at the two city corporations -- nine at DNCC and eight at DSCC -- for collecting samples such as dairy products, cookies and beverages. They are also responsible for inspecting restaurants.

After collecting samples, they are supposed to send them to the Modern Food Testing Laboratory and Training Centre. If any sample fails tests, staffers are authorised to file case with DSCC’s Pure Food Court against the manufacturing company.

But there is virtually no implementation of this process. In 2018, neither city corporations collected any sample, and since then, DSCC has collected 130 (up till September 2020) while DNCC has collected zilch.

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## One dies, eight hurt in Ctg building fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An elderly woman died and eight, including six members of a family, suffered burn injuries in a fire at a six-storey building in Chattogram city on Sunday night.

Peyara Begum (65), who suffered 60 percent burns, succumbed to her injuries at the burn unit of Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) around 12:45pm yesterday.

The six injured -- Peyara’s son Mijanur Rahman (42), daughter-in-law Bibi Sultana (30), grandson Mahir (7), granddaughter Manha (2); other son Saiful Islam (20) and daughter Sumaya Akhter (18) -- were admitted to the burn unit. Family members decided to take them to Dhaka for better treatment in the afternoon, said Dr Rafiq Uddin Ahmed, head of the CMCH burn unit, adding that condition of most of the injured was critical.

Two other injured -- Riajul Islam (22)

and his wife Salma Jahan (21) -- used to sublet a room at Mijanur’s flat, said OC Jahir Hossain of Akbar Shah Police Station.

The fire broke out at Mijanur’s flat on the top floor of “Momtaj Villa” in North Kattoli area around 9:30pm, the OC added.

Mijanur, a service holder at a private company, used to stay alone. So he sublet the room to the couple. His wife, a primary school teacher at Dagonbhuiyan upazila in Feni, and other family members who live in their village home in Feni, came to visit him a few weeks back, said the OC.

The cause of the fire was yet to be known, the OC said, adding that Fire Service and Civil Defence and Power Development Board are investigating the incident.

A duty officer at the divisional headquarters of fire service at Agrabad said the fire was extinguished before their team reached the spot. Fire service suspects that the fire originated from an electric short circuit, the officer said.

### DRIVE IN KHULNA CITY

## 33 detained, 25 fined for not wearing masks

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Around 33 people were detained by two mobile courts for violating health guidelines in Khulna yesterday.

The mobile courts also fined 25 people Tk 17,000 during the drives conducted in four areas including Shibbari Mor and in front of court building in the city.

Yusuf Ali, additional district magistrate of Khulna District Administration, told The Daily Star strict measures have been taken to prevent the second wave of Covid-19.

“We detained people who did not wear masks outdoors in city areas. We kept around 15 people in police custody as they could not provide logical answers to why they did not wear masks, and handed over 12 to 14 children to guardians,” he said, adding, “We will fine the detainees and release them today after taking their undertaking.”

According to the decision of the district law and order committee meeting on Sunday, people who do not wear masks outside will be punished. Khulna Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate Mohammad Helal Hossain presided over the meeting.

## Ex-husband throws acid on woman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man allegedly threw acid on his ex-wife, an employee at a hospital in the capital, yesterday morning.

As the victim, Rahima Begum (45), a medical assistant at Birdem hospital’s Mirpur branch, was leaving the hospital around 6:30am after night duty, her ex-husband Abdul Ali threw acid on her and fled, the victim said.

She was later rescued and admitted to Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

Dr Partha Sankar Paul, a resident surgeon there, said she had 12 percent burns on her body, including her face.

According to the victim’s family members, Rahima, hailing from Dinajpur’s Biral upazila and resident of Kalyanpur’s Natun Bazar area, got divorced from Ali three months back.

Yesterday, Ali, helper of a truck driver, met Rahima and threatened her with dire consequences if she does not return to him. She expressed unwillingness to do so, said Miraj Hossain, husband of the victim’s sister.

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## 39pc migrant workers’ families had no income from April-June: study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-nine percent of the migrant workers’ families had no income during April, May and June in the country this year, although there were no families that had no income till November 2019, said speakers citing a recent survey at a webinar yesterday.

The survey -- conducted by Karmojibi Nari, Manusher Jonno Foundation and UK Aid, also revealed that although before Covid-19, the monthly income of a migrant worker was on an average Tk 47,272, it came down to Tk 9,361 after the coronavirus situation emerged, says a press release.

The findings were presented at an online seminar, titled “Covid-19: Safe migration, fact findings on migrant workers’ acquirements and deprivation, and ways to reintegration”, organised by Karmojibi Nari and supported by MJF and UK Aid.

The survey focused on the impact of Covid-19 on migrant workers and it was conducted with 383 migrant workers (155 women and 228 men), aged between 21 and 50, in 3 districts -- Dhaka, Mymensingh and Narsingdi. The workers participating in the study were involved in a total of 55 occupations.

Speakers at the meeting made recommendations on a variety of issues. According to them, these workers need to be provided with jobs and loans on easy terms to survive and special initiatives should be taken by the government to monitor the stimulus package provided by the Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment.

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## ASI among 2 held with yaba in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons including a police official were arrested with yaba tablets in the capital’s Gendaria area on Sunday night.

Members of Rapid Action Battalion-10 arrested Abdul Aziz, assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of Jatrabari Police Station, and one Abdur Razzak with 148 yaba tablets in the area, Saiju Mia, officer-in-charge of Gendaria Police Station, told The Daily Star.

Later, Rab members handed the duo over to Gendaria police and filed a case under the Narcotics Control Act around 8pm, the OC said.

They will be produced before a Dhaka court soon, he added.



PHOTO COURTESY: WANDER WOMAN

A traveller dresses up in a sari for the perfect photo-op at Saint Martin’s island, with the setting sun in the background and waves crashing at her feet.

## Travelling made better for women, by women

MEHRIN MUDDI CHOWDHURY, Star Lifestyle

There are many words for it. “Wanderlust”, “hodophile” or “bhromon-pipashu” -- are only some of the things we call those of us who harbour a strong desire to travel.

But then not all of us get to tick-off all the entries from our wish-lists. Travelling isn’t as easy as it seems. There’s scheduling, paperwork, savings and a lot of other variables to take care of before one can travel.

But there’s another factor that’s perhaps a little different from the others -- gender.

Even in 2020, it’s difficult for a woman to travel. Stigma is there -- “Women can’t travel alone” or “Women can’t travel without a male guardian accompanying them” -- and so is fear for personal safety.

This is where Wander Women comes in. It’s a travel organisation that facilitates travelling for Bangladeshi women. It’s services and solutions are specifically crafted for its female customers.

“University years got me into travelling. I used to attend a lot of international competitions, and I developed a taste out of these trips,” said Sabira Mehrin, founder and lead traveller at Wander Women.

“But it was hurdle as I graduated and joined the workforce,” Mehrin continued. “I had to do everything on my own -- from arranging funds to finding suitable locations.”

“Sensing a gap in the travelling market, I decided to start Wander Women. My friends encouraged me to start small, first with a Facebook group and scale up from there,” she recounted the early days. “Thankfully, I listened! Since the first post on social media back in 2017, we never had to look back!”

Something of a by-product that comes out of Wander Women’s services is how it provides female travellers with a network of like-minded travelmates. This acquaintance comes in handy when friends and family cannot match schedule.

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### ‘DEROGATORY FACEBOOK COMMENTS’

## Suman, Ishrat challenge contempt of court ruling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two Supreme Court lawyers yesterday filed a petition with the Appellate Division of the SC, challenging the contempt of court rule issued by the HC against them for allegedly posting derogatory comments about the judiciary on Facebook.

Syed Sayedul Haque Suman and Ishrat Hasan submitted the petition through their lawyer Aneek R Haque, also seeking a stay on a High Court verdict that upheld the Bangladesh Bar Council decision allowing a Jumman Siddique to practise law in court although he failed the enrolment test.

The petitioners sought a stay on the HC order that summoned them to appear before it in person on November 16 to place their explanations on this issue and imposed a cost of Tk 100 on each of them.

Lawyer Aneek R Haque told The Daily Star that the apex court chamber judge may hold hearing on the stay petition today.

On November 8, the HC issued a contempt of court rule against Sayedul and Ishrat, where it asked them to explain why contempt of court proceedings should not be initiated against them for their Facebook comments.

The HC bench of Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore and Justice Mohammad Ullah came up with the rule and summons order.

During hearing on the writ petition on November 8, Jumman Siddique’s lawyer Tania Amir brought the Facebook comments made by Sayedul and Ishrat before the HC bench and prayed for necessary order.

Following the same writ petition, another High Court bench on December 18 last year stayed the effectiveness of the Bar Council notification that allowed Jumman to practice law although he failed in the enrolment test.

The bench of Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Md Iqbal Kabir Lytton also issued a rule asking the Bangladesh Bar Council and government

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No matter how much automation is introduced in the capital’s traffic system, it seems to have little to no effect on vehicular and pedestrian movement. Due to citizens’ unwillingness to follow rules, sergeants still manually direct traffic, and these “useless” lights gradually fall apart and just stand there, waiting to be repaired, inset. The photos were taken yesterday from the capital’s Bailey Road.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



## Will make sure project money is not wasted: Taposh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh yesterday said they do not want wastage of money in any project of the city corporation.

He also stressed on proper implementation of the project money.

Taposh made the comment while delivering his speech at a meeting in Nagar Bhaban on “Livelihood Improvement of Urban Poor Community Project”.

The mayor said they will make sure that there is no wastage of project money. He sought help from the councillors in this regard.

There are many government projects where even though the entire budget was not used, it was shown as expenditure, he said.

The prime minister has been irked by such incidents, said Taposh.

Talking about the urban poor, the mayor said, “We have to improve their living standards through this project.” He also said they will work towards bringing down the number of poor people living in the city to under 10 percent.

The meeting was chaired by DSCC Secretary Akramuzzaman.

