Kathalbari ferry

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Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

In July, 2017, Kathalbari Ghat was shifted to the present site from Kawrakandi in Shibchar upazila due to river erosion.

Sharful Islam, executive engineer (river management) of the Padma Bridge Project, said the main channel of the river runs through Kathalbari area.

"A three-km stretch of the river bank is unprotected. We need to start dredging and work of river bank protection immediately. The ferry ghat had to be relocated from there," he mentioned.

Sixteen ferries, 82 launches and more than 400 speedboats operate on this route.

SpaceX-Nasa

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Crew Dragon will gradually raise its orbit for the next 27 hours through a series of onboard thruster firings, giving the astronauts time to eat pre-packaged dinners and roughly eight hours to rest before docking at the International Space Station at 11:00 pm eastern time on Monday.

An air leak caused an unexpected drop in capsule pressure less than two hours before launch, Nasa officials said. But technicians said they conducted a successful leak check, and the scheduled launch was still on.

The Resilience crew includes Hopkins and two fellow Nasa astronauts, mission pilot Victor Glover and physicist Shannon Walker. They were joined by Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi, making his third trip to space after previously flying on the U.S. shuttle in 2005 and Soyuz in 2009.

The 27-hour ride to the space station, an orbiting laboratory some 250 miles (400 km) above Earth, was originally scheduled to begin on Saturday. But the launch was postponed for a day due to forecasts of gusty winds - remnants of Tropical Storm Eta - that would have made a return landing for the Falcon 9's reusable booster stage difficult, NASA officials said.

Highest daily

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positive for Covid-19 in the country. Since then, the daily infection count had been decreasing gradually.

Against yesterday's 15,768 tests conducted in 115 labs across the country, the positivity rate was 13.57 percent, while the overall positivity rate stood at 16.99 percent.

At least 1,604 Covid-19 patients recovered in the same 24 hours.

With this, the total number of recoveries rose to 3,51,146, while the recovery rate stood at 80.82 percent.

Among yesterday's 21 deceased, 15 were males and six females. Twenty of them died in hospitals, said the release.

One was aged between 51 and 60, six were between 41 and 50, and the rest were above 60 years, added the release.

For a month, experts, as well as policymakers, had been speculating further spike of Covid-19 infections ahead of the cold weather. Many countries across Europe and America have already imposed virus curb measures in the face of the second wave of coronavirus infection.

Against this backdrop, the government has recently announced a "no mask, no service" policy in all public and private organisations. The announcement, however, has remained a mere announcement except for a few initiatives in some places.

Yesterday, the cabinet decided that measures would be taken soon so that people wear facemasks in the capital.

JS body

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triggered by a viral video footage of a woman being tortured and gang-raped in Noakhali's Begumganj.

At least 975 women were raped across the country in the last nine months and 161 of the incidents took place last month alone, according to a report by rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra.

Several organisations, including Feminists Across Generations, advocated that death penalty was not the solution.

According to the Article 9 (3) of the existing law, if a woman falls victim to gage-rape and gets injured or dies, the punishment is the death penalty or life imprisonment for each rapist.

The latest bill also proposes changes to sub-articles 11 (Ga) and 20 (7) of the existing law.

Any simple injury for dowry will be a compoundable offence (the complainant can drop the charge) in accordance with the article 11 (Ga) of the proposed law.

In the article 20 (7) of the bill, the Children Act, 2013 has been incorporated in place of Children Act, 1974 to follow the latest law as much as possible during the trial of any crime committed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act-2000 in case any child commits or witnesses such crime.

The trial of rape cases shall be completed by 180 days at Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunals according to the existing law.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo participates in a wreath-laying ceremony in homage to victims of terrorism at Les Invalides in Paris, France, yesterday. Pompeo arrived in Paris Saturday at the start of a seven-nation trip to US allies.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Govt to spend

FROM PAGE 12

According to the meteorological department, the country saw the second longest spell of flooding this year since 1998, when floods lasted 63 days.

This time, the duration of floods was 61 days -- from July 27 to September 30. The prolonged floods damaged many roads, bridges and culverts.

Project documents mention that floods hit 182 upazilas of 28 districts in Rangpur, Rajshahi, Khulna, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sylhet and Chattogram divisions. All these areas will be covered under the project.

Moreover, the country witnessed around 50 percent more rainfall in the first nine months of this year, compared to the average rainfall in the corresponding period in the last 30 years.

Meteorological department data shows that on average, 363.621 millimetres of rainfall was recorded in the country between January and September.

The project documents say heavy rains damaged roads, bridges and culverts in 139 upazilas of 22 districts in Rajshahi, Khulna, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Chattogram divisions. The project will cover these areas.

The LGED prepared the project, incorporating data from public representatives across the country.

Under the project, 6,148 km roads across the country will be repaired.

Besides, 78 km of RCC (roller-compacted concrete) roads will be repaired, and 268 bridges (4,631.85 metres) and 239 culverts (692.37 metres) will be reconstructed.

Trees will be planted on both sides of 328 km roads under the project, say the documents.

Vetting the project, the Planning Commission observed that it will play an important role in fixing rural infrastructure damaged by the cyclone, floods and heavy rains, and also help boost economic activities in these districts.

Four more development projects involving over Tk 2,600 crore are likely to be placed at today's Ecnec meeting. The project areas are in Gaibandha, Barishal, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi, Khulna and Jamalpur. All those will be implemented with the government's own funds.

War hero Shawkat Ali no more

FROM PAGE 1

He was admitted to the hospital on October 29 with pneumonia.

He was put on life support on November 5, Udoy Shawkat Ali, grandson of the former military official, told The Daily Star.

Shawkat left behind his wife, two sons, a daughter and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

He was in jail for 13 months as an accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case before the country's independence.

During the autocratic regime of late military ruler HM Ershad, he had been behind bars for 16 months -- from May 1982 to September 1983.

He was also jailed in 2003 during the tenure of the then BNP-Jamaat government.

On February 23, 2011, he told parliament the charges brought against them in the Agartala Conspiracy Case were true.

He also said they had formed Sangram Parishad under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for secession of East Pakistan from Pakistan and the case actually laid the foundation of the country's independence.

Shawkat said as part of the plan called "Agartala Plot", navy steward Mujibur Rahman and educationist Mohammad Ali Reza went to Agartala to seek India's support for the independence of Bangladesh.

He was a captain in the Pakistan Army in 1968 when he was accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case. He was accused No-26 among the total 35.

He was supposed to be tried by court martial, but the then Pakistan government felt it would benefit more from a civil trial. However, the case was withdrawn the following year amid public protest.

Shawkat was forced to retire from Pakistan Army in 1969.

The Agartala Conspiracy Case, which had set a new course in the history of the country's independence struggle, was filed in early 1968 implicating Bangabandhu as the prime accused and 34 other Bangalee civil servants, army, navy and air force officers and politicians over "hatching a plot".

The case ultimately resulted in the fall of Gen Ayub Khan in 1969 and subsequently led the nation towards the 1971 Liberation War.

Shawkat was reinstated into the army after the formation of the Bangladesh Forces in 1971 to fight the Liberation War.

The valiant freedom fighter was forced to retire the second time when he was a colonel in 1975 working as the director of Ordnance Services following the assassination of Bangabandhu.

Shawkat was elected MP from Shariatpur-2 six times. He was elected unanimously the deputy speaker of the ninth parliament on 25 January 2009, following a landslide victory of the Awami League.

He was also a lawyer registered with the Supreme Court.

Shawkat had completed his LLB from University of Dhaka in 1958 before he joined the Pakistan Army as a commissioned officer the following year.

CONDOLENCES

Condolences poured in after his demise yesterday. President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages expressed deep shock at the death of the veteran politician.

Hamid in his message said, "Despite being a military officer, the courageous role he had played for the freedom of the country putting his life at risk is really unparalleled."

The premier in her message said, "With his death, the country has lost a veteran leader of the masses and I myself lost a trusted colleague of Bangabandhu's ideal."

Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad, Law Minister Anisul Haq, Health Minister Zahid Maleque, Expatriates Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad, Industries Minister Nurul Majid Mahmud Humayun, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, Planning Minister MA Mannan, Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee and top leaders of different political and socio-cultural organisations, distinguished personalities expressed their condolences at Shawkat's death.

BURIAL

People from all walks of life paid tributes to the valiant freedom fighter at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital around 3:30pm yesterday.

After Maghrib prayers, his first namaz-e-janaza was held at the Baitul Mukarram national mosque.

His body will be flown to Naria of Shariatpur by an armed forces helicopter around 10:00am today.

Later, Shawkat's body will be taken to Naria Shaheed Minar where people from all strata of society will pay their respect to him.

His second namaz-e-janaza will be held at the ground of Naria BL High School after Johr prayers today before his burial at his village home in Naria.

Moderna vaccine

FROM PAGE 12

Moderna's interim analysis was based on 95 infections among trial participants who received either a placebo or the vaccine. Of those, only five infections occurred in those who received the vaccine, which is administered in two shots 28 days apart.

"Having more than one source of an effective vaccine will increase the global supply and, with luck, help us all to get back to something like normal sometime in 2021," said Eleanor Riley, professor of immunology and infectious disease at the University of Edinburgh.

Moderna expects to have enough safety data required for US authorization in the next week or so and the company expects to file for emergency use authorization (EUA) in the coming weeks.

A key advantage of Moderna's vaccine is that it does not need ultra-cold storage like Pfizer's, making it easier to distribute. Moderna expects it to be stable at normal fridge temperatures of 2 to 8 degrees Celsius (36 to 48°F) for 30 days and it can be stored for up to 6 months at -20C.

Pfizer's vaccine must be shipped and stored at -70C, the sort of temperature typical of an Antarctic winter. It can be stored for up to five days at standard refrigerator temperatures or for up to 15 days in a thermal shipping box.

Another drugmaker Sanofi also said their vaccine also won't need to be super-cooled.

"Our vaccine will be like the 'flu vaccine, you can keep it in your refrigerator," the Paris-based drugmaker's France chief Olivier Bogillot told the CNews channel. "This will be an advantage for some countries," he added.

The Sanofi vaccine, one of many in development, will be available for distribution next June, Bogillot added.

While the breakthroughs open a chink of light at the end of the tunnel, experts caution there are still difficult and dangerous months ahead.

"A vaccine on its own will not end the pandemic," warned World Health Organization head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Supply will initially be limited to health care workers and other vulnerable populations, which could offer major help to hospital systems but will "still leave the virus with a lot of room to move," he said.

Marriott hotel construction in Bandarban against laws

FROM PAGE 12

of the cultural norms acknowledged by this country's constitution and the CHT Regulation 1900, Bandarban Hill District Council Act 1989 and CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001, said the statement.

"There is no scope to construct such private, profit-making ventures under these laws," it added.

Such a corporate venture is a threat to the existence of the local culture, heritage and ecosystem, said the citizens, adding that they want the project cancelled.

"The Mro protesters are being threatened," the statement said.

"Instead of listening to the legitimate demands of the Mro community, R&R Holding Ltd has begun razing the hills, obstructing the people from reaching their burial places, water sources as well as their sacred stones and trees.

"The hotel and the traffic it will pose a security concern for the women of the community, and their lifestyle," it said.

"On top of that, taking up space for a resort will further decrease the already shrinking space for jhum farming.

"Representatives of R&R Holding Ltd gave several interviews to the media stating that they are doing the project with the permission of the district commission. This would make this project illegal, because the commission cannot hand over ownership of the land to any party without the explicit permission of the community and the mouza headman.

"We demand that all economic activities, including tourism that is not sanctioned by the community, be stopped immediately. We also demand that the land grabbers be evicted."

The statement was signed by, among others, Professor Emeritus of University of Dhaka (DU) Dr Serajul Islam Choudhury, eminent human rights activist Sultana Kamal, Dr Hameeda Hossain, Coordinator of Nijera Kori Khushi Kabir, executive chair of Power and Participation Research Centre Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, trustee of Gonoshasthaya Kendra Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, former governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr Salahuddin Ahmed. Distinguished Fellows at Centre for Policy Dialogue Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Dr Mustafizur Rahman, Chief Executive of Transparency International Bangladesh Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation Shaheen Anam, Professor of economics at Jahangirnagar University Dr Anu Muhammad and Dr MM Akash at DU, Professor Meghna Guhathakurata, Professor Amena Mahsin, Chakma Raja Barrister Devasish Roy, Chief Executive of Gonoshakkhorota Ovijan Rashida K Chowdhury, Secretary of Shujan Dr Badiul Alam Majumdar, Naripokkho member Shireen Huq, eminent Jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik, writer Rahnuma Ahmed, photojournalist Shahidul Alam, Executive Director of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit Dr CR Abrar, Chief Executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Executive Director of Coast Trust Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Barrister Sara Hossain, Executive Director of Bangladesh Indigenous Forum Sanjeeb Drong, President of the Bandarban chapter of Chittagong Hill Tracts Forest and Land Rights Protection Committee Juamlian Amlai, and President of CHT Citizens' Committee Gautam Dewan.

Workers to get regularised, recruited

FROM PAGE 12

according to media reports.

"The government is expected to make RM 95 million from compounds and other payments that undocumented migrants and employers will pay," reported The Star, quoting Malaysia Home Minister Hamzah Zainudin.

Migrant worker Abdul Kuddus said many Bangladeshi undocumented workers face different difficulties in and outside their workplaces in the Southeast Asian country.

"You can't move freely and you can't even sleep well when you are undocumented," he said.

Kuddus, who is currently stuck at home because of the pandemic, said he was an undocumented worker before he got regularised under an amnesty programme in 2016.

During crackdowns on undocumented foreign workers by Malaysian police, they flee their workplaces and sometimes have to spend nights in the woods, he added.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, Malaysia has hired about 10.57 lakh Bangladeshi workers since 1978.

The exact number of Bangladeshis living without legal papers in Malaysia is unknown.

Asked, Zahirul Islam, labour welfare counsellor at Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, could not tell how many of them are expected to avail the latest opportunities.

Last year, about 53,000 Bangladeshi undocumented workers obtained legal status and returned home under Malaysian government's Back for Good programme, said the labour welfare official.

Zahirul said the high commission was yet to formally receive the programme details from the Malaysian authorities.

Malaysian Home Minister Hamzah Zainudin was quoted as saying on Thursday that under the latest Repatriation Recalibration Plan, the migrants can volunteer to return to their homeland, subject to certain conditions.

The migrants and employers who wish to participate in either programme are to deal directly with the Immigration Department and the Peninsular Malaysia Labour Department, the minister added.

New pay scales on December 16

FROM PAGE 12

introduced new pay scales to suit individual officers who served their purposes.

The new pay scales will confer greatest benefits upon low-paid government employees, particularly the present class four and class three employees. Upon the new arrangement, the maximum pay of class one senior officials may not exceed Tk 2,400 per month while the present class four employees will draw a minimum of Tk 200 per month, including allowances.

WICKMAN CALLS ON BANGABANDHU

The Swedish Foreign Minister Krishter Wickman, who is now visiting Bangladesh, calls on Bangabandhu today at the Gono Bhaban. They discuss bilateral matters during the meeting. It may be mentioned that the official level talks between the foreign minister of Bangladesh and Sweden begin today at the State Guest House in Dhaka.

HUNGARIAN RAILWAY CARRIAGES FOR BANGLADESH

The Hungarian wagon and machine building factory will supply Bangladesh 27 special railway carriages equipped with highly efficient ventilators. Hungary will fulfil the order by December 20, 1972 so that the railway carriages can be supplied to Bangladesh as quickly as possible.

SOURCES: November 18, 1972 issues of Bangladesh Observer, Dainik Bangla and Dainik Ittefaq.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Memo No. 22.04.0000.037.21.000.2020-674 Date: 16-11-2020

e-Tender Notice

Re-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following goods.

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package Reference No.	Description	Tender/proposal last selling date & time	Tender/proposal opening date & time
01	513110	Package: GD14A	Procurement of Small Equipment for Research	29 Nov. 2020 at 16.00pm	01 Dec. 2020 at 12.00pm

The other necessary information for submission of e-Tender is as follows:

a) This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
b) Registration of interested tenderers with the National e-GP Portal is a must for the submission of tender.
c) The required fees have to be deposited in the registered bank through online system for downloading the e-Tender documents.

The interested tenderers may visit National e-GP (http://eprocure.gov.bd) and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) for further information and guidelines.

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