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Boeing says all 777s with PW engines grounded after fire
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"We'll deliver the results of the independence to all doors, this is our promise."
PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH HASINA

"Our students are responsible. I firmly believe that they will behave responsibly in this regard."
DHAKA UNIVERSITY VICE-CHANCELLOR PROF. MOHAMMAD AKHTARUZZAMAN

"It's nothing like we've ever been through in the last 102 years since the 1918 influenza pandemic."
WHITE HOUSE MEDICAL ADVISER ANTHONY FAUCI ON COVID DEATHS IN US

PUBLIC, PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Confusion added to chaos

Dipu Moni declares May 24 for resuming in-person classes hrs after PM gave instruction to assess situation for reopening edn institutions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday instructed the education ministry to review whether educational institutions, which have been closed since March 17 last year due to the pandemic, could be reopened.

Surprisingly, hours after the instruction was given at a cabinet meeting, Education Minister Dipu Moni announced that in-person classes at universities would resume on May 24 after the Eid-ul-Fitr. Besides, the student dormitories at those universities will reopen on May 17, she said.

Students demonstrating for the reopening, however, rejected the announcement and demanded that their universities reopen on March 1. They continued their protests on their campuses yesterday.

Talking to The Daily Star, sources in the cabinet meeting said no specific date regarding reopening of educational institutions was mentioned in the prime minister's instruction.

While briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandker

Anwarul Islam also did not give any dates. "Now educational institutions in European countries, except England, are open. From this point of view, the prime minister instructed the education ministry to review the matter and see whether we can do the same with our educational institutions," he said.

"We'll sit in a meeting with all concerned, including consultants, experts and law enforcement agencies, within the next five to six days to make a decision on the issue," he added.

Wishing anonymity, a minister, who attended the meeting, told this newspaper that the education minister's announcement was "premature" and it created "confusion".

Addressing a virtual press conference that began around 2:00pm, the education minister said, "In-person classes at all public and private universities will resume on May 24, after the Eid-ul-Fitr. All residential halls of universities will reopen on May 17."

All procedures to this end will be completed following the health guidelines,

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Demanding reopening of Jahangirnagar University dormitories, a group of JU students chants slogans in front of Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall on the campus around 1:00pm yesterday. Students in Dhaka University, bottom, also demonstrated on their campus to push for the reopening of their residential halls.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Open dorms on March 1

Demonstrating students of univs demand

STAR REPORT

Calls for immediate reopening of residential halls got louder as students of various public universities took to the streets to press home their demand, while Jahangirnagar University students refused to leave their dorms.

A group of agitating students welcomed the government's decision to reopen universities, but demanded that the residential halls should be open from March 1 instead of May.

The students of Jahangirnagar University, who broke open the locks of their residential halls on Saturday, refused to leave the dorms. Instead, female students yesterday broke open a hall again, defying an order of the university.

Following JU, several hundred Dhaka University students yesterday broke open the locks of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah and Amar Ekushey halls

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CONVICTED IN KUWAIT

Papul finally loses his JS membership

RASHIDUL HASAN

The seat of independent lawmaker Mohammad Shahid Islam, also known as Kazi Papul, has been vacated yesterday on grounds of moral turpitude.

The parliament secretariat issued a gazette notification to that end yesterday afternoon following a meeting between Speaker Shirin Sharmin and top officials of the secretariat, Zafar Ahmed Khan, senior secretary at the parliament secretariat, told The Daily Star.

The gazette has been in effect from January 28, 2021 -- the day Kazi Papul, lawmaker from Laxmipur-2, was sentenced to four years of rigorous imprisonment by a Kuwaiti court for human trafficking and bribing Kuwaiti officials.

This is the second time in the history of parliament that the membership of a lawmaker was cancelled on grounds of



moral turpitude, sources at the parliament secretariat said.

Earlier, the Jatiya Sangsad cancelled the membership of HM Ershad, late president and founder of Jatiya Party, as he was sentenced to imprisonment for more than two years in connection with the Janata Tower scam, they told this correspondent.

In the gazette regarding Papul's vacated seat, it was mentioned that, as per articles 66 and 67 of the constitution, a member of parliament shall vacate their seat if they are convicted of a criminal offence involving moral turpitude "by a competent court" and is sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years, unless a period of five years has elapsed since his release.

The parliament secretariat has sent the gazette to the Election Commission secretariat.

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OXFORD-ASTRAZENECA VACCINE

Second lot of 20 lakh doses arrives

MOUJID AHMED SUJAN

Twenty lakh doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from Serum Institute of India reached the country early today, which is less than half of the monthly supply installment as per a contract.

The government purchased three crore shots of the vaccine called Covishield from the company through its local agent Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

According to the tripartite deal, Bangladesh is supposed to get 50 lakh doses a month for six months.

The country received the first installment of 50 lakh doses on January 25.

Contacted, Beximco Managing Director Nazmul Hassan Papon said, "As per agreement, we were supposed to get 50 lakh doses of the vaccine a month. But we are now getting 20 lakh doses. We will let you know why we are getting less in a couple of days."

He, however, said they were also assessing how fast the vaccine stock in Bangladesh finishes.

Nazmul said a flight from Mumbai would carry the

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ACC probing some RMG owners

The watchdog received allegation over laundering of Tk 64,000 crore a year in guise of export, import

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has begun enquiring into allegations of laundering about Tk 64,000 crore (\$755 million) annually by some garment factory owners in the guise of export and import business.

ACC Secretary Md Anwar Hossain Howlader said they have received allegations that some government officials abetted these businesspersons in money laundering.

Talking to journalists at the ACC's Segunbagicha headquarters, he said a four-member ACC team has been assigned to enquire into the matter.

The team has also been tasked with probing the allegation of garment factory Al-Muslim Group laundering Tk 175 crore, the ACC secretary said.

"The ACC will take measures according to the findings of the enquiry," said Anwar. Upon the ACC's request, the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has recently submitted some documents on over-invoicing.

The anti-graft watchdog is also looking into that.

"It will take us some time as the matter is very broad," he said, adding that he hoped the NBR will continue to send information on over-invoicing on a regular basis to the ACC.

"The commission is very strict in dealing with the prevention of money laundering," he said.

Asked, he said after the enquiry, they will be able to identify how many garment factories are involved.

The ACC earlier led an enquiry into an

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Momen flies to Washington

Likely to meet Blinken tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Aiming to developing a solid relationship with the world's most powerful country, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen left for the US last night on a three-day visit, his first visit after President Joe Biden took office in January.

He will hold meetings with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken tomorrow, and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Senator Bob Menendez and some congressmen during his visit to Washington DC.

Diplomatic sources said Bangladesh is seeking a visit by Blinken to Dhaka for the celebrations of the 50 years of Bangladesh's independence, which among others will be joined by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"We want to develop a solid relationship with the US. The US has new foreign policy. It gives importance on Bangladesh as it is geo-politically important,"

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A boy, who earns his livelihood by cleaning cars with a rag, climbs the central reservation of the busy Tejgaon-Bijoy Sarani Flyover to go to the other side of the street, putting his life at risk. Struck by poverty, many children have to toil day and night on the streets of the capital this way. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SMUGGLED IN FROM UAE 17.5kg gold bars recovered from Biman aircraft



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chattogram Customs House and Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate (CIID) officials recovered 150 gold bars, weighing 17.5kg and valued at Tk 9.5 crores, from a Biman plane that landed at Shah Amanat International Airport yesterday morning from Abu Dhabi.

The bars were found inside a vent beneath two passenger seats.

No arrests have yet been made in this connection. CIID Deputy Director Babul Ikbal, told The Daily Star that a team of CIID and the Customs House, acting on a tip-off, jointly conducted a drive in flight BG128.

Rokhsana Khatun, deputy commissioner of Chattogram Customs House, told The Daily Star, "We recovered the gold bars from two AC panels beneath two passenger seats of the plane -- from beneath seat number 26A, we seized

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