

**BANGLADESH  
UPDATE**

**890**  
New cases in 24hrs

**5,24,910**  
Total cases

**7,833**  
Deaths

**4,69,522**  
Recoveries

**GLOBAL  
UPDATE**

**1,979,334**  
Deaths

**92,441,754**  
Total cases

# BGB stops BSF move to build border fence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) has stopped installation of a barbed wire fence along the zero line of the Fultala-Batulji border in Moulvibazar's Juri upazila following objections of Border Guard Bangladesh.

He claimed that the BSF did not follow the international rule that no fence could be installed within 150 yards of the zero line. This created tension between the two sides, he said. Later in the day, the BSF stopped installation of the fence after a flag meeting between BGB and BSF.

# Pompeo's remarks irresponsible

Foreign ministry says refuting claim Al-Qaeda carried out attacks in Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has termed Washington's remarks linking terrorist group Al-Qaeda with Bangladesh irresponsible and unfounded.

of any presence of Al-Qaeda in Bangladesh, it said. "Such irresponsible comments by a senior leader is very unfortunate and unacceptable," the foreign ministry said.

In a statement on January 12 on the US state department's website, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said, "Imagine too the potential to completely upend fragile places with an established Al-Qaeda presence like Libya, Yemen, and the Maghreb, or increase turmoil in places like Bangladesh, where Al-Qaeda cells have carried out attacks."

# 'He must go'

FROM PAGE 1

toward impeaching the president for his role in the Jan. 6 siege. The source said no final decision has been reached on the timing of Senate action.

19, only a day before Democratic President-elect Joe Biden is due to be sworn in.

Trump's supporters on Jan. 6 breached the building's security, sent lawmakers fleeing and left five dead in their wake, including a police officer. The mob interrupted the formal certification of Biden's victory in the Nov. 3 election.

Republican congressman Jim Jordan, a prominent Trump ally who led his party's opposition to the first Democratic-led impeachment in 2019, accused Democrats of pursuing an impeachment drive that he said began soon after Trump's inauguration in 2016.

Pelosi said Trump has engaged in a "war on democracy," and that the "insurrectionists" and "domestic terrorists" who stormed the Capitol were "sent here by the president."

Democrats, including Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, have pressured McConnell to agree to bring the Senate back sooner under emergency circumstances and the source noted that the Senate has already scheduled a normally sparsely attended "prof forma" session tomorrow.

Some Republicans made speeches earlier in the day urging the House not to impeach Trump in the interest in promoting national healing.

The New York Times reported that McConnell is said to be pleased by the House impeachment push.

# HC calls it 'naked interference'

FROM PAGE 1

The short verdict was delivered on December 10 and the full text yesterday.

body. More so, it has already been noticed that as per mandate of section 10(4) of the Act of 1958 [Criminal Law Amendment Act], the Anti-Corruption Commission is the only authorised body to withdraw from the prosecution against any person either generally or in respect of any one or more offences under the Act of 2004 or the Act of 1958," it said.

The Sylhet court also exempted the accused from the case proceedings.

"Thus, it is patent that the government has nothing to do in respect of withdrawal of a case filed under the Act of 2004 or the Act of 1958. Be that as it may, if the government wants to withdraw a case pending before the Court of Special Judge, in that event it can only make a request or express its pious wish to the commission and if the government makes such a request, the commission is free to decide indifferently whether it would consider such request or proposal of the government or not," the HC judges said.

The government reportedly recommended withdrawal of over 7,000 criminal cases filed before the Awami League assumed power.

Deputy Attorney General Sarwar Hossain Bappi refused to make any comment on the HC observation.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Frontline health workers collecting samples from a boy to get him tested for coronavirus. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon at the outdoor section of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital. Many of the employees contracted the virus, recovered and returned to the testing process over the months.

# Confusion reigns over vaccine price

FROM PAGE 1

will understandably be less ... When they would sell it, they would add their expenditure with the profit," he said. "We cannot expect that we will get [the vaccine] at the price same as their production cost. But we will look into at what price vaccines are being sold in the international market. We will try to control the price at which we will get the vaccines.

was signed publicly and claimed that everything written on the papers had already been made public. "The agreement does not have any hidden clause."

"Many countries, not one or two, will provide vaccines. If one country charges more, we will try to go for another country. We have that option," Mustafa Kamal said.

Each jab, however, will cost the government \$5 as it will have to pay Beximco in service charges and for transporting the vaccines to the government vaccination centres.

will be the final price. Because India bought each shot at 200 rupees in the first phase and it might go up to 250 rupees," he added.

# Govt mulls allowing human trial

FROM PAGE 1

of its vaccine candidate and is likely to submit a proposal to Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC) within days for conducting first-stage human trial, say its officials.

another 6.8 crore shots from global initiative called COVAX.

immunity, they said.

There are three stages of human trial of a vaccine.

At a recent discussion, a number of experts said it is uncertain how long the vaccines approved so far will give immunity. Besides, if the novel coronavirus mutates regularly like the influenza virus, there may be a need for regular vaccination.

According to the New York Times Coronavirus Vaccine Tracker, eight vaccines, including that of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Oxford-AstraZeneca, have so far been approved by the US, the UK and several other countries for emergency use.

# 14 more die, 890 get Covid

UNB, Dhaka

With 890 new Covid-19 patients detected in the 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday, the total number of infections in the country rose to 524,910.

As per the latest data, the daily infection rate dropped to 5.66 percent. The country recorded 8.29 percent infection rate on January 10, 7.52 percent on January 4, and 8.18 percent on January 1.

CASE UNDER DSA

# Baul singer Rita Dewan granted ad interim bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday granted ad interim bail to Baul singer Rita Dewan in connection with a case filed for "hurting religious sentiment" under the Digital Security Act.

Dhaka Cyber Tribunal Judge Mohammad Ash Sams Joglul Hossain granted bail to Rita till January 27 after she was produced before the court, seeking bail in the case, Shamim Al Mamun, bench assistant of the tribunal, told The Daily Star.

On February 2 last year, lawyer Imrul Hasan filed the case against Rita with the cyber tribunal. There were three other cases filed against Rita in Dhaka, Chattogram and Jhenidah, said Rita's lawyer Abdullah Al Noman.

This means even though Rita received ad interim bail in one case yesterday, she will still need to get bail in two other cases.

The probe report details that Rita was doing a "Pala Gaan" session with fellow artiste Shah Alam Sarkar, where the topic being debated was "Living Beings versus The Greatest". The event was held on the night of December 10, 2019, at Shahjahan's house in Tangail's Kalihati upazila.

Shahjahan and Iqbal had uploaded Rita's songs to their YouTube channels, according to the case documents.

On January 1 last year, complainant Imrul was at home when he came across the video on social media.

Following the filing of the lawsuit, Rita, along with her two daughters, had posted another video on social media apologising for "causing hurt".

# France court probes minister for conflict of interest

AFP, Paris

A French court has launched an investigation into Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti for alleged conflict of interest relating to his time as a lawyer, prosecutors told AFP yesterday.

# US military leaders issue

FROM PAGE 1

While a number of Trump's cabinet members including acting Defense Secretary Chris Miller condemned the storming of the top US general, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley, was silent until now.

President-elect Joe Biden would be inaugurated on Jan. 20 and become their commander in chief.

On Twitter, the head of US forces in South Korea said that what happened occurred in Washington DC on Wednesday was an "attempted insurrection."