

Bus workers bear the brunt of lockdown



Bus workers in Tangail are facing dire straits as their vehicles go off the roads due to countrywide lockdown. PHOTO: STAR

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Around 8000 bus workers in Tangail are passing hard days with their families as they have been off the roads because of the countrywide lockdown imposed to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Neither the owners' association nor the government has come forward with any help for them during the lockdown, said the workers.

"When I got down from the bus the day before the government imposed lockdown on April 13, I had a total of Tk 2,500, which had already been spent to run the family. I'm now struggling to meet my daily needs," said Saiful Islam, a bus driver.

Saiful also said that most of the bus workers are poor and do not have any savings. It has become difficult for them to maintain family when their vehicles go off the roads.

Abu Taher, a supervisor of a bus, said "We get Tk 500 to Tk 700 a day when the buses ply the roads but we are now in dire

Workers said neither the owners' association nor the government has come forward with any help for them during the lockdown.

straits due to the lockdown."

Parvez Miah, helper of Dhaleswari Paribahan bus on Dhaka-Tangail route, said "Will all the problems be solved just by stopping the bus? During the last year's lockdown, I suffered a lot. I have not been able to repay the money I borrowed at that time."

Meanwhile, the bus owners did not stand by the workers during this difficult time. The owners' association has engaged 20 workers per day to keep the buses at the terminal under watch. Each of the worker is paid Tk 300 for

the job.

Several bus owners said they are around 800 buses in the district. This year's lockdown comes as a fresh blow to transport owners because they are yet to recover the losses they have faced during the first wave of Covid-19.

They added that many of the owners are yet to repay the bank installments. So, they cannot do anything for their bus staffers despite of having good intentions.

Seeking anonymity, a bus owner said it was possible to do something good for the workers with the money collected in the name of owners' association. But these are eaten up by the leaders.

Abdul Latif, organising secretary of the district bus coach workers' union, said they could not do anything for the workers due to lack of funds.

Several bus workers said they did not get any benefit from the owners. As a result, they are now struggling to meet their daily needs amid the lockdown.

Orchards losing mango buds without rain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Over the last couple of months, mango buds are falling off trees in mango orchards across Chapainawabganj -- which is considered the mango capital of the country.

Worried farmers speculate that a drought-like situation due to no rain during the period is causing the damage.

Farmer Sadikul Islam from Mistripara in Chapainawabganj town leased over 100 mango trees on 14 bighas of land in Chalk Alampur village of Sadar upazila.

He said the mango farmers had been expecting a good harvest this year as almost all mango trees in their orchards produced massive number of buds when in full bloom. But with so many of the buds falling off, they have been worrying about incurring heavy losses this year.

As a last resort, the farmers have started to irrigate their orchards, he added.

Another mango farmer, Aminul Islam, from Alinagar area in the town, said he spent Tk 18.5 lakh to lease an orchard on 40 bighas in Jonakipara of Nachole upazila.

He said he was also worried about suffering massive losses as a good number of mango buds already died and fell off the trees in his orchard.

The lack of rain is drying up the mango trees, resulting in the fall of so many mango buds, he also said.

Most mango growers in the area said rain in the month of March is crucial for a good production of mango, but the entire month had no rain this year.

During a recent visit to mango orchards in Ganka, Sarkarpara and Court Bagan areas in the

Most mango growers in the area said rain in the month of March is crucial for a good production of mango, but the entire month had no rain this year.

town and Dhumi Hayatpur and Chalk Alampur villages in Sadar upazila, this correspondent found a huge number of fallen mango buds that were blanketing the ground in the orchards and children were roaming around to collect the larger of the buds for consumption.

Contacted, Muhammad Nazrul Islam, deputy director of Department of Agricultural Extension, said this year they did not record any rain in the district. Whereas, last year they recorded 17 millimetres of rainfall in January, 7 mm in February, 29 mm in March and 72 mm in April.

About 10 to 12 percent of the mango buds fall off naturally, but the percentage has been higher this year due to the lack of rain.

Advising farmers to ensure adequate irrigation in the orchards, the official also said they expect a total mango production of 2.5 lakh tonnes in the district this year.

As much as 95 percent of mango trees -- in commercial orchards and homes -- bloomed in Chapainawabganj this year. The district had mango orchards on 34,871 hectares last year, when production reached 2.50 lakh tonnes.



PHOTO: RABIUL HASAN

Malnourished mango buds, smaller and deformed, on a tree in an orchard in Ganka area of Chapainawabganj. Enduring rainless months this year, a good number of the buds is dying and falling off.

SpaceX ship

FROM PAGE 12

be opened. The hatches should be opened around 7:15 am (1115 GMT), with a welcoming ceremony to follow at 7:45 am.

The Crew-2 mission, which includes the first European, Thomas Pesquet of France, blasted off from pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida before dawn on Friday.

Endeavour is carrying the third crew sent to the ISS by SpaceX, as part of the company's multibillion dollar contract with NASA.

It's also Endeavour's second trip to the ISS.

It first flew there on the Demo-2 mission in May 2020, which ended almost a decade of US reliance on Russia for rides to the ISS following the end of the Space Shuttle program.

Global daily

FROM PAGE 12

died. Most of the patients were younger than 50. There were no reported cases among men.

Fears over blood clots had also threatened to hamper vaccine roll-out efforts in Europe, where medical regulators Friday said the benefits of AstraZeneca's Covid-19 vaccine increase with age and still outweigh the risks for adults despite links to very rare side effects.

The news came as the European Union also said it would have enough vaccines for most of its adult population by the summer -- a marked shift in tone for a bloc plagued by problems with vaccines, first failing to secure much-needed supplies and then relating to safety concerns.

"I'm confident we will have enough doses to vaccinate 70 percent of all EU adults already in July," European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said.

The EU chief had previously set a goal of late September for the target, but announced the new date during a visit to a Belgian vaccine plant that is ramping up production of the Pfizer/BioNTech jab.

Bhashani's telegram to world

FROM PAGE 12

twin task of carrying on the war and reorganising the civil administration in the liberated zones. There was a general lull in the fighting between Mukti Foj and the Pakistan Army today except for some isolated encounters. In one of them, the Mukti Foj successfully repulsed an attack on Pakuria village in Dinajpur. The Mukti Foj inflicted heavy casualties on the Pakistani troops.

Today, Pakistan indirectly admitted the shelling of Benapole border areas. Radio Pakistan in its news bulletin claimed that Pakistan troops sealed the border with India at Petrapole after beating back a band of 'infiltrators' and their 'collaborators'.

FLOW OF REFUGEES FROM BANGLADESH UNINTERRUPTED

During the previous 12 days, Tripura received about 100,000 refugees from Bangladesh and of them 50,000 were in camps.

At Sabroom alone, 20,000 refugees had gone from Chattogram. Sabroom had a population of 5,000 only. On an average 5,000 to 6,000 refugees were pouring into Tripura every day. Accommodation for the refugees had been provided mostly in the educational institutions.

Another 100,000 refugees went to Haldibari, Cooch Bihar. The refugees went here following heavy shelling of Saidpur, Nilphamari and Thakurgaon towns by Pakistani troops.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

Covid 'tsunami' hammers India

FROM PAGE 12

to bring oxygen equipment from Singapore. The government has also pressed industrialists to increase production of oxygen and life-saving drugs.

It also exempted import of Covid vaccines from basic customs duty with immediate effect for a period of three months in a bid to keep low the prices of overseas jabs, reported our New Delhi correspondent.

Import of oxygen and oxygen-related equipment also received full exemption from basic customs duties for three months with immediate effect to augment their availability in domestic markets.

The decisions were taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

One 'oxygen express' carrying 30,000 litres for hospitals arrived in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh state, where armed guards were waiting to escort trucks that would carry the oxygen to hospitals.

Lucknow has been one of the worst-hit cities, with hospitals and crematoriums inundated with patients and bodies. Officials said the liquid oxygen would only be enough for half a day's needs.

Uttar Pradesh, a state of 200 million people, has imposed a weekend lockdown in a bid to curb the spread.

Many patients are dying outside hospitals in New Delhi because of the lack of beds and oxygen. Television showed families tending to the sick in hospital corridors and streets as they waited for medical attention.

Twenty patients at the Jaipur Golden Hospital in the capital died during the night as it suffered oxygen shortages, the hospital's director told Indian media.

He said that at one stage yesterday morning, the reserve was down to 30 minutes and pressure had been reduced for the 200 coronavirus patients, most of whom were on emergency oxygen.

Khaleda tests for Covid again

FROM PAGE 12

are now looking forward to her fresh test report."

He said Khaleda's body temperature is normal. "Her breathing and blood oxygen saturation level are very good. Her taste in food is the same as before."

Khaleda underwent Covid-19 testing on April 10 as eight other people at her residence were infected with the virus and she tested positive.

Amid the novel coronavirus outbreak, the government on March 25 last year freed Khaleda from jail for six months through an executive order suspending her sentences. Later, the government extended her release period twice.

are now looking forward to her fresh test report."

He said Khaleda's body temperature is normal. "Her breathing and blood oxygen saturation level are very good. Her taste in food is the same as before."

Khaleda underwent Covid-19 testing on April 10 as eight other people at her residence were infected with the virus and she tested positive.

Amid the novel coronavirus outbreak, the government on March 25 last year freed Khaleda from jail for six months through an executive order suspending her sentences. Later, the government extended her release period twice.

AL leader

FROM PAGE 12

alterations with him at times.

Following one such altercation, Faruk stabbed his wife with a kitchen knife, leaving her critically injured.

Kanak, also a former BCL leader, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where doctors declared her dead around 5:30am, she said.

The OC of Pallabi Police Station said Faruk, during primary interrogation, admitted that he stabbed his wife.

Police sources said they initially found that the victim gave money that Faruk earned in Japan to one of her relatives who was dilly-dallying to pay them back.

Besides, Faruk was putting pressure on his wife to transfer her share of the flat, owned jointly by the couple, to him as he paid the money.

The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Wearable

FROM PAGE 12

has started working with partners to develop manufacturing processes.

Made from a flexible material -- polyvinyl alcohol -- with a layer of gold, the e-skin is a wearable sensor that can pick up signals such as heartbeat and electrical impulses from muscle movement.

A small wireless transmitter strapped to the chest will send heartbeat data to a nearby smartphone or laptop, or to the cloud, allowing a doctor to monitor it remotely.

"E-skin is the next generation of wearables," Someya tells CNN Business. "Today's mainstream wearables are in the form of smart watches and glasses, which are bulky. In contrast, e-skin is thin, lightweight, stretchable and durable."

Park Provence
Redefining Comfort & Style
At Khilbari adjacent to Baridhara Block-J

Park Provence a luxury highrise has more to it than just its cosmopolitan looks. Being built to truly international standards and located adjacent to Baridhara J Block, it is designed to be one of the finest residential developments in Dhaka. Park Provence consists of modern 3 bedroom apartments with high-end amenities encompassing a **Swimming Pool, Community Hall, Gymnasium, Rooftop Garden, Walkway, Children Play Area etc.**

Call **16687**
01713367486, 01713098449
01713046689

Asset
DEVELOPMENTS
Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd
91 Gulshan Avenue

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Principal
Sherpur Govt. College, Sherpur

Rajabari Road, Sherpur

Website: www.sherpurgovtcollege.edu.bd

Memo No. CEDP/SGC/G-7(Re)/2020-21/1

Date: 25/04/2021

e-Tender Notice 03/2020-2021

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of package	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	557841	Supply & installation of Laboratory equipment & instrument for Physics, Chemistry, Botany & Zoology department of Sherpur Govt. College, Sherpur (Re-Tender).	06-May-2021 13:00pm	06-May-2021 14:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks' branches up to 05-May-2021 13:00pm. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Professor Md. Abdur Rashid

Principal

Sherpur Govt. College, Sherpur

Phone: 0931-61219

E-mail: sgovcollege@yahoo.com

GD-815