



A YEAR OF PANDEMIC

Country on recovery trail

Al-AMIN and MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

One year on, Bangladesh is well and truly on the recovery trail from the deep impacts the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on life and livelihood.

With the vaccination campaign gathering pace, the fear of the invisible killer has subsided greatly, the lockdown has been lifted, economic activities have returned almost to the pre-pandemic level and health emergency alerts have been lowered. The government is all set to open educational institutions at the end of this month.

As the country puts all the efforts and energy in the fight against the pandemic, it appears focused on returning to the pre-pandemic way of life, notwithstanding the fact that there are a lot of lessons to learn from the pandemic.

The coronavirus has been a part of our lives since it was first detected in the country on March 8 last year -- more than three months after it hit the Chinese city of Wuhan.

It has changed everyone's life. And each and everyone felt its impact -- from the richest to the poorest, from urban to

rural areas, from industrialists to workers and from business tycoons to small entrepreneurs.

Face mask is now a necessary accessory and the demand for hand sanitiser has never been so high. Social distancing has become a new way of life.

In late March last year, economic activities came to a grinding halt due to worldwide restrictions on mobility, and educational institutions were closed to safeguard the future generation from the pandemic.

The otherwise bustling streets were deserted due to the lockdown enforced to save lives.

Students started learning remotely and work from home became a professional norm. Festivals, entertainment and sporting events were cancelled.

Hospitals became overcrowded with coronavirus patients, leaving the frontline professionals clueless about how to deal with such patients.

In the absence of a cure for the deadly virus, the procession of corpses grew longer with every passing day.

But after one year, the pertinent

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COVID IN BANGLADESH

➤ First case identified
MARCH 8

➤ First death reported
MARCH 18

➤ Total death
8,462

➤ Total people infected
5,50,330

➤ Countrywide shutdown begins
MARCH 26

➤ Shutdown relaxed
MAY 31

➤ Education institutions closure
MARCH 17 TILL DATE

➤ MoU signed for
VACCINE NOV 5

➤ Bangladesh approves
Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine
JAN 4

➤ First instalment
of 50 lakh doses arrives
JAN 25

➤ Vaccination piloting begins
JAN 27



➤ Total vaccine recipients 37,89,352

➤ Total registration 50,17,804

➤ Total centres in Dhaka 47

➤ Adverse effects following immunisation 848

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COVID INOCULATION Foreigners' registration begins on March 17

PORIMOL PALMA

Foreigners in Bangladesh can start registration for Covid-19 vaccination from March 17, the birthday of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, as the government planned inoculation of all eligible people.

Bangladesh began inoculation for frontliners on January 28 and has so far vaccinated more than 36 lakh people, including the emergency workers and those above 40 years. Since February, the government also began inoculating some 1,200 diplomats at the Sheikh Russel National Gastroenterology Institute and Hospital.

Officials at the foreign ministry said as the inoculation was going ahead at speed and vaccine supplies were satisfactory, the government decided to bring all eligible people, nationals and foreigners,

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Salma Khatun driving a train at Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday. She has been in the profession for 17 years. She is the only female loco master of Bangladesh Railway.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

If one tarnishes country's image, no bail

Warns CJ while talking about DSA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain yesterday warned about posting abusive and indecent comments on social media and asked how educated people could do such things.

"Satires take place even in the US, but those are not as indecent as those in our country," he said while presiding over a three-member bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court that was hearing an appeal.

"We are cautioning that we will not consider granting bail to those who tarnish the country's image in any manner," he said. "It has to be kept in mind that the image of the country is the first priority."

The chief justice asked whether there was any point of education if educated people used such words.

If such comments are made in the future, granting a bail will not even be

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It was declaration of independence



Says PM about Bangabandhu's historic March 7 speech

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the historic March 7, 1971, speech of the Father of the Nation was the actual declaration of the country's independence as it contained the directives on taking preparation for the Liberation War.

"The most important aspect of the historic March 7 speech was that he [Bangabandhu] had given all the directives regarding taking preparation for a [guerilla] war. If it is thought from this point of view, it can be said that the March 7 speech was the real declaration of the country's independence," she said.

The PM was addressing as the chief guest at a discussion organised by the cultural affairs ministry at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC). Joining the event virtually from the Gono Bhaban, she said Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had announced the declaration of the country's independence in his March 7 speech as he apprehended that he might not be alive to make a formal declaration of independence.

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I did not do anything wrong: Kishore



GOLAM MORTOZA

When I entered the hospital room, the bed was empty. Cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore Kishore had gone to get his eyes checked. When he returned to the cabin in about 20 minutes, I was flabbergasted that he was on a wheelchair.

I stared at him, at a loss for words, he too stared back. Kishore broke the silence: "How are you bhai [brother]?" He went to the bed and lay down. A strong man drained in just 10 months.

I talked to Kishore shortly after he was released from jail on March 4. "Bhai, I am Kishore..." His voice seemed unfamiliar. He said after meeting his lawyer he would go straight to a hospital. He was not in a

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY TODAY

Law there, awareness little

Domestic violence remains daily routine in numerous households

NILIMA JAHAN

The government has enacted the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act in 2010 that ensures the victims' rights to law enforcement officers' assistance, required medical facilities, and legal services.

The enactment was the outcome of a collaboration between the women's movement and government.

The act has several progressive provisions including protection orders for women, the right to reside in the marital home, temporary custody of children, and recovery of personal assets and assets acquired during the marriage.

Ten years have gone by since the enactment of the law, but the implementation is still very poor due to the lack of awareness among victims and key implementing agencies, rights activists say.

As a result, violence within the home remained almost a daily

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A YEAR OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

BRAC

June-Oct: BRAC's Human Rights and Legal Aid Services Programme saw a 16% (average) increase in number of complaints received

Complaints of "non-compoundable criminal offences" (e.g. rape, domestic violence) increased from 1,739 in 2019 (Jan-Dec) to 2,414 in 2020 (Jan-Oct)

Number of rape complaints rose by 63%

Number of incidences of VAW reported by BRAC's ward-level community platforms: In 2019 (Jan-Oct): 9,083; In 2020 (Jan-Oct): 11,298

Number of incidences of child-marriage dealt by BRAC's Polli Shomaj: In 2019 (Jan-Sep): Prevented 371 and reported 97; In 2020 (Jan-Sep): Prevented 646 and reported 146

Manusher Jonno Foundation

April 2020: 24% of 17,203 women interviewed reported undergoing domestic violence.

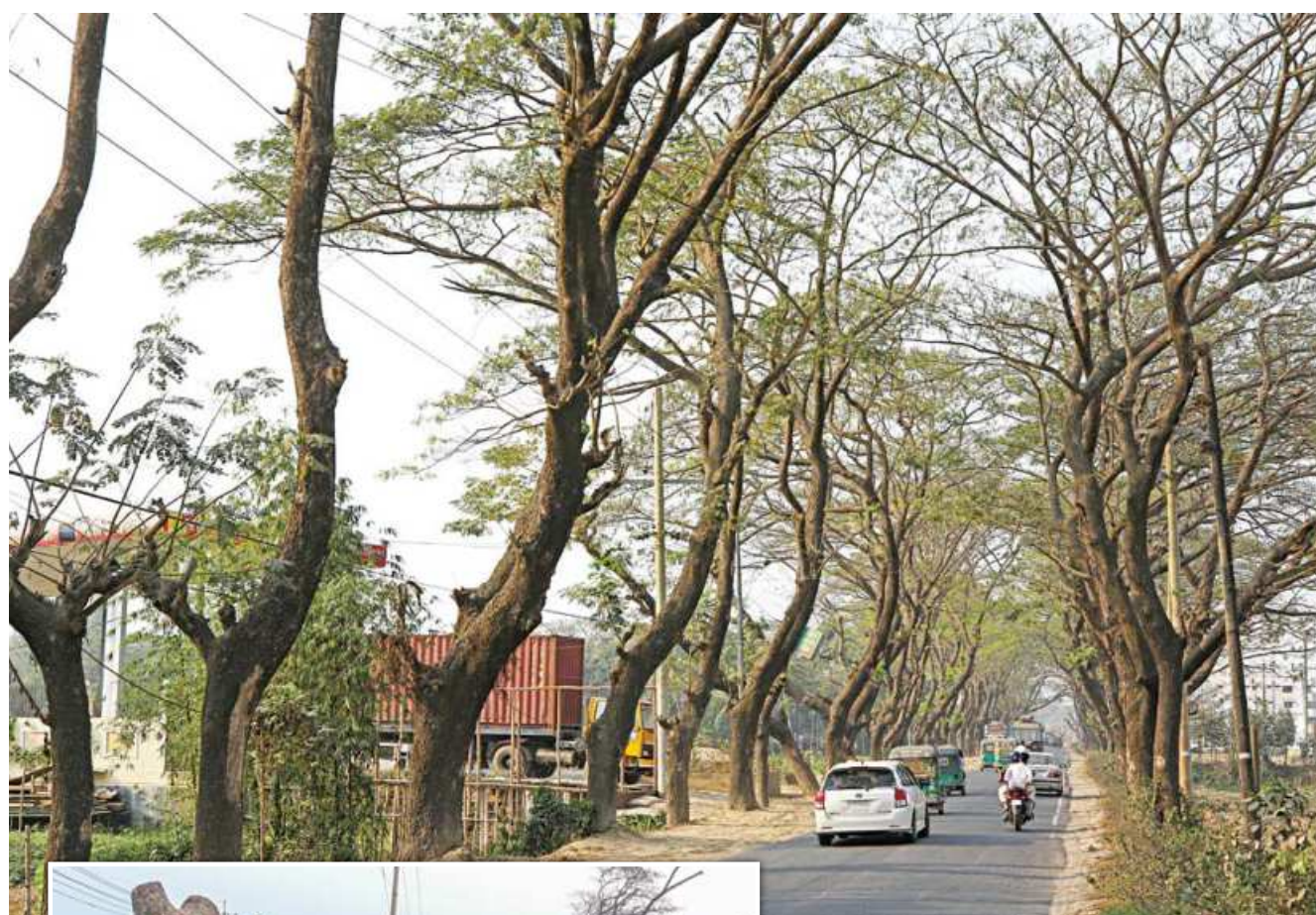
May 2020: 20% of 53,340 women and children interviewed reported undergoing domestic violence. 38% of victims had never been abused before.

July 2020: 16% of 63,968 women and children interviewed reported undergoing domestic violence. 39% of victims had never been abused before.

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)

Jan-Dec 2019: 218 women killed by husbands; 423 cases of extreme domestic violence tracked from media reports

Jan-Dec 2020: 240 women killed by husbands; 554 cases of extreme domestic violence tracked from media reports



A tunnel of greenery shades the approach road to the under-construction Bangabandhu Tunnel on the Anwara upazila side in Chattogram. Work is underway to transform the two-lane road to a six-lane highway that will feed into the tunnel under the Karnaphuli river. Inset, a total of 1,705 trees planted 25 years ago are being cut down to make way for the six-lane highway. A roads and highways official said they will plant between 1,800 and 2,700 saplings once the transformation is complete. The photos were taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Six held over protesting Mushtaq's death get bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six out of seven leftist student leaders and activists who were arrested following the protests over writer Mushtaq Ahmed's death in custody got bail yesterday.

A Dhaka court granted bail to the six student leaders and activists in connection with a case filed over assaulting and preventing policemen from

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This week, as part of our celebration of INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, the Tuesday supplement Star Lifestyle comes out on MONDAY, 8 MARCH, 2021. From female professionals, to women who have bravely embraced entrepreneurship, and not to mention COVID-19 frontliners — we celebrate the hardship and subsequent contribution women have made in society.

BE SURE TO CHECK
LIFE Style
SPECIAL ISSUE TODAY.