



# The Daily Star

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Your Right to Know

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**"Government organisations and departments are 'not serious enough' about curbing institutional corruption."**  
ACC CHAIRMAN IQBAL MAHMOOD



**"We shouldn't leave the streets until we succeed. We have to prove it not in words but in our actions."**  
BNP LEADER GAYESHWAR CHANDRA ROY  
ON FREEING PARTY CHIEF



**"I don't mean it as a criticism, just the reality -- he doesn't have a democratic, small D, bone in his body."**  
US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN ON CHINA'S XI

MASS VACCINATION

## Age bar brought down to 40 now

Govt does it to improve response; experts say limit needs to be lower

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA and MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

The government has allowed people aged 40 and above to register for inoculation against Covid-19 as only a fraction of the people eligible for the shots are responding to the campaign.

The original plan was to inoculate in the first phase people aged 55 and above along with those belonging to certain groups of professionals. After the new announcement, many aged just over 40 reported that they successfully registered for vaccination.

But some experts said the bar should be further lowered if the authorities wanted to make sure there were no risks of the purchased doses expiring before they could be utilised.

"We have to increase the numbers of registrations and inoculations. Otherwise, it will be a disaster," said a top official of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), wishing not to be named.

With 44,509 receiving the first shot of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine yesterday, the number of people vaccinated against Covid-19 reached 75,669 in the first two days of the campaign.

The numbers are quite underwhelming as the government had taken preparations to inoculate 3.60 lakh people a day.

In the last two days, a measly 2 percent of the first month's target of 35 lakh people had been reached. This target was also lowered from the original one of 60 lakh.

Over the last 11 days, around 5.12 lakh people have registered on www.surokkha.gov.bd.

The government's plan was to begin administering the second dose after two months, but this plan was also changed to one month.

"Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the cabinet meeting directed officials

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Accompanied by her daughter-in-law Farhana Hossain (standing), 84-year-old Rizia Khatun, middle, waits at the capital's Mugda Medical College and Hospital to take the coronavirus vaccine. Many elderly people like Rizia, who went to the hospital yesterday for the vaccination, complained of mismanagement. The photo was taken around 11:00am.

## Mugda lacks facilities for the elderly

Complain those who came for vaccine shots

ASIFUR RAHMAN and MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Along with her son Rezaur Rahman and his wife Farhana Hossain, 84-year-old Rizia Khatun, an osteoporosis patient, went to the capital's Mugda Medical College Hospital to take the Covid-19 vaccine yesterday.

Reaching there around 10:00am, from their home in Narinda, they did not find any attendant or wheelchair on their way to their destination -- the second floor of the hospital. They also could not find any elevator.

Holding hands of her son and daughter-in-law, Rizia then had to take the trouble of climbing the stairs to make it to the vaccination booth.

Many other elderly people, who went to the hospital for the shots, suffered the same way.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

## Police charge journo Kajol, cartoonist Kishore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have pressed charges against photojournalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol, cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore, writer Mushtaq Ahmed and Rashtrachinta activist Didarul Islam Bhuiyan in two cases filed last year under the Digital Security Act.

Sub-Inspector Mohammad Russell Mollah of Detective Branch of police, also the investigation officer of a case filed against photojournalist Kajol, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on Sunday.

The detectives pressed charges in the case filed with Hazaribagh Police Station over Kajol's Facebook post regarding the arrest of Jubo Mahila League leader Shamima Nur Papi.

However, investigators are yet to submit the probe reports in two other cases filed against Kajol with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar and Kamrangir Char police stations. All

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Govt not sincere in curbing graft

ACC chief also says most of its recommendations go unheeded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Apart from investigating corruption allegations against individuals, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) carries out enquiries into different government organisations and institutions to find out scopes of graft and make recommendations for the respective authorities accordingly to prevent these at source.

For instance, the practice of extending project deadlines at WASA, disregarding government orders on tax exemption for imported goods by the officials of National Board of Revenue (NBR) or unholy alliance of officials and contractors of railway and health directorate responsible for corruption.

Had the recommendations been implemented, the scope of corruption would have been narrowed, observed the ACC in its 2019 Annual Report.

Their appeals, however, have been going unheeded. To solve the problem, the ACC in its report, published yesterday, recommended giving the cabinet division the charge of evaluating and implementing its recommendations.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

- ➔ 263 corruption cases filed in 2019
- ➔ 21,371 allegations submitted to ACC
- ➔ 1,710 of them approved for enquiry
- ➔ Charge sheets given in 267 cases

## No corrupt person will be spared

Says HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday warned that it will not spare any corrupt people no matter how powerful they are -- be it ministers or lawmakers.

Nobody is above the law, said the HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim.

The court said this at the hearing of a petition from Shariful Islam Jinnah, Jatiya Party lawmaker from Bogura-2. The lawmaker sought anticipatory bail in a corruption case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information.

Shariful's lawyer Sheikh Sirajul Islam told the HC bench that his client is a freedom fighter and is now 73. The corruption case was filed against him to tarnish his image and harm his dignity.

In response, the HC bench said it is not right that a lawmaker's dignity will be

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

## Cops the captors

6 CMP constables held for abduction of businessman, extortion

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

Chattogram district police on Sunday arrested six police constables of the Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) on charge of extortion.

The arrestees were allegedly involved in extorting money from a contractor after picking him up from his house at the district's Anwara upazila of on February 4.

However, senior officials of the CMP and Chattogram district police have remained silent over the issue, denying to disclose information in detail to this newspaper.

The matter came to light after the victim lodged a complaint to police on Sunday.

The arrestees are Md Abdul Nabi, Md Eskandar Hossain, Md Monirul Islam, Md Shakil Khan, Md Masud, and Morshed Billah, all attached to the Special Armed Force (SAF) unit of CMP, said police, court and local sources.

Speaking to The Daily Star SM Rashidul Haque, superintendent of Chattogram Police said, "Police arrested six constables in this connection while a case was lodged with Anwara Police Station."

Rashidul, however, refused to disclose further details.

The incident has been already informed to the Police Headquarters, including to the Additional Deputy Inspector General (DIG) (Confidential) section.

Speaking to The Daily Star, local and police sources said, that eight people, including the six constables, on four motorcycles went to the home of contractor Abdul Mannan, 30, around 2:00am of February 4.

According to the case statement, the plainclothes men knocked on the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## Bank directors seek longer loan tenures

BB to review demands; several MDs, experts criticise move

AKM ZAMIR UDDIN

The Bangladesh Association of Banks (BAB) yesterday asked the central bank to further relax the repayment tenure for term loans and working capital.

Mentioning that the pandemic caused business slowdown, representatives of BAB, led by its Chairman Md Nazrul Islam Mazumder, urged Bangladesh Bank Governor Fazle Kabir to relax the repayment tenure of the two types of loans at a meeting held at the central bank headquarters.

The proposal submitted by BAB, an organisation of directors of private banks, drew criticism that it would further deteriorate financial health of banks.

However, Md Serajul Islam, an executive director and spokesperson of the central bank, said Bangladesh Bank had assured BAB of reviewing

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



NEWS ANALYSIS

## FIX THE ERROR, not the mirror

SYED ASHAQUL HAQUE

Just imagine a day without a mirror.

You're getting ready for work, not knowing how you look. Your car, without rear-view mirrors, is on the busy road to office, negotiating the peak hour traffic. A girl is having her hairdo or makeup done before going out to meet friends, with no clue about her looks. A dentist tries to do a root canal job on a tooth deep inside a patient's mouth, basing on what he can see and what he can't. The outcome is obvious: a laughter or disaster.

It is impossible to live a life without a mirror. A tiny piece of glass, yet it turns out to be a true friend in our life, always helping us stay safe. It's rather a one-sided friendship that keeps us informed of the truth and do things right. We need a reflection in the mirror to find out the problems in our looks, dress, makeup and the way we carry ourselves. It indicates what errors need to be fixed and how.

Even if there is no flaw, we need our mirror to tell: "Go ahead and feel good". We just cannot think of a public appearance without a mirror vetting.

How do we react after finding faults in the reflection? We don't reject the reflection. We zero in on the wrong and get it right. We work on it till the mirror agrees with the fixing. No one wants to look funny, after all.

Who does not trust a mirror? Mirror is not devised to produce a deceiving image. It reflects as it is. Even the ugliest person on the planet keeps a mirror but doesn't say: "Oh no, it cannot be me or the mirror must be giving a wrong reflection to tarnish my image!"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1