



People enjoy an attraction at the Happy Valley amusement park on New Year's Day, following the coronavirus disease outbreak, in Wuhan, Hubei province, China yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

UK enters new era

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"Our Future. Our Britain. Our Destiny," said the headline.

The pro-EU Independent was less sure: "Off the hook -- or cut adrift?" it asked, reflecting widespread uncertainty at the path the country had now chosen.

Whether the United Kingdom will even stay united was also exercising minds as the pro-EU Scottish National Party steps up calls for a second referendum on independence.

"It's a very sad day. Brexit puts a barrier in between my ability to be Scottish and my ability to be British," retiree Bruce Borthwick told AFP in Edinburgh.

PRACTICAL CHANGES
The Road Haulage Association, an industry body, estimates that some 220 million forms will now need to be filled in every year to comply with the new rules for transporting goods to and from mainland Europe, including permits to even drive on the roads leading to ports like Dover.

Ferry group Stena Line tweeted yesterday that six freight loads bound for EU member Ireland were turned away at Holyhead port in north Wales for not having the correct paperwork.

Practical changes include how long Britons can visit their holiday homes on the continent, to travel with pets, and an end to British involvement in an EU student programme.

Holidaymakers and business travellers used to seamless EU travel could face delays, although fears Britons will have to get international permits to drive in Europe were averted by a separate accord.

British fishermen are disgruntled at a compromise in the free trade agreement to allow continued access for EU boats in British waters, which has raised fears of clashes at sea.

The key financial services sector also faces an anxious wait to learn on what basis it can keep dealing with Europe, after being largely omitted from the trade deal along with services in general, which account for 80 percent of Britain's economy.

In Northern Ireland, the border with Ireland will be closely watched to ensure movement is unrestricted -- key to a 1998 peace deal that ended 30 years of violence over British rule.

'UNKNOWN OPPORTUNITIES'
Despite the uncertainty, Prime Minister Boris Johnson is bullish

optimistic, writing in yesterday's Daily Telegraph that Brexit presented "opportunities unknown to modern memory."

He said "the world has changed out of all recognition, and so has the UK" since the country joined the European Common Market in 1973.

"We need to keep pace with developments on the west coast of America and in the Pearl River delta," he added.

"We need the Brexit-given chance to turbo-charge those sectors in which we excel."

Divisions over Brexit, both political and social, remain deep and are likely to last for years, despite a muted end to the saga overshadowed by the global health crisis.

Opinion polls indicate that most Britons want to move on and are far more worried about the worsening coronavirus pandemic, which has left more than 73,500 dead in Britain alone.

Johnson, who survived several days in intensive care with Covid last April, warned of tough times ahead but said a UK-developed vaccine offered grounds for hope.

Columnists' Forum starts journey

City Desk

Bangladesh Columnists' Forum (BCF) -- a platform of senior journalists, academics, researchers and economists specialising in commentaries on contemporary issues of national and global nature -- began its journey yesterday, says a press release.

Renowned journalist and biographer Syed Badrul Ahsan has been made its convener and prominent legal economist and columnist MS Siddiqui co-convener.

Reputed economic affairs analyst and columnist Md Mazdul Hoque is in the ad hoc committee of BCF as a member secretary, adds the release signed by Badrul Ahsan.

Resist bid to foil

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of the war-ravaged economy of the country. He asks the workers to produce more in the mills and factories and the farmers to increase yields in the field.

Bangabandhu further declares that any act of communalism would not be allowed to crop up on the soil of Bangladesh.

TOTAL HARTAL IN CITY

The life in the capital comes to a standstill today as response to the call for nine-hour hartal was enthusiastic and complete. The call for hartal was given separately by a number of organisations to protest yesterday's police firing which claimed two young lives.

Source: January 3, 1973 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Bangladesh Observer and Ittefaq.

BCL leader shot

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when he got shot. Hearing gunshots, locals rushed to the scene and took him to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex where doctors pronounced him dead.

Doctor Ayub Hossain said Osman had been shot three times.

His body was sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Police are looking for the suspects, said Mohammad Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station.

Covid cases lower

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cases, the number of recoveries was also higher in December than in November.

Over 76,000 people recovered last month, up from 56,566 in November.

Meanwhile, 17 more people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours ending 8:00am yesterday, according to a DGHS press release.

The total number of deaths was 7,576 and the death rate 1.47 percent.

At least 990 new infections were recorded in the meantime, taking the total number of people infected people to 5,14,500.

The current positivity rate is 8.18 percent, while the total positivity rate stands at 15.88 percent.

Some 12,103 samples were tested across the country during the same 24-hour period.

At least 1,197 Covid-19 patients recovered during this period.

The total number of recoveries stood at 4,58,656 and the recovery rate at 89.15 percent.

Of the 17 deceased, 10 were men and seven women.

One of them was aged between 41 and 50, four were aged between 51 and 60, and 12 were above 60 years old, the release said.

German govt at odds over armed drones

AFP, Berlin

Should the German army be equipped with killer drones? With less than a year to go before a general election, it's a question that has bitterly divided Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition government, testing Nato's patience.

German armed forces have so far only been allowed to use reconnaissance drones as part of military missions in Mali and Afghanistan, leaving it to other international partners to deploy armed drones.

In 2018, Germany signed a contract to lease five new Heron TP drones from Israeli manufacturer IAI with the initial purpose of using them only for surveillance, although they can be equipped with missiles if desired.

Merkel's conservatives and their centre-left Social Democratic (SPD) coalition partners agreed at the time that parliament would have the final say on any future arming of the drones.

Any kind of military action remains a sensitive issue in Germany, a nation scarred by its past as the instigator of two world wars.

But calls have also grown louder in recent years for Germany, as a major European country with considerable political and economic clout, to take on more international responsibility in matters of defence and security.

Merkel's CDU/CSU conservatives have backed arming the remote-control drones, along with some SPD members. The liberal FDP and far-

right AfD opposition parties are also in favour.

The opposition Greens and the far-left Die Linke are fiercely opposed.

The debate came to a head in mid-December when SPD co-leader Norbert Walter-Borjans and the chairman of SPD's parliamentary group, Rolf Muetzenich, unexpectedly spoke out against the arming of the unmanned aerial vehicles.

A vote in the German parliament has now been postponed indefinitely. "The line between defending the lives and limbs of our soldiers and killing with a joystick is very thin," Walter-Borjans said.

But the chairman of the prestigious annual Munich Security Conference, Wolfgang Ischinger, disagrees.

"What does a pilot (of a fighter plane) do, if not kill by joystick, by pressing a button 50 kilometres away, without seeing his target, and firing an air-to-ground missile?"

Muetzenich said he wants a comprehensive ethical debate on "automated killing" by the Bundeswehr armed forces, which he says half of Germans oppose.

"It disturbs me that almost only the military -- those responsible for armaments and defence -- have a say, but never doctors or Church representatives," he said.

Andre Wuestner, the head of Germany's armed forces union, said there had been several years "of discussions on five, I stress, five armed drones".

51 eminent citizens

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The Daily Star has not been able to independently verify whether Kalam was sent to jail.

The case in which Kalam has been accused was filed by Kutupalong Camp-in-charge Khalilur Rahman on June 1 last year, according to the first information report.

It said the accused assaulted officials and obstructed public servants from discharging their duties.

Khalilur Rahman's phone was found switched off last night.

The statement issued yesterday read, "On the morning of December 28, 2020, Abul Kalam, an award-winning photographer and Rohingya refugee, set out to take photographs of buses departing the Kutupalong camps for Bhasan Char. He was apprehended and then taken to the camp-in-charge of Kutupalong Registered Camp."

The signatories to the statement include Dr C R Abrar, executive director, Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit at the University of Dhaka; renowned photographer Shahidul Alam; Sara Hossain, honorary executive director, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust; Dr Ambia Perveen, chair, European Rohingya Council; Professor Dina M Siddiqi, Faculty of Liberal Studies, New York University;

Shireen Huq, coordinator, Standing with Rohingya Women, and founding member of Naripokkho; Ai Weiwei, Chinese contemporary artist and activist; and Bianca Jagger, a Council of Europe goodwill ambassador.

"Photography is not a crime. Abul Kalam was taking photographs of buses on their way to Bhasan Char. He was doing so in a public place, albeit in a refugee camp. The relocation to Bhasan Char is a widely publicised programme of the Bangladesh government. It is by no means a secret and has been extensively covered in the media," said the statement.

The statement said Abul Kalam has been a refugee in Bangladesh for 28 years.

"Abul Kalam is 35 years old. He originally came from Borgobdil, Maungdaw, Myanmar. He is a prolific photographer and has documented refugee life in recent years. His images have appeared in many publications, and he recently won two prizes in the Rohingya Photography Competition," said the statement.

"We call upon the authorities to release Abul Kalam unconditionally and without further delay," the statement said.

The case in which he was accused was filed against 10 named and 30-40 unnamed Rohingya refugees.

The forwarding letter presented to the court shows Kalam is one of those unnamed accused.

Two 'JMB members'

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said they detained the duo in the upazila's Shahbajpur Uttarpar area.

They were detained before they managed to implement their plan of carrying out anti-state and subversive activities on important civil establishments in the area, a press release from Rab read.

Rab also claimed to have seized documents on extremism including two books, two scripts, four leaflets

as well as two cell phones and three pages of printed short messages from the detainees.

During primary interrogation, the detainees admitted of campaigning on extremism through distributing leaflets and via cell phone in Sarail and other areas, claimed Rab.

ASP Belayet Hossain, squad commander of Rab-14's Bhairab camp, said a case was filed against the detainees with Sarail Police Station.

The poor suffer

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government organisations distributed blankets and warm clothes among those in need. However, it was inadequate against the demand.

Nur Kutubul Alam, additional deputy commissioner of Thakurgaon, said about 12,000 blankets were distributed among distressed people of five upazilas in the district.

Besides, each UNO has been allocated Tk 6 lakh to distribute blankets and quilts among poor people.

Agricultural activities are also being hampered due to the bad weather as farm workers cannot spend sufficient time at their crop fields due to the temperature.

Habib Mohammad Ahsanur Rahman, a farmer who cultivates potato on a large scale, told the Daily Star, the production cost is going higher than estimated as the weather is yet to improve.

If such adverse weather continues, it would be tough to protect potato plants from different diseases like late blight.

Contacted, Aftab Ahmed, deputy director of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Thakurgaon, said the agriculture officials asked farmers to take measures to protect plants.

"If farmers follow the directions, their crops will not be affected much," he added.

First ferry docks in France after Britain exits single market

AFP, Calais

The first ferry from Britain bound for Calais after the UK's exit from the EU customs union docked in the northern French port yesterday, with three dozen vehicles disembarking in a smooth operation, an AFP correspondent said.

The Pride of Kent of P&O Ferries docked in Calais at 0915 GMT, hours after Britain left the customs union and single market in the final act of Brexit.

There had been no ferries earlier in the day due to the New Year. Under the rules of the so-called "smart border" implemented by French authorities to minimise queues, hauliers send information on their freight in advance with disembarking traffic either waved through or told to stop for further checks.

Of the 36 trucks disembarking from the Pride of Kent, which left from the British port of Dover, three were told to stop for additional checks, the AFP correspondent said.

Calais port president Jean-Marc

Puisseuseau said Thursday that officials were relaxed about the new arrangements after carrying out dry runs and investing 13 million euros (\$15.6 million).

Some 70 percent of trade between Britain and the EU passes through the French ports of Calais and Dunkirk. On average, 60,000 passengers and 12,000 trucks pass through daily.

Justice

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Days after Soleimani's killing, Iran launched a volley of missiles at Iraqi bases housing US and other coalition troops, with Trump refraining from any further military response.

The Iranian leadership has called the strikes a "slap" and vowed that "severe revenge" awaits.

Soleimani's successor, Esmail Qaani, warned during yesterday's event that it may come from anywhere.

"It's even possible that there are people inside your home (the United States) that will respond to your crime," he said.

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GULSHAN 2 RD. 79 NEXT ITALIAN NEAR OTHER EMBASSIES, 2600 SFT 4 BED 4 BATH, LARGE DRAWING / DINING UPTODATE AMENITIES. Contact # 01713171369

Rogue squirrels attacking New Yorkers in Queens

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The city's health department advised residents in a statement "to hire a New York State licensed trapper."

"Squirrels and many other small rodents are rarely found to be infected with rabies," the health department said, telling residents to report any animal they spot that seems infected to local authorities.

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 8181658-61, 8181664-69; Fax: 8181678; Website: http://www.pksf-bd.org

e-Tender Notice for Goods
PKSF invites in the following e-Tender in the national e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the following packages

Tender ID No.	Package No and Description of Goods	Date & Time
530200	PKSF/ENRICH/GD-1 Procurement of Albendazole under ENRICH program of PKSF	Publication 30-12-2020
530214	PKSF/ENRICH/GD-2 Procurement of Carbonyl Iron 50mg + folic acid 0.50mg + zinc sulphate monohydrate 61.8mg/capsule under ENRICH program of PKSF	19:00 PM
530854	PKSF/ENRICH/GD-3 Procurement Calcium Carbonate under ENRICH program of PKSF	Closing/Opening 27-01-2021
530859	PKSF/ENRICH/GD-4 Procurement of Micronutrient Powder (1 gm dry powder contain: Vitamin-A,C,D,E,B1,B2,Niacin,Pyridoxine,B12, Folic Acid; Mineral - Iron, Copper, Selenium, Iodine) Manufacturing facility should have appeared by UNICEF for MNP under ENRICH program of PKSF	& 12:00 PM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

Md. Ziauddin Iqbal
Senior General Manager (Admin)

Zila Parishad, Pabna
www.zppabna.gov.bd

Memo no: 46.00.7600.002.14.029.19. 406 (300)

Date: 30-12-2020

e-Tender Notice 08/2019-2020 (OSTETM)

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of under mentioned work

Sl. No	Tender ID	Name of Work	Package No.	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1	524312	Construction of 1000 Seats Auditorium Cum Multipurpose Hall at Zila Parishad, Pabna.	e-Tender 08/ZPP/2019-2020/ W-27	01.02.2021 12:00	02.02.2021 13:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 16:00 pm on Date: 01.02.2021.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

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