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SHAH CEMENT

More Covid aid lands in India

Death toll hits new record; Canada, Brazil struggle with outbreaks

AGENCIES

India struggled to contain one of the world's worst coronavirus outbreaks with nearly 400,000 new infections reported yesterday, as more international aid arrived in the South Asian nation to help end the crisis.

Deaths from Covid-19 jumped by a record 3,689 in 24 hours, with the eastern state of Odisha imposed two week lockdown as the nation's creaky healthcare system is unable to cope with the massive caseload.

Surges in Brazil and Canada also highlighted the persistent threat of the pandemic, with the Covid-19 death toll approaching 3.2 million even as many nations ramp up vaccination drives.

India expanded its vaccination programme to all adults on Saturday, but many of its states are struggling with shortages despite an export freeze for shots produced in the country.

Long queues were seen at vaccination centres in cities across the nation at the weekend, with people desperate to be inoculated against a disease that has overwhelmed the healthcare system and even crematoriums and graveyards.

"We are here early in the morning to get vaccinated... I left my three-year-old at home to get vaccinated," said Megha Srivastava, 35, at a private immunisation centre in the capital New Delhi.

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A herd of deer takes shelter under a tree to protect themselves from the scorching sun at the Bangladesh National Zoo in the capital yesterday. A spell of heat wave continues in the country.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



Khaleda to be in hospital for a few more days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's medical check-up is yet to be completed and she needs to stay in hospital for a few more days.

Although she is physically stable and has no symptoms of Covid-19, her medical tests, due for more than one and a half years, will be done soon, her personal physician AZM Zahid Hossain told The Daily Star.

Asked how many days it take to complete, Zahid said, "All the tests cannot be completed within a day or two. So it will take time, but it cannot be said exactly when it will be done."

"The medical board examines Khaleda almost every day and also reviews the results of those conducted."

On Tuesday night, the former prime minister was

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Some int'l flights resume after 17 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Operation of regular international flights to and from Dhaka resumed on May 1 after a 17-day suspension due to coronavirus restrictions.

But there is a travel ban on India, Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Georgia, Iran, Mongolia, Oman, South Africa and Tunisia, according to a circular issued by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

This ban excludes the Bangladeshis who went to these countries for a short visit in the 15 days prior to their arrival in Dhaka and have special permission from the authorities, it said.

And people arriving from 26 countries will be required to be in quarantine for up to 14 days at government-selected hotels at their own expenses, it added.

The countries are: Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belgium, Chile, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iraq, Kuwait, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and Uruguay.

Airlines will check whether a hotel has been booked before issuing a boarding pass, it said.

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Pakistan denies refugee exodus

MAY 2 & 3, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

PAKISTAN'S DENIAL West Pakistan newspapers on May 3 quoted government sources as denying that large numbers of refugees were fleeing East Pakistan to neighbouring India.

Statements attributed to officials in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad said the majority of persons who had crossed from East Pakistan into India since March 25 were Indian military infiltrators who had been sent to cause trouble in Pakistan.

According to the Pakistan government, these and local "miscreant" followers were crushed by the Pakistani army and survivors were returning to West Bengal Province in India.

The Pakistani statement followed reports from India that roughly one million East Pakistani refugees had arrived in India, posing a severe economic problem for the New Delhi government.

The Dawn quoted Pakistani government officials as saying: "West Bengal in India under the best of circumstances has a large floating population and hundreds of thousands sleep on the pavement in Calcutta as a matter of daily routine. To any unsuspecting foreign visitor these could be shown as refugees from across the border."

JAPAN SUSPENDS FOOD SHIPMENTS TO PAKISTAN

Japan successfully resisted pressure from West Pakistan to divert to Karachi shipments of textile machinery and food originally meant for Bangladesh. The Japanese government, which maintained

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69 more die of Covid, positivity rate drops

UNB, Dhaka

As the deadly coronavirus continues its onslaught in Bangladesh, health authorities reported 69 more deaths in 24 hours until 8:00am yesterday.

With this, the total number of people who died of the virus was 11,569.

Besides, 1,359 new cases were detected after examining 14,158 samples during those 24 hours.

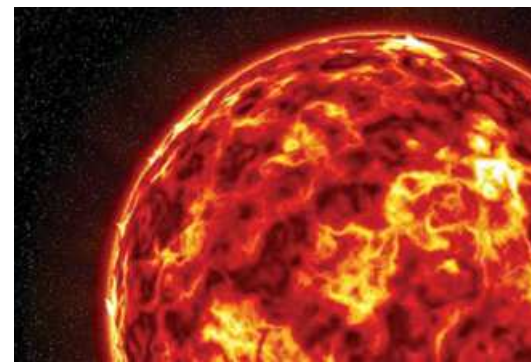
However, the positivity rate fell to 9.60 percent from Saturday's 9.61 percent while the fatality rate rose to 1.52 percent from 1.51 percent of the previous day.

Bangladesh reported its first coronavirus cases on March 8 last year and the first death on the 18th of that month.

During this second wave, the country reported its highest single day deaths

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Scientists discover 'hellish' world



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A "hellish" world that could be the hottest planet in the known universe has just been discovered by scientists.

TOI-1431b, also known as MASCARA-5b, was found 490 light-years from Earth. Nearly twice as large as Jupiter, the planet reaches temperatures that exceed the scorching red dwarf stars in our own Milky Way galaxy.

"This is a very hellish world - daytime temperature of ... approximately 2700 degrees Celsius and nighttime temperature approaching ... approximately 2300 degrees Celsius - no life could survive in its atmosphere. In fact, the planet's nighttime temperature is the second hottest ever

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PRAYER TIMING MAY 3

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-01 12-45 4-45 6-32 8-00
JAMAAT 4-11 1-15 5-00 6-42 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MAY	SEHRI	IFTAR
20	3	6:32	
21	4	3:55	6:32
22	5	3:53	6:33



Plates full of iftar items being organised on a footpath yesterday in the capital's Lalmatia D-block for distributing among the poor. Voluntary organisation, "Mehomankhana", has been giving iftar to 1,000-1,200 people every day there.

PHOTO: AMIRAN HOSSAIN

3 sent to jail over rape of 11-yr-old

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A Cox's Bazar court on Saturday sent three men to jail on charge of gang-raping an 11-year-old girl.

The accused are Mohammad Arif, 23, of Pekua upazila's Goakhali village, Md Rashed, 20, and Mohammad Juel, 20, both from Kutupalong Rohingya refugee camp in Ukchia upazila.

Police said the trio are known criminals and often snatch money and valuables from tourists from the sea beach.

They raped the homeless child inside a flower garden near Laboni Point on Friday morning.

They then left the victim in an unconscious state. A woman who went to the beach for a morning walk, found the victim.

"On information, we rushed to the spot and took the girl to a hospital," said Omar Faruk, president of "Notun Jibon" (new life), a social organisation that works for street children.

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