



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

www.thedailystar.net

Your Right to Know

JAMADIU SANI 5, 1442 HIJRI

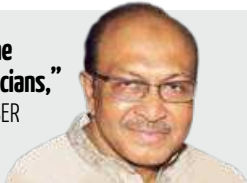
16 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE PRICE : Tk12.00



"This could delay Covax deliveries and create exactly the scenario Covax was designed to avoid, with hoarding, a chaotic market..."
WHO CHIEF TEDROS ADHANOM ON VACCINE NATIONALISM



"Bureaucrats should not cross the line drawn for them... They are not politicians,"
PROF SYED MODASSER ALI, FORMER ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER



"I think we can't just be a team that plays spinners all the time... I can't see myself playing an ODI without three seamers."
BANGLADESH HEAD COACH RUSSELL DOMINGO AHEAD OF THE HOME SERIES AGAINST THE WEST INDIES PAGE 11



Similar projects, different stories

A poorly planned project to build bridges to cost Tk 2,530cr more while a well-managed bridge project to save Tk 1,464cr public money

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

In 2017, the government took up a four-and-a-half-year project, worth over Tk 3,900 crore, to construct bridges in rural areas for boosting agricultural and non-agricultural production as well as sending the produce to the market easily.

Strangely, officials of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) did not carry out any feasibility study on about 100 of 130 bridges to be built.

All the bridges were supposed to open to the public by June this year, but LGED officials now seek an extension of three years to complete the work. They have also proposed increasing the cost by Tk 2,530 crore.

There are, however, cases which are completely different.

Take for example, the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) undertook an eight-and-a-half-year-project, involving around Tk 8,400 crore, in April 2013 to increase traffic volume on the Dhaka-Chattogram National Highway and establish uninterrupted road communications with the capital.

The project is almost over, and RHD

PROJECT ON 130 BRIDGES
Estimated cost was Tk 3,926cr
Now increases to Tk 6,457cr

PROJECT ON THREE BRIDGES
Estimated cost was Tk 8,486cr
Now decreases to Tk 7,022cr

officials have sought an extension of only three months. Besides, the project cost has been proposed to be lowered by Tk 1,464 crore.

Project officials attributed this success to proper feasibility study, management and efficient implementation.

This might indicate how time and public money can be saved if projects are handled properly, they said.

The Local Government Division is likely to place a proposal on the first revision of the "Construction of Important Bridges on Rural Roads" project and the RHD is set to place the first revision proposal of the "Kanchpur, Meghna and Gumti 2nd

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Six-year-old Maria waits for people to buy flowers from her in TSC area of Dhaka University. Having lost her father when she was one and a half years old, Maria helps her mother, a vendor, earn their livelihood by toiling on the streets of DU campus. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

World facing 'catastrophic' moral failure

Says WHO chief on distribution of Covid vaccines

AFP, Geneva

The world is on the "brink of a catastrophic moral failure" if rich countries hog Covid-19 vaccine doses while the poorest suffer, the head of the WHO said yesterday.

World Health Organization director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus denounced the "me-first" attitude of wealthy nations and also blasted vaccine manufacturers for chasing regulatory approval in rich countries rather than submitting their data to the WHO to green-light vaccine use globally.

He said the promise of worldwide equitable access to vaccines against the coronavirus pandemic was now at serious risk, in a speech in Geneva opening a WHO executive board meeting.

Tedros said 39 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine had been administered so far in at least 49 higher income countries.

Meanwhile, "just 25 doses have been given in one lowest income country. Not 25 million; not 25,000; just 25," he said.

"I need to be blunt. The world is on the brink of a catastrophic moral failure -- and the price of this failure

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

India to send 20 lakh vaccine shots as gift

Expected to arrive tomorrow; first lot from Serum due on Jan 25-26; govt to provide treatment in case of adverse effect

MOUDDUD AHMED SUJAN

Bangladesh will receive 20 lakh doses of Covishield as a gift from India tomorrow, said a high official with knowledge of the development.

"India will send 20 lakh shots of Covishield as a gift to the Bangladesh government on January 20," said the official of the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), requesting not to be named.

These doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine made by Serum Institute of India are being given in addition to the three crore doses of the coveted coronavirus vaccine Bangladesh has bought from Serum at a rate of \$5 per shot.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday morning said, "We will get some additional vaccine doses as a gift from the Indian government. But I can't say how many doses will arrive. These may arrive before the first shipment arrives from Serum Institute."

DGDA officials held a meeting in the evening to discuss a letter the health ministry sent detailing the preparations needed before receiving the 20 lakh doses.

DGDA Director General Maj Gen Mahbubur Rahman chaired the meeting.

On November 5, the government signed a tripartite deal with the Serum Institute and its local agent Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd to procure three crore doses from Serum.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

16 more die, 697 infected with Covid in a day

UNB, Dhaka

A daily infection rate of 5.49% with 697 new cases were reported in the country till early yesterday.

An infection rate of 4.90% was recorded on January 14, 8.29% on January 10, 7.52% on January 4, and 8.18% on January 1.

Bangladesh has recorded 528,329 cases so far, while the country's number of fatalities rose to 7,922, since the first death from the virus on March 18, with a death rate of 1.50%. In the last 24 hours, 16 Covid-19 deaths were reported.

So far, 3,470,160 tests, including 12,707 new ones, have been conducted. The overall infection rate stood at 15.22%, said the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Practise tolerance, shun differences

President urges treasury, opposition parties in JS as new year session begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid yesterday said the opposition parties, alongside the ruling party, would have to play a constructive role in maintaining transparency, accountability, tolerance, human rights and rule of law.

Addressing the inaugural sitting of this year's first parliament session, he called upon all, irrespective of their status as treasury or opposition bench members, to play their due role in the Jatiya Sangsad.

"Let us all, irrespective of our religion-colour-caste, repay the debt of blood of millions of martyrs through establishing an exploitation-free society by shunning the differences of party, paths and opinion," Hamid said.

He said the Jatiya Sangsad is the focal point of all hopes and aspirations of the country's people. "I would like to make a clarion call to all political parties, and people, irrespective of classes and professions, to take a collective initiative for building consensus on democratisation, good governance and unhindered socioeconomic development."

The president said all have to work unitedly to eliminate corruption, drugs, terrorism and militancy from the country by upholding the spirit of Liberation War in order to build the "Sonar Bangla" dreamt by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

According to constitutional obligation, the president has to deliver his

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Vote for AL or else don't cast ballots

Bogura Swechchasebak League leader says at election camp

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

Bogura district Swechchasebak League President Sajedur Rahman Shaheen has said voters who would not cast their ballots for the Awami League mayoral candidate in the Gabtali municipality polls need not go to polling centres.

Sajedur, also the chairman of Kharna Union Parishad under Bogura's Shajahanpur upazila, was addressing a meeting at Darail Bazar on Saturday evening, marking the opening of an election campaign centre of AL mayoral nominee Mominul Haque Shilu.

The Daily Star has obtained a 2:14-minute video footage of his speech.

Speaking at the event as chief guest, Sajedur instructed the party men to bring leaders and activists of each Awami League unit and assign polling stations to them on the polling day

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Flirting with Danger... Taking a child on her lap and without wearing a helmet, a woman rides a motorcycle in the capital's Tejgaon area yesterday. Accidents involving motorcycles are quite common in the city. Yesterday morning, a couple was killed as a bus hit their motorcycle from behind on Airport Road.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Couple meet tragic end on way to work

Bus hits their motorbike from behind in capital



Akash Iqbal



Maya Hazarika

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Akash Iqbal and his wife Maya Hazarika were young millennials who were working hard to build a life in the city, but a bus ran over them and their dreams yesterday.

They were on their way to work on their motorbike when a bus of Ajmeri Glory Paribahan rammed them from behind.

The incident happened on Airport Road around 7:00am. When the bus hit their motorbike, the couple were thrown onto the highway and the bus driver, attempting to escape, drove the vehicle over Akash's head and Maya's torso, said Sub-inspector Imran Hossain, the case's investigation officer at Airport Police Station.

The couple, who have a five-year-old daughter, died on the spot.

Akash, 26, and Maya, 25, were on their way to work, informed their cousin Mizanur Rahman Mintu. The

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3