

NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT
Russia deploys peacekeepers as ceasefire halts fighting
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CASH AID FOR THE POOR

Blighted by graft, partisanship

TIB survey on 1,050 people finds 69pc yet to get anything; 18.9pc bribed to get on the list; around 10pc had to prove political identity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Taking interviews of 1,050 beneficiaries of the government's cash assistance for the poor, Transparency International Bangladesh has found that 69 percent were yet to receive anything.

Of the interviewees, 18.9 percent had to pay bribes to be included in the list, while 36.1 percent had to request local influential figures to refer their names for the financial support. In addition, 103 people said they had to prove their "political identity" to be listed as beneficiaries.

TIB revealed these findings yesterday in a virtual press briefing, titled "Governance Challenges in Tackling Coronavirus [Part II]". The data was collected between June 16 and October 31 this year and the interviewees were from 35 districts.

Among those who received the money, 26.6 percent said their mobile banking agent deducted a commission from the amount, according to the anti-graft watchdog.

Beginning May 14, the government has distributed a cash support of Tk 2,500 to each of 35 lakh beneficiaries rendered poor due to the coronavirus pandemic. This was a one-time injection, said finance ministry sources.

The government had set aside Tk 1,250 crore for 50 lakh poor families.

The sources told The Daily Star that the project was stopped after funds were handed to 35 lakh beneficiaries, because the authorities were not

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Vehicles seized by law enforcers have been piled up in front of Ashulia Police Station in Savar. Storing vehicles in the open causes them to get ruined. In many countries, vehicles are impounded in sheds where they are protected from the elements and theft. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Recovery not possible sans united efforts

Says PM about global initiative for fighting Covid pandemic

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said there is a need for constructive multilateralism more than ever as the Covid-19 pandemic has reminded the world that "no one is safe until everyone is safe".

"The Covid-19 pandemic is a stark reminder that no one is safe until everyone is safe. The pandemic has taught us that global prosperity is embedded in collective

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PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Be judicious while spending state money

HC issues guidelines to ensure transparency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a set of guidelines to ensure proper expenditure of state money and transparency in the purchase and maintenance of medical equipment in government hospitals across the country.

The guidelines are a part of an HC verdict, which also directed the

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It was a murder

CCTV footage shows mental hospital staff beating ASP dead soon after admission; 15 sued; 10 held

MUNTAKIM SAAD

A day after Senior Assistant Superintendent of Police Anisul Karim was allegedly assaulted to death by its staff, the Mind Aid Psychiatry and De-Addiction Hospital in the capital's Adabor was all but deserted yesterday.

From the outside, the three-storey building -- recently renovated and fitted with modern amenities -- looked serene, but from what the remaining kitchen staffers told this correspondent, there was turmoil within.

Inside, there are around 15 rooms. Two of



Anisul Karim

those, situated at the corner, are soundproof rooms where "angry patients" were taken so that their "fury could be neutralised".

Some staffers at the hospital said the rooms were akin to "soundproof torture cells".

"All the patients who come here don't behave the same way. Some behave violently, and are taken into those [soundproof] rooms..." said a member of the hospital's kitchen staff, wishing not to be named.

The soundproof rooms are located on the ground floor and first floor of the

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GOP backs Trump

Leaders say president has right to challenge results; Biden mulls legal action over transition delay

AGENCIES

President Donald Trump yesterday pushed ahead with longshot legal challenges to his election loss, as Republican US lawmakers and state officials defended his right to do so.

Pennsylvania Republican state lawmakers called for an audit of results in the state that on Saturday enabled Democrat Joe Biden to secure the more than 270 votes in the Electoral College he needed to win the presidency.

Biden, the president-elect due to take office on Jan 20, 2021, also leads Trump in the popular vote by more than 4.6 million votes, according to the latest count of ballots.

Trump has made baseless claims that fraud was marring the results. The count has been delayed by a surge in mail-in ballots prompted by voters' desire to avoid infection from the coronavirus pandemic.

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THE THIRD VIEW



MAHFUZ ANAM

TRUMP IS PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME

Now we know why he likes the likes of Putin and Kim

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A mobile court of the Khulna district administration fines a cyclist Tk 500 for not wearing a mask at Dakbanglo intersection in the city yesterday. He later put on his mask. Mobile courts detained 33 people and fined 64 during drives in the district to enforce Covid-19 health guidelines.

PHOTO: DIPANKAR ROY

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Rules to be followed by overseas passengers:

- Passengers should bring the photocopy of Air ticket and passport
- Sample to be given within 72 hours of flight schedule (at least 36 hrs before)

• Covid-19 report will be verified by passengers and Airport authority from DGHS website

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2 CHINESE PROJECTS

PMO asks rail ministry to cut costs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Prime Minister's Office has directed the railways ministry to significantly reduce the cost of China-funded Akhaura-Sylhet and Joydebpur-Ishwardi rail line expansion projects.

The PMO issued the directives following a report of a special committee formed to review costs of three projects and to assess whether the projects should go ahead as planned.

As per the directives, railways have to reduce Tk 3,354.31 crore cost from the project for converting metre-gauge rail line to dual-gauge line between Akhaura and Sylhet, which is 20.8 percent of the total project cost.

For upgrading the Joydebpur-Ishwardi dual-gauge line to dual-gauge double line, Tk 1,495.52 crore cost has to be slashed. The amount is 12.91 percent of the total project cost.

Such directives from the PMO is "not only rare, but I think this is the first", a railway official said.

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SCHOOL ADMISSION

No decision yet, parents worried

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Every November, the stress levels of many parents seeking to get their children admitted to private schools begin to escalate as the admission process of most reputed schools in the capital kicks off by the middle of this month.

But this year, the anxiety of the guardians grows deeper as the coronavirus pandemic has made school admissions complicated and uncertain.

"I have already communicated with three good private schools, but all of them said they are yet to decide about the admission tests. They cannot say anything specific now and asked us to keep in touch with them," said Riasat Alam, a father of a six-year-old from Mirpur.

School admission has always been a nerve-wracking ordeal for guardians as there are only a handful of "good" schools in the capital against an ever-increasing demand every year.

"We saw on television that there is an apprehension of a second wave hitting the country in winter. If this apprehension turns true, we don't know what will happen. We are anxious," said Riasat, a private job holder.

Thousands of parents like Riasat are anxiously waiting for the start of school admissions as none of the public and private school authorities have yet taken any decision about selling admission forms and holding tests.

Private schools usually start selling admission forms as early as mid-November. On the other hand, government schools begin the form distribution process in December.

But the Covid-19 pandemic situation, which forced the authorities concerned to shut down all educational institutions till November 14,

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daraz

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SALE

NOVEMBER 11

আজ ১১ নভেম্বর

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