POST-COUP CRISIS IN

A leading Myanmar ethnic rebel army said it had shot down a military helicopter





Your Right to Know





"Considering defamation as a criminal offence is a violation of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CR ABRAR OF DHAKA UNIVERSITY



"What we've witnessed over the last several years is China acting more repressively at home and more aggressively abroad." US SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY BLINKEN

MASSIVE LAND ACQUISITION FORGERY

Tk 29cr goes to 15 fake owners

Public money embezzled using false papers for 80 decimals acquired to build PBI office in Cox's Bazar

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, back from Cox's

Nizam Uddin, a 55-yearold Cox's Bazar resident, was attending a relative's wedding at a hotel in the tourist town on December 23, 2019 when he received a phone call informing him that a powerful syndicate had sold his land to a government project posing as its owner.



A perplexed Nizam appeared at the district land acquisition office the next day to submit his hastily gathered land documents with the hope of receiving compensation as the rightful owner of his two-decimal land.

Since then, he has visited the land acquisition office numerous times -- a hundred visits, in his estimation -- but his pleas were met with indifference and neglect with no cooperation to provide him any compensation.

He claimed that he is now living under threat from the people who sold off his property to the government.

"It is unbelievable. I have got all the legal documents against my land, yet the syndicate robbed the money in collaboration with land acquisition officials, surveyors, and top brass of Cox's Bazar district administration,' Nizam told The Daily Star on March 14.



Khaleda in CCU with breathing difficulties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, now undergoing treatment for Covid-19, was moved to the coronary care unit of Evercare Hospital in the city yesterday with breathing difficulties.

Her personal physician AZM Zahid Hossain said the former premier was moved to CCU from the cabin around 4:00pm after she developed breathing

difficulties in the morning. Khaleda's condition was stable and her breathing problems later eased a little, . Zahid told The Daily Star.

The BNP chief was admitted to the hospital on April 27 night for some medical tests after she received second positive

BEXIMCO-SERUM

Talks on to make Oxford vaccines here

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla

Serum Institute of India has been in talks with Beximco about producing the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine in Bangladesh.

Serum's discussion with its Bangladeshi agent Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd is part of an effort to ramp up production as the former struggles to meet the demand in India and the global supply commitments.

Beximco has asked Serum about the

amount of doses that can be produced here and where the doses would be supplied to, Beximco Managing Director Nazmul Hassan Papon said

"Local production requires a large investment. Before making the investment, we need to study its feasibility. It won't be viable if we produce only for the local market... We are waiting for a formal proposal [from Serum]," Papon told The Daily Star yesterday.

It will be a milestone in the pharmaceuticals sector of Bangladesh, if Beximco produces the vaccine here, he

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

No homegoing for Eid this time

school were the bodies were kept.

Govt decides to keep all inter-district services suspended; 'lockdown' stretched till May 16; no extra Eid leave in addition to three days

The government has decided to extend the ongoing lockdown till May 16 to contain the spread of Covid-19, keeping suspended inter-district bus, launch and train services during the period.

However, public transport will be allowed to operate within the cities and districts from May 6.

Besides, there will be a three-day holiday for the Eid-ul-Fitr. No extra holidays will be given. The decisions were made yesterday at a cabinet meeting chaired by

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. She joined the meeting at the Secretariat via video conferencing. The government has put restrictions on operation of public transport since April 5 amid a spike in Covid-19 cases.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said no inter-district buses, launches or trains will operate during the period.

In normal times, 80 lakh to 1.2 crore people leave Dhaka, Narayanganj and Gazipur for village homes to celebrate the Eid with their loved ones, according to passenger welfare organisations.

Anwarul also said the government will be tougher to make people wear masks to curb the spread of the virus.

The local administration will conduct drives in markets and shopping malls across the country and monitor whether the market authorities are

following the health safety guidelines properly, he mentioned.

Press Freedom Day

'Never thought I'd be forcefully disappeared'

Says journo Kajol

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

"I still don't have the courage to say whether I was forcefully disappeared or I was lost," said photojournalist Shafigul Islam Kajol at a webinar yesterday.

Kajol was "found" in Benapole near the India border in the middle of the night on May 3 last year, 53 days after he went

"I was assaulted for doing my job. But I never thought I'd be forcefully disappeared," he said at a webinar, hosted by citizen's platform "Nagorik", marking the World Press Freedom Day yesterday. "I cannot describe how my family and I

went through the cruel times. He said he never thought he would be able to return among his acquaintances

and talk. "I did not have any power or any political backing to help me return." Moderating the event, Supreme Court

lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said, "Kajol has

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

26 die as speedboat overturns in Padma

It hit a sand-laden bulkhead in Madaripur

Twenty-six people were killed as a speedboat capsized after it crashed into a sand-laden bulk carrier in the Padma river in Madaripur yesterday.

passengers of the speedboat. Bodies of 22 victims were handed over to family members till 6:00pm

yesterday, said Ashiqur Rahman, inspector of Banglabazar ferry terminal traffic police in Madaripur.

They were undergoing treatment at different hospitals, he added. The accident took place around 7:00am near the old terminal at Kathalbari,

around one kilometre away from Banglabazar terminal in Shibchar upazila of The speedboat, which was carrying 30 passengers, had started from

"I became unconscious and when I regained my senses, I found myself in a hospital bed," she told The Daily Star near the site of the accident, where she

#BUSINESS MFS industry swells riding on low-income groups

Mobile financial services have gained immense popularity in Bangladesh, particularly among lower-income groups, but the charge to withdraw funds has remained almost unchanged since the inception of the digital

platform. As a result, most clients have to fork out Tk 18.50 to withdraw Tk 1,000 from their accounts. It was the same in 2011 when the service was

rolled out. Some MFS providers have recently slashed the charge to Tk 14, but users and analysts say the rate is still high, and a further reduction will benefit the poor, who use the service most.



Without maintaining physical distancing, people travel on a pickup in the capital's Shanir Akhra area on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway. As public transport remains suspended due to the Covid-19 restrictions, many city dwellers are heading home this way every day ahead of Eid, ignoring the risks involved. The photo was taken around 1:00pm vesterday. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

SUZIT KUMAR DAS and SAJJAD HOSSAIN

All the deceased -- three women, two children and 21 men -- were

Five persons, including the driver of the speedboat, were rescued alive.

Shimulia terminal of Munshiganj and was heading towards Banglabazar terminal, said Abdur Razzak, in-charge of naval police's Char Janajat outpost. When it arrived near Kathalbari, the motorboat collided with the bulk carrier, causing it to capsize, he added. Aduri Begum, 35, a passenger of the speedboat who survived the accident

but lost her husband and one-and-a-half-year-old son, said, "Since the beginning, the driver was operating the speedboat haphazardly. It was clear to all of us that the driver was not skilled. We were all anxious. Finally, our speedboat hit the bulk carrier and I saw everyone going under water.

had returned to receive the bodies of her husband and son.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Mamata relegates Left to footnote

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

The landslide victory of Mamata Banerjee has not only thwarted the Modi wave that has swept over India but also relegated the Left and Congress to a footnote in West Bengal polls.

Trinamool Congress, which is all set for a third consecutive term in West Bengal, also brought hope for major regional political parties to check Modi's populist sway and posed a challenge to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of the next general elections due in 2024.

Samyukta Morcha, the alliance of the Congress, Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Indian Secular Front (ISF), managed to get only 8.61 percent of the votes and most of the candidates of Left parties and Congress lost their security deposits.

The only success for the Morcha came through the ISF, formed only months before the elections, which won just one seat in South 24 Parganas district.

On the other hand, the BJP has made a big leap by winning 77 seats, especially since it won three in the last assembly

produce a credible chief ministerial face of its own to match Mamata's charisma. Besides, the party had set an ambitious target of 200-plus seats in West Bengal. Besides, the conflict between the old and new comers in West Bengal BJP came to a head before the election on the issue of choosing nominees.

According to analysts, Modi's saffron party failed to

Many BJP nominees were defectors from other parties --36 from the TMC alone -- but only five of them, including Suvendu Adhikari, could win.

Polls result showed that the West Bengal people mostly preferred Mamata's welfare schemes like duare sarkar (government at the doorstep), Kanyashree, Rupashree, Khadya Sathi, Krishak Bandhu and Swasthya Sathi over the central government sponsored PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi and Ayushman Bharat medical insurance scheme.

On the other hand, an unprecedented consolidation of Muslim votes in most of the 141 assembly constituencies SEE PAGE 2 COL 1 ANOTHER STORY ON PAGE 6

STORY ON B1



6,91,162





College Girl's Death

Lawyer asks govt to verify phone convo

Serves legal notice

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday served a legal notice on the government, asking it to verify through forensic tests the authenticity of an alleged conversation between the college student found dead in a Gulshan flat and Bashundhara Group Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir.

In the notice, the SC lawyer, Yeadia Zaman, also sought legal action against Sobhan if the tests found the conversation to be authentic.

Yeadia made the home secretary the respondent. The notice was sent to him

The 21-year-old woman was found dead in the flat on April 26. Later her sister filed a case with Gulshan Police Station accusing Anvir of instigating the with the legal notice," she added.

Commissioner (DC) Rahima Khatun

said the speedboat was carrying

passengers, violating the restriction

imposed by the government to curb

visibility on the river in the morning.

Furthermore, the driver was not skilled

Hours after the incident, Madaripur

district administration formed a six-

member committee -- with Deputy

Director of Local Government

Division Azharul Islam as its convener

-- to investigate the accident, said DC

magistrates, representatives of naval

police and fire service, has been asked

to submit the probe report within three

receive Tk 20,000 assistance for funeral

arrangements, the DC said

The family of each victim will

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport

responsible for development,

Contacted, BIWTA Assistant Director

Authority (BIWTA), a government

body under the Ministry of Shipping,

maintenance and control of water

transport and waterways in the country.

Md Shahdat Hossain, who is assigned

to ensure marine safety and traffic

management at Shimulia terminal,

yesterday said his department does not

monitor speedboat operations on the

Shimulia-Banglabazar route due to a

The naval police and Coast Guard

Contacted, Lt Ashmadul Islam,

commander of Coast Guard's Pagla

station in Narayanganj, said they are

only responsible for ensuring safety

measures like wearing of life-jackets

and controlling overloading. The

BIWTA is responsible for the overall

police at Mawa of Munshiganj, said law

enforcers are supposed to ensure safety

and security; but BIWTA is responsible

Around 400 speedboats are being

operated daily on this route. But

these speedboats do not have any

registration or fitness certificates from

Commodore Golam Sadek said all the

speedboats are unregistered. Recently,

28 speedboat operators have applied

he or she just has to negotiate with the

If anyone wants to run a business,

BIWTA Chairman

for controlling operations of vessels.

LINREGISTERED BOATS AND

UNSKILLED DRIVERS

the government.

for registration.

Contacted,

Sirajul Kabir, in-charge of naval

lack of manpower.

monitor it, he said.

services.

The committee, which also includes

enough, the DC told The Daily Star.

The accident occurred due to poor

the spread of Covid-19.

PROBE BODY

Rahima Khatun.

working days.

26 die as speedboat

Madaripur Deputy

victim to die by suicide.

In the conversations, which have gone viral after the incident, Anvir is allegedly heard verbally abusing the victim. Such language is disrespectful for any female, the lawyer mentioned in the notice.

The lawyer also mentioned in the notice that police already have the conversation in their possession.

Talking to The Daily Star, the SC lawyer said she would wait for the home secretary to take appropriate action. If she does not get a response from the secretary soon, she said she would serve another notice asking the government about the progress in the matter, she

"I will take appropriate legal steps if the home secretary does not act in line

Perhaps most alarming is that the

They move up the ladder from a

speedboat drivers do not have any

driver's assistant to becoming the actual

driver after a few days of gathering

experience, said Ashraf Hossain, the

leaseholder of the speedboat terminal

Contacted, BIWTA official Md

Shahdat Hossain admitted the fact

and added that the speedboat which

capsized yesterday, owned by one

Chandu Mia, is not registered and its

"We have already asked law enforcement agencies to take action

Leaseholder Ashraf Hossain said

the process of registering speedboats

was initiated a few years ago, but the

initiative did not see any progress

due to a lack of cooperation from

Multiple government officials are

now saying the speedboat services on

this river route are illegal, although

speedboats have been plying the route

illegal. But we don't know how these

are being operated. We can inform

you after investigation. We will talk

to our higher authorities to stop these

speedboat services," said DC Rahima

Md Abdul Arek, superintendent of

naval police in Faridpur Region, who

visited the spot, said, "Speedboats

are illegal during normal times.

Furthermore, operations of such

transports are very much illegal during

lockdown. We will investigate the

matter to know how and why these

transports were being operated," the

The driver of the speedboat has

been arrested and is now undergoing

As per the rules, all passengers of

speedboats are bound to wear life-

jackets but most do not follow the

rules, said locals and speedboat

About overloading, locals said

About the speedboat that capsized

yesterday, Lt Ashmadul Islam,

commander of Coast Guard's Pagla

station in Narayanganj, said the

speedboat had a capacity of carrying

But it is assumed that the driver

took some 30 to 35 passengers. Of

them, some wore life-jackets while

most of the passengers did not wear it,

capacity of carrying passengers varies

according to the size of speedboats.

police officer told journalists.

treatment under police custody.

LACK OF SAFETY MEASURE

"Operation of speedboats are totally

speedboat owners and workers.

ILLEGAL SERVICE

for the last few years.

driver Md Shah Alam has no license.

against them," he added.

institutional training or license.



Volunteers of Swechchhasebak League struggle to maintain a crowd as they distribute rice, lentil and other grocery items among locals in the capital's Jatrabari intersection area yesterday. Physical distancing, crucial to curb the spread of Covid-19, was not followed there at all. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Tk 29cr goes to 15 fake owners

This is just the tip of the iceberg of a massive forgery that took place in the acquisition of one acre or 100 decimals of land to build a Police Bureau of Intelligence (PBI) office in Kolatoli Bypass Road area, adjacent to the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway.

On a visit to the land in question on March 25, this correspondent saw walls have been built with a signboard saying the land had been acquired for PBI. A tin-roofed shanty was also seen inside

An administrative building, barracks, and other structures are set to be built on the land, according to PBI documents.

An investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission found a syndicate in collaboration with land officials embezzled around Tk 29.29 crore of public money against 80 decimals of land through fake papers, keeping the real landowners in the dark, according to ACC documents.

The government had disbursed around Tk 31.13 crore for the acquisition, as per the documents seen by The Daily Star.

An ACC official with knowledge of the forgery told The Daily Star that only one person had withdrawn the money using genuine documents while 15 others used fake powers of attorney and other illegal means to siphon off the public money.

In the acquisition of the 100 decimals of land, standard government procedure was also not followed, the ACC document said.

For instance, Nizam did not receive any notice of acquisition from the local land office but one Nurul Haque, allegedly a member of the syndicate, got the notice on January 23, 2019. The Daily Star obtained a copy of this notice.

As per the Land Acquisition Act-2017, the land acquisition office led by the additional deputy commissioner (revenue), along with the upazila nirbahi officer and assistant commissioner (land) from the area concerned, must make a field visit to the land chosen for acquisition. They then hang a notice in the land area that it has been selected for acquisition.

If no reservation arises from anyone regarding the acquisition, the land acquisition office then proceeds to issue a notice to the landowner by Section-06 of the Land Acquisition Act and prepare a field book by Section-07, which will assess the compensation of land, trees and structures on it. The office then pays the owner.

SYNDICATE FORGED LAND DOCUMENTS

At a press conference on December 6 last year, eight victims of this illegal land acquisition alleged that a syndicate led by Md Edris CIP, Nurul Haque, and Belayet Hossein took control of PBI's land acquisition process.

The syndicate not only faked documents to grab the land but also threatened the genuine landowners to not raise their voice against the illegal acquisition.

Nurul Alam, while reading out a written statement on behalf of all the victims, alleged that the land acquisition office did not take any action against the syndicate despite several appeals and cases regarding the fake documents.

Documents obtained by The Daily Star show the home ministry gave administrative approval for land acquisition for the PBI office in Cox's Bazar on October 1, 2018. The district administration started

the land acquisition process in January 2019, selecting plot numbers 20307, 20306, 17050, and 20163 to acquire 100 decimals of land under Jhilongja mouza of Cox's Bazar Sadar. Among these four, plot 20307 is the

largest with 75 decimals of land with the other three plots making up the rest

The 10-member syndicate hatched a conspiracy centring around these four

Led by Edris CIP and Nurul Haque, the syndicate included the numbers of these government acquired plots in their claim on 54 decimals of land they actually bought through four powers of attorney in two phases in 2018 and 2019 from Chandrima Abasik area, which is half a kilometre away from the plots acquired for PBI, according to documents from land acquisition office.

The land acquisition office treated following day asked the Cox's Bazar these fake owners as real on this basis throughout the whole process, despite several appeals by the genuine landowners. within 30 working days. The land acquisition office disbursed

payment to one Nezamul Haque for 18 decimals of land against plot number 20306 -- however, the khatiyan (record of rights) and land trace map shows only seven decimals of land in that plot. Nezamul received Tk 5.25 crore from

the land acquisition office on March 25, 2020 -- just one day ahead of the countrywide shutdown began due to the coronavirus pandemic. Edris CIP's wife Jinnat Rehana

withdrew money twice using one sale deed (number 1020) -- first as the payment for 4.41 decimals of land and then the payment for nine decimals of

Though she only possessed 10 decimals of land based on the fake sale deed, she received payment for 13.41 decimals in March 2020 to the tune of around Tk 3.5 crore in four cheques.

MONEY RELEASED IN RECORD TIME Documents obtained by The Daily Star revealed that initially, the then land acquisition officer Azit Deb in his payment assessment -- a thorough assessment of the land documents before paying the money -- held back payment on October 9, 2019 citing 10 cases regarding 80 decimals of the land intended for the PBI office were pending with the Joint Session Judge's Court in Cox's Bazar.

As per the law, the money cannot be released until the disposal of cases relating to the intended land.

The payment assessment, a copy of which The Daily Star obtained, further said the land deed that claimed ownership over the 80 decimals was for land in Chandrima Abasik area -- out of the area selected for acquisition.

As Azit Deb had held back payment, Nurul Haque posing as plaintiff submitted a fake memorandum of agreement to new land acquisition officer Shamim Hossain on November 10, 2019 saying that the disputing parties had agreed to take back the cases from court and thereby urged the land acquisition office to release the money.

The land acquisition office led by Ashraful Afsar, former additional deputy commissioner (revenue), and land acquisition officer Shamim Hossain accepted the fake memorandum of agreement and released the money though Nurul Haque was not a plaintiff in any of the cases that were filed relating to the disputed land.

In his review report on December 1, 2019, Shamim Hossain, while overturning Azit Deb's reservation regarding the payment assessment, said that the matter relating to the reservation and cases were resolved through investigation and recommended that the payment process be facilitated.

As the Cox's Bazar administration reshuffled distribution in the land acquisition office on March 24, 2020, the file relating to the PBI land acquisition was then handed over from group 3 to group 1.

"It takes at least one week to transfer the files from one group to another. But group 3 transferred the files immediately and group 1 released 17 cheques worth Tk 17 crore to 14 people the very next day," an ACC official investigating the forgery told The Daily Star, adding that such quick disbursement was a first in the history of land acquisition payments.

The official said as lockdown was looming, the syndicate anticipated that the office would delay the payment and they got the cheques released as fast as they could.

The ACC filed a case on March 10 last year after arresting two middlemen and one surveyor with Tk 96 lakh in their possession, linked to the land acquisition forgery

DĈ-LED PROBE BODY INCLUDED ONE OF THE ACCUSED

Nurul Alam, one of the victims who lost two decimals of land in the PBI acquisition, filed a case seeking court intervention on August 10, 2020 accusing 14 people including Ashraful Afsar, former additional deputy commissioner (revenue), and land acquisition officers Shamim Hossain and Abu Hasnat Md Shahidul Haque.

The court in its order on the

deputy commissioner to investigate the matter regarding the allegation raised by Nurul Alam and submit a report However, the then DC of Cox's Bazar

formed an investigation committee on May 17, 2020 including one of the accused, Ashraful Afsar. The committee, in its investigation,

not surprisingly found nothing wrong in the land acquisition process and submitted its report to the court.

Nurul Alam, who underwent a surgery recently, was unable to talk in detail about the matter. He only told The Daily Star that the case he filed with the court has not seen much progress.

However, an official of Chattogram ACC integrated office-02, who is looking into the forgery case, said an investigation committee with an accused among them couldn't be expected to investigate the matter thoroughly. The committee did not look into the allegations raised by the people deprived of their compensation, he added.

He said that they have got evidence that the syndicate led by Edris CIP, Belayet Hossein, and Nurul Haque resorted to forgery at every stage of the land acquisition process.

Six fraudsters -- Edris CIP, Nurul Haque, Nasir Uddin, Tipu Sultan, Golam Moula, and Shamimur Rahman signed a registered agreement on June 18, 2019 delineating who would bear the bribery costs and everyone's share of the loot after receiving payment from the land acquisition office.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the agreement, which divided the fraudster into two parties -- Edris CIP alone was the first party and the rest five formed the second party in the agreement.

As per the agreement, the six agreed to open a joint bank account. The second party could only withdraw Tk 1 crore as per the agreement while Edris was entitled to the rest of the money as he was bearing all costs relating to the illegal land acquisition. PBI ROLE?

The land in question was chosen by PBI and approved by the district land acquisition committee in 2017, based on which the home ministry gave administrative nod for this the next year.

Md Moniruzzaman, the then additional police super of Cox's Bazar PBI, told The Daily Star on April 26 that as an expectant agency they had no major role to play in land acquisition. "It was done by the land acquisition office of Cox's Bazar district administration.

Asked why an expectant agency would choose a disputed land, he said he was in charge of Cox's Bazar PBI till March 25, 2018 and the process was about to begin during his term.

"So we did not know then who owned what amount of land, it is up to the land acquisition office to verify everything," said Moniruzzaman, now posted in Khagrachhari.

PRESENT STATUS OF THE ACCUSED Both Edris CIP and Nurul Haque were recently arrested by the ACC.

Nezamul Haque, one of the accused who withdrew Tk 5.25 crore against 18 decimals of land while owning only seven decimals of land on paper, claimed to The Daily Star that documents proving his ownership of 18 decimals of land were publicly available.

However, a search of the e-mutation website of the Cox's Bazar land office revealed that the khatiyan number 7545 against the land belonging to Nezamul was found suspended.

Another accused Belayet Hossein did not respond to multiple phone calls.

Asked how the money was released to fake owners of land despite dozens of cases pending with the court, land acquisition officer Shamim Hossain told The Daily Star that he wasn't authorised to make any comment without permission from his supervisors.

Ashraful Afsar, former additional deputy commissioner (revenue) of Cox's Bazar, now transferred to the Ministry of Science and Technology, told The Daily Star that he could recollect one incident when one cheque was pending due to some complications. After forming a three-member committee, they released the cheque later.

"Apart from this, everything was done following due procedure," he claimed.

65 more die of Covid, 1,739 get infected

Unb, Dhaka

Bangladesh reported that 65 more people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday, raising the death toll to 11,644.

The health authorities recorded 1,739 new infections after examining 13,431 samples, according to data available at corona.gov.bd.

A handout from the Directorate General of Health Services put the number of tests at 19,431, including antigen tests.

Bangladesh has so far tested 55,18,410 samples, according to the

There has been a steady decline in the number of tests since April 28 when 28,206 samples were tested. With a fall in tests, the number of new cases too went down gradually from April 26 (3,306) to May 2 (1,359) before a slightly upward curve.

Yesterday's daily infection rate slipped to 8.95 percent from Sunday's 9.6 percent, but the mortality rate remained static at 1.52 percent.

Bangladesh has recorded less than 70 virus-related deaths since Friday. The death toll soared to over 100 during April 16-19 and on April 25, but since then the daily fatalities have been falling gradually.

With the latest figure, 7,63,682 cases have been recorded in the country so far, the DGHS said in the handout. This puts Bangladesh at 33rd in the list of countries with highest cases, according to Johns Hopkins University tally.

The number of recoveries now stands at 6,91,162, including 3,834 new one. So far, 90.50 percent patients have recovered.

Bangladesh reported its first coronavirus cases on March 8 last year, and the first death on March 18 that Covid-19 claimed 2,404 lives in

the country since the outbreak of the pandemic last year. Of all coronavirus-related deaths reported until the end of last month, April alone recorded 20.99 percent

April alone, the deadliest month for

fatalities. In the last month, 147,837 new were officially registered,

according to DGHS. In Bangladesh, 568 coronaviruselated deaths were reported in January, 281 in February and 638 in

Dhaka division remains the worsthit region, registering most of the deaths -- 6,784 or 58.26 percent.

Thirty-two of the 65 deaths reported yesterday are from Dhaka division and 17 from Chattogram division.

Khaleda

FROM PAGE 1

Covid-19 test result on April 24.

Her doctor had said she needed to stay at the hospital for a few days as her medical tests had been due for more than a year and a half.

Khaleda is receiving treatment under cardiologist Shahabuddin Talukdar.

The BNP chief has been suffering from arthritis, diabetics and eye problems. She first tested Covid-19 positive on April 11.

Speaking at a press briefing yesterday, Zahid told journalists that Khaleda developed breathing

difficulties early in the morning. "Doctors soon examined her and the medical board decided to shift her to CCU," he said.

A 10-member medical board is ooking after the treatment of the BNP chairperson.

The physician said Khaleda's treatment was going on properly. "We on behalf of Khaleda Zia request all to pray for her quick recovery."

Asked if the former PM was suffering from breathing problems due to Covid-19 infection, Zahid said, "One can develop breathing problems anytime. She was moved to the CCU after consultations with doctors."

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir called Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday evening to inform him about the condition of Khaleda.

Asked if Khaleda's family sought permission to take her abroad for treatment, Fakhrul told The Daily Star that it was not the case.

Amid the coronavirus outbreak the government on March 25 last year freed Khaleda from jail for six months through an executive order suspending her jail sentences in two graft cases.

She was released from the prison cell at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University the same day. Since then, Khaleda had been staying at her Gulshan residence.

The government extended her release period for six months on August 27 last year. It was extended for another six months on March 15 this year.

On February 8, 2018, the BNP chief was sent to Old Dhaka Central Jail after a court sentenced her to five years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. The High Court later doubled her sentence.

Khaleda was found guilty in another graft case the same year. Her party, however, claims both the cases are politically motivated.

terminal's leaseholder, said sources at Mamata relegates Left to footnote

28 passengers.

where minorities are a decisive factor contributed to the Mamata-led

landslide victory of the TMC.

The TMC made a clean sweep in all the 16 seats in Kolkata, 10 out of 11 seats in Birbhum, 30 of 33 seats in North 24-parganas and 28 out of 31 seats in South 24-parganas, and all 32 seats in Purba Burdwan and Howrah.

Voting in these districts were held in the last three of the eight phases of the assembly polls. It happened as the second wave of Covid-19 exploded in

The TMC not only won at its

strongholds but also in the areas where

the BJP had done well in 2019 Lok Sabha elections, including the former Maoist hotbed of Junglemahal. Another important factor that went in favour of the TMC was that it managed to snatch almost all the seats that were considered traditional

Dinajpur and Murshidabad. The Congress and Left parties had together won 77 seats in 2016 and almost all of those went to the TMC this

Congress bastions like Malda, South

The Muslim and non-Muslim votes that had in the past gone to Congress and Left also went en bloc to the TMC.

The Muslims have been backing the TMC since 2011 when the party came to power for the first time. But the way

Muslims rallied behind Mamata this time was something never seen before. In the 141 constituencies with significant Muslim presence, the TMC bagged 120, BJP bagged 20 and Abbas

the TMC in order to prevent a BJP win in Bengal.

None of the top Left leaders came to Bengal to campaign even for a day. But they were busy electioneering in Kerala,

Congress star campaigners Rahul Gandhi addressed just one meeting in Bengal while his sister gave the state a total miss. But the siblings had extensively campaigned in Kerala, Tamil

30 years, got only 3 percent of the votes, while the CPIM, that ruled WB for 34 years, got less than 5 percent.

electoral history by returning to power.

Siddiqui's Indian Secular Front one.

A senior CPI(M) leader told The Daily Star wishing anonymity that the Congress and the Left did not stand a chance in the election in Bengal and it was a conscious decision to facilitate the transfer of the votes to

Tamil Nadu and Assam.

Nadu and Assam. The Congress, which ruled Bengal for

However, CM Pinarayi Vijayan, the Communist party stalwart, created Besides, the young candidates of the CPIM, who created a lot of media hype,

including Meenakshi Mukherjee, Aishi Ghosh and Dipsita Dhar, failed to make



Cabinet clears draft law for pvt medical and dental colleges

The cabinet yesterday gave the final approval to the draft of Private Medical College and Dental College Act, 2021 to ensure discipline in private medical and dental colleges by bringing those under a law from two separate guidelines.

The approval was given at the weekly cabinet meeting held with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The premier virtually joined the meeting, held at the secretariat, from Gono Bhaban.

The private medical and dental colleges in Bangladesh are now operated under the Private Medical College Establishment and Operation Guidelines 2011 and Private Dental College Establishment and Operation Guidelines 2009.

While briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said a medical or dental college must have at least 50 students while its teacher-student ratio will have to be 1:10 as per the proposed law.

A medical college needs to have at least two acres of land in any metropolitan area while the land requirement for the dental college is one acre, he said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Bracing for traffic jam

City dwellers say roads are already crowded as lockdown remains only on paper; bus service resumes Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite no buses plying the roads, the capital is still witnessing heavy traffic amid the "lockdown". If that is the scenario right now, when buses start running from Thursday, Dhaka may once again turn into a city of traffic jams, city dwellers fear.

Restrictions were imposed on movement of people and public transportation on April 5, to contain the second wave of Covid-19. The restrictions had then been extended until May 5 in phases. Yesterday, they were was once again extended till May 16, but with a directive to resume intra-district bus services from May 6

However, roads and shopping malls are already crowded with vehicles and people amid the restrictions, ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Yesterday, heavy traffic congestion was seen on Mirpur road, Pragati Sarani, Gulshan, Banani, Mohakhali, New Market, Elephant road, Bangla Motor, Panthapath, and Karwan Bazar areas.

The congestion got heavier during office hour -- in the morning and

Talking to this correspondent, Riaz Uddin, employee of a private organisation, said resumption of public transportation may help officegoers commute, but it will also increase traffic jams.

"Currently, I'm seeing no restrictions on roads actually. Private cars, auto-rickshaws, covered-vans, trucks, staff buses, and motorbikes -- all are plying on the roads. If buses also start running, the city may return to its

Nurul Islam, another job-holder who commutes on ride-sharing motorbikes, said his costs for commuting to office rose threefold, as public

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Anti-Modi Protests

Release 51 arrestees before Eid: activists

Noted rights activists yesterday demanded the release of 51 people who were arrested between March 25 and April 28 in connection with the movement against Indian Prime Minister Lalit Modi's visit to Bangladesh.

They demanded that these 51 activists and leaders of Bangladesh Student, Youth and Labour Rights Council be released before Eid-ul-Fitr.

Under the banner of civil society representatives, a sit-in programme was held at the base of Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka.

Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder and trustee, presided over the programme.

Eminent photographer and activist Shahidul Alam; Gonosamhati Andolon Chief Coordinator Zonayed Saki; Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna; Dhaka University law department Professor Asif Nazrul and DU statistics department professor Md Lutfor Rahman were present at the demonstration alongside family members of those arrested.

"Students were arrested as they raised their voice for the people's rights. It's not an offence. In the past, students have taught us how to raise our voice against oppression. We demand immediate release of the 51 arrested and withdrawal of the false cases against them," said Dr

Former VP of DU Central Students' Union Nurul Haque

In hopes of safer, better buildings across country

Revised building code now a law, with provisions like rainwater harvesting; authority for its implementation to be formed soon

HELEMUL ALAM

With the introduction of a provision for mandatory rainwater harvesting for buildings across the country, the government on February 11 published a gazette notification, making the revised Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) a law.

However, the code will remain ineffective like earlier, unless the proposed authority to enforce BNBC is not formed, according to leading professionals.

BNBC now has a provision of

forming a separate authority for the code's implementation, which was missing earlier. Experts demanded that the

government form the authority as soon as possible. Asked, Housing and Public Works

secretary Shahid Ullah Khandaker recently told The Daily Star that they are taking steps to form the authority,

and it will be formed soon.

The first BNBC was developed in 1993 and enacted in November 15, 2006, followed by amendment of the Building Construction Act-1952. As a living document, the code needs to be updated periodically in intervals of 4-5 years, but it took too many years to be updated, said experts.

Despite tragic losses of lives and properties in repeated building disasters, the country's building code remains largely unimplemented for 28 years, in the absence of an enforcement authority, said leading professionals.

The government had neither constituted a building regulatory authority nor designated building officials all these years for enforcement of BNBC, considered the most essential tool for safe and environment-sensitive building

construction. BNBC is a complete set of rules to

ensure safe construction for a healthy atmosphere, use of quality materials accountability of professionals, and conservation of environment.

The code states that engineers, architects and planners involved in a building's construction would be legally accountable for any anomalies in their professional duty.

After implementation, to construct any building in any place of the country, the owners will have to follow BNBC.

RAINWATER HARVESTING

According to BNBC, every building proposed for construction on plots covering 300 square metres or more shall have facilities for conserving and harvesting rainwater.

Rainwater can be conserved and used for suitable purposes. The amount of rainwater to be conserved depends on the purpose of use,

'Stop character assassination of victims of violence'

Nari Pragati Sangha urges media to be more responsible

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) expressed grave concern over the prevailing culture of character assassination of women and their family members in media, especially in connection with the recent death of a college girl at a Gulshan apartment.

According to BNPS, such propaganda in the media is intended to divert the facts by covering up the influential persons involved in the crime, which can hinder proper investigation and delivery of justice. The culture of character assassination of women was

largely present in the media until the first half of the nineties, mentioned a press statement signed by BNPS's executive director Rokeya Kabir. With a few exceptions, in almost all cases, pictures and

detailed family identities of victims of rape and torture were published, while the pictures of rapists or torturers were not printed, and even their [perpetrators] names were concealed carefully, it read.

BNPS along with many organisations working for gender equality conducted different training programmes to sensitise journalists, which brought a visible change in the media in terms of reporting gender-based violence.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Jaintapur sees road crash at same spot for second day

This time three dead, two injured; three more killed in Sirajganj road accidents

STAR REPORT

For the second consecutive day, a road accident occurred in the same area of Svlhet's Jaintapur, killing three people and injuring two others this time. The accident occurred on Sylhet-Tamabil

highway yesterday when a Jaflong-bound brick-laden truck crashed into a roadside motor workshop around 1:30am when the driver lost control of it, said Omar Faruque, inspector of Jaintapur Police Station. The deceased were identified as owner

of the workshop Sohel Ahmed (30) of Golapganj upazila, Ashik Ahmed (31), and Sultan Ahmed (30) both of Gachbari Nayagram village in Kanaighat upazila. Police and fire service personnel

recovered the bodies and sent them to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College for autopsys The injured -- Sumon and Sahel -- are also undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Police seized the truck but the driver fled. The accident comes within a day after a truck hit a CNG-run auto-rickshaw on the same highway, killing five people including four of a family.

In Sirajganj, at least three people were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents in Mohisluti's Bonpara-

Hatikumrul highway yesterday morning. The accidents took place at Mohishluti Bazar and on the highway's Bridge 9 areas. The first one occurred at 6am while the second one an hour later.

OC Md Sajahan Ali of Hatikumrul highway Police Station said the accident at Bridge 9 took place when a rock-laden truck hit and a vehicle carrying newspaper and killed Shahin Hasan (44) on the spot. Three others were also injured, of whom Saddam Hossain (32) died on the way to Sirajganj General Hospital.

Around 7am, a speeding truck collided with a courier service van at Mohishluti Bazar, killing the truck helper on the spot. Three others were also injured, police said.

Identity of the helper, aged around 20, could not be known immediately.



With few modes of transportation available, battery-run rickshaws drivers in Chattogram city are taking on more commuters than the vehicle can possibly fit. Not only is there a risk of accident, but of Covid-19 infection as well. The photo was taken yesterday at Shah Amanat Bridge.

Rab detains two in Savar over alleged rape of minor Our Correspondent, Savar

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-4) detained two people from Savar's Aminbazar area on Sunday night for allegedly raping a 14-year old girl.

The elite force officially confirmed the matter yesterday through a press release signed by Md Ziaur Rahman Chowdhury, Assistant Director (Media) of RAB-4. The detainees were identified as Md Parvez (45) and

Kumari Ranzita Rani (19). According to the press release, the victim was "manipulated" and taken to Parvez's house by her

neighbour Ranzita on Saturday night. Later, Parvez raped the victim multiple times with the help of Ranzita. After the victim's family field a written complaint, Rab

started investigation into the incident and detained the Both arrestees were handed over to Savar Model Police

Saiful Islam, inspector (investigation) of Savar Model Police Station, told The Daily Star the accused were produced before a Dhaka court, seeking seven days remand

The court granted one-day remand for each, he added.

Consider student visa emergency service

Students appeal to German Embassy in Dhaka after facing visa difficulties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi students studying at various German universities, stuck in the country ever since the second wave of Covid-19 broke out, have appealed to the German Embassy in Dhaka and the foreign ministry to facilitate student visa processing amid the "lockdown", considering it as an emergency and special service.

Due to movement restrictions, nearly 1,000 Bangladeshi students admitted to nearly 350 German universities have been unable to reach their campuses due to visa complications, they said.

At a press conference held at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday, the students called on the government and the German Embassy to take their appeal into count. They also submitted a memorandum to the foreign ministry in this regard.

Speaking on behalf of the students, Nazim Uddin, a student of Germany's OTH Ambergen Weiden University, said though the students can attend classes online, some of the universities have already informed them that they have to be physically present at campus by August.

"If the foreign ministry takes the initiative, we will be able to save our studentship," he said. Nazim Uddin said that among the students who

applied for visa interviews and visas in last year's June, only 150 were able to completed their visa process at the German Embassy, while around 1,000 applied but did not get visas.

"Due to the lockdown, issuing German visas is halted. But it is possible to carry out the process by following health guidelines," he said.

Speakers at the press conference said that almost all the students have deposited around Tk 11 lakh in block accounts, while many others have already submitted their tuition fees.

In an attempt to have their voices heard, students from Bangladesh have joined a social media campaign under the hashtag #EducationIsNotTourism, alongside students from different countries.

For months, the students have been urging embassies and other important bodies to help sort out their visa issues so that they're studies are not interrupted.

Protect waterbodies, forests to solve water crisis in CHT: speakers

During every dry season, indigenous people of Chittagong Hill Tracts face acute water shortage.

Rivers, waterfalls, canals and lakes are being dried up due to unrestricted stone extraction. Besides, reduction of water level in Kaptai Lake and lowering of groundwater table in the region have also contributed to this

Yesterday, speakers raised the issue at a webinar titled "Indigenous people in water crisis".

A media platform of indigenous peoples -- IP News BD -- arranged the event, moderated by its editor-in-charge Anthony Rema.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association; Pavel Partha, researcher and author; Mathura Bikash Tripura, executive director, Jabrang Welfare Association; Anurug Chakma, assistant professor, department of peace and conflict studies, Dhaka University; advocate Susmita Chakma, and Mohammad Zahed Hasan, programme manager, Manusher Jonno Foundation, spoke at the webinar. Syeda Rizwana said, "A survey has to be conducted to identify rivers,

canals and other waterbodies which have dried up. If there is no water, there will be no tree and wildlife." "There are many brick kilns in the hills which are running without any

permission and papers. These brick kilns can overheat the surroundings. These should also be stopped immediately," she added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Tk 10 lakh or both.

Evercare Hospital begins operations in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Global healthcare consortium Evercare Group has started operating its second chain hospital Evercare Hospital Chattogram, providing both outdoor and indoor health services since early April.

The 470-bed hospital is located in the Ananna Residential Area of the port city's Hathazari area. It is the first ever multidisciplinary super-specialty tertiary care hospital in Chattogram, said officials.

"Evercare Hospital Chattogram is determined to support the people of Chattogram and take care of all their healthcare needs," hospital COO Nilesh

Gupta told The Daily Star on Thursday. The hospital is also well-equipped with

Covid-19 treatment facility, officials added. In a press conference last month, Evercare Group CEO Massimiliano Colella said it is the only 470-bed multidisciplinary hospital of international standard in Chattogram.

Officials said Evercare built the hospital with treatment of heart diseases in mind, given its high incidence in the city.

Construction for the hospital started in September 2014 on about one acre of land. The construction cost was Tk 850 crore.

The hospital will be officially inaugurated after the Covid-19 situation improves in the country.

Protect

Mathura Bikash said, "We have been facing acute water shortage this time of the year for many years. One of the main reasons behind it is that we have already chopped down most of the large ancient trees. The barren hills cannot conserve water which is why we cannot find water in the rivers, canals and springs."

Anurug Chakma alleged that the forest department is itself involved in eliminating forests. They are collaborating with local ruling party leaders, thugs and elites in eliminating the natural forests, he added.

Susmita Chakma said, "We have been living with water scarcity for years. But, this year, we have witnessed a severe crisis of drinkable and usable water.

"Usually, women are responsible for fetching water and they often have to walk miles away from home. So, they are fearful of rape, kidnap and sexual violence.

Also, they have to spend so much time for domestic chores which is why they cannot participate in income generating activities," added Susmita.

"Unplanned Partha said, urbanisation has destroyed our entire ecosystem. Excessive emission of carbon dioxide and overpopulation are some of the reasons behind such unbearable heat. The government should prepare a list of all hilly rivers, lakes and springs which are used as water sources and protect those at all cost."

Mohammad Zahed Hasan said, "Many women go out to fetch water even at around 3am. The water scarcity has taken a severe turn in the hill tracts areas. The number of NGOs that used to implement projects on solving water crisis is dwindling.

speakers demanded that the government take pragmatic steps immediately to solve water crisis in the indigenous districts and villages.



Award of job under this recruitment is subject to securing fund from respective donor

CARE is a leading international humanitarian agency working in Bangladesh since 1949 to help people achieve social and economic well-being. We put women and girls at the center of our work because we know that we cannot overcome poverty until all people have equal rights and opportunities. We seek dynamic, innovative thinkers to further our mission. Currently, CARE Bangladesh is looking for following positions for W-GDP Women Thrive in Bangladesh Activity Project.

- Chief of Party/Project Director
- **Deputy Chief of Party**
- **Technical Coordinator Advocacy and Communication**

CARE is seeking to increase diversity in its staff profile, qualified women with appropriate experience will get preference. We are committed to a workplace that is supportive of women

There is no cost involved with applying for positions with CARE Bangladesh. Any solicitation of job application costs should be regarded as fraudulent.



If you feel confident about your suitability then please visit for details and apply online by May 10, 2021 at https://career.carebangladesh.org/

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer, DPHE

Lakshmipur District, Lakshmipur

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি Date: 03/05/2021

Memo No. 46.03.5100.061.07.265.14-1054

e-Tender Notice No. 19 (2020-21)

Implementing agency Project/program name Department of Public Health Engineering.

Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-4) 574506, 574527 Description of works:

 Major Maintenance of 16 Nos. Government Primary School at Ramgonj Upazila in Lakshmipur District under Primary Education Development Program-4 (PEDP-4).
 Major Maintenance of 29 Nos. Government Primary School at Sadar Upazila in Lakshmipur District under Primary Major Maintenance of 29 Nos. Government From July Education Development Program-4 (PEDP-4).

Soldings of official | Md. Rafiqul Islam, Executive Engineer, DPHE, Lakshmipur District. Name, designation & address of official inviting tender

This is online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be Interested person/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd

GD-885

GD-880

Md. Rafiqul Islam

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Pubali Bank Limited, the largest online commercial Bank in Bangladesh, is hereby inviting sealed Tenders from the eligible Tenderers who can participate in the following Tender as defined in the tender documents of the under mentioned work as per Terms and Conditions stated below:

1. Supplying, Installing, Commissioning and Maintenance of 15 (Fifteen) different Servers and related Software for IDTP, BACH-II, RTGS and Management Zone at Data Center of Pubali Bank Limited.

Please visit https://www.pubalibangla.com/tender.asp for more details. Interested Parties may purchase Tender documents by 20 May **2021** duly fulfilling all other requirements.

(Md. Helal Uddin) GM & Division Head



ICT OPERATION DIVISION Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer PWD E/M Wood Workshop Division, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka Phone & Fax: 88-02-55028813

Website: www.pwd.gov.bd

Date: 29/04/2021

Memo No. 25.36.2680.534.14.170.21-2200

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tenders are invited in the National e-GP Portal:							
SI. No.	Tender ID No.	LTM/OTM	Last selling date	Opening date			
01	574056	OTM	16/05/2021	16/05/2021			
02	574066	OTM	16/05/2021	16/05/2021			
03	574245	OTM	20/05/2021	20/05/2021			
04	574036	OTM	23/05/2021	23/05/2021			
05	574053	OTM	23/05/2021	23/05/2021			

This is an online tender where only e-Tenderer will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GF help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



PWD/EM Wood Workshop Division Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka ee_wood@pwd.gov.bd

Press Freedom Day observed in Barishal

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, journalists in Barishal yesterday sought a safer work environment and demanded assurance of their livelihoods.

They also demanded repealing of Digital Security Act and sought equal payments for journalists outside Dhaka. Speakers made the demands at a discussion organised by Barishal Reporters Unity at its office. It was presided over by the organisation's president Nazrul Biswas.

Journalists Mohammad Ali Khan Jasim, Gazi Shahriaj, Kamrul Ahasan, Sushanta Ghosh, and Mithun Saha addressed the programme, among others.

They said the freedom of journalists is being endangered again and again. This is not only due to influential people or because of the Digital Security Act, but also because journalists don't have any financial safety.

Moreover, the profession as a whole is losing its attractiveness due to low wages, the speakers observed. Given the difficulties, everyone must come forward to ensure a free mass media, they said.

Meanwhile in Patuakhali, Patuakhali Press Club held a human chain marking the day, reports our local correspondent. Journalists also brought out a procession on the occasison.

Release 51

Nur said, "We have already taken the decision that we will celebrate Eid Ul Fitr in front of Gono Bhaban if our colleagues aren't released before Eid."

Most of the arrested are students. Three are students of

The activists met with Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Professor M Akhtaruzzaman afterwards and requested him to ask for bail for the arrested students as a guardian.

"As teachers and guardians, the students always have our sympathy. I am requesting the authorities concerned to not harass students unnecessarily. I also ask them to not frame them in false cases. Cases were not filed against students by the university authority. They were arrested by law enforcement agencies. So the legal procedure will go on. I have only that one request, otherwise there is nothing else to do about it," the VC said.

Stop character

However, with the death of the college girl at Gulshan, some media outlets influenced by the key accused in the case, became quick to discredit the victim and her family members, it said.

According to BNPS, whenever the perpetrator or accused is an influential person, some media outlets try to protect him, and as part of this, they try to divert the investigation by spreading stories on the character of the

Such practice creates a strong public opinion against the victims and women in the society, which not only harms the victims and their family but also affects the wider society, and even provokes further violence against women and girls, read the statement.

BNPS informed the media that no matter the identity, lifestyle or occupation of a victim of violence, rape or murder, there is no scope to condone the crime itself.

In the spirit of the Liberation War, the media has an important role to play in building a violence-free, genderequal society, it said.

If media is diligent in fulfilling this role, its benefits will not only reflect on women, but it will also accelerate the overall progress of the country since women make up half of the total population, it added.

In hopes of

rainfall intensity at the locality and available catchments from where rainwater shall be collected.

Two major aspects of this facility are rooftop rainwater harvesting, and artificial groundwater recharge (replenishing groundwater by the harvested rainwater), according to BNBC.

To ensure only fresh rainwater is used for recharge, aquifers and qualified plumbers will be involved in the process. The revised BNBC said rainwater harvesting system should not be installed without permission from authorities concerned, which will be formed to enforce the

"An application for a permit for rainwater harvesting and drainage work shall be submitted... by a licensed plumber and the [building] owner, or by their appointed person or agent...," reads the code.

WHAT EXPERTS SAY

Adil Mohammad Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said there are no rules and regulations to construct buildings in rural areas outside Dhaka, but BNBC has specified the authorities, and what types of buildings are allowed to be constructed in which area.

He said to construct any building in the country the owners will have to go through a legal procedure due to the code. He said a post of "building official" has been proposed in BNBC, and they will monitor construction

The code also fixed engineering and planning standards among other requirements for buildings. They also fixed building categories and occupancy requirements, he added.

Even issues like submitting plans and taking approvals, special procedures for big projects, taking occupancy certificates, the kinds of procedures that were earlier only applicable for big cities will be enforced in small towns and villages, after the code comes into effect.

BNBC also has given emphasis on keeping facilities for people with disabilities. There are provisions for constructing disabled-friendly buildings, he said.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon joint secretary Iqbal Habib said they want its implementation as soon as possible.

Except the obligation of maintaining setbacks while constructing buildings, all other things during and after construction of a building have proper guidelines or directions in the code, he said.

"But the building regulation authority is very important, and we want an authority to enforce BNBC," he said.

"We failed to implement the Detailed Area Plan, as we failed to construct an authority, and again territorial dispute and duplicity could not be solved due to the lack of an authority," he said.

There are many things in the code, but there is a lack of details and explanations, which is the code's weakness,

"We hope the authority that will be formed will prepare those details to make it more effective," he said.

M Abu Sadeque, immediate-past director of Housing and Building Research Institute, said, "Compliance with the building code would ensure a life-saving, built-in system with sufficient fire-safety and earthquake resistance measures in a building.'

"Bangladesh has had its own code since 1993, but enforcement is not at all satisfactory. For a safer Bangladesh as well as well-being of people and properties, we have no other alternative but to implement the national building code all over the country," he said.

Cabinet clears

For setting up a medical college outside any metropolitan area, the land requirement is four acres and it is two acres for a dental college, said Anwarul Islam.

For a medical college, Tk 3 crore will have to be deposited with any commercial bank and Tk 2 crore for any dental college as reserve funds.

The proposed law says any medical college must have one lakh square feet of space for academic purposes and another one lakh square feet of space for hospital

For a dental college, the hospital space has to be 50,000 square feet each.

The cabinet secretary said the authorities concerned will inspect such colleges and hospitals from time to time. He also said medical and dental colleges

will have to be affiliated with a public Anwarul Islam said the government will fix the academic fees for medical and dental

Besides, he said, private medical college or dental college authorities will have to dispose of their wastes in a scientific

At yesterday's meeting, the cabinet also gave the final approval to the draft of Territorial Waters and Maritime Zones

medical colleges and 26 private dental colleges in the country.

In case of violation of the law, the cabinet

Currently, there are some 70 private

secretary said the maximum punishment

will be two years' imprisonment or a fine of

(Amendment) Act, 2021 to make it a more time-befitting one. The cabinet secretary said the old law, which was enacted in 1974, has to be

amended amid the evolving situation. The cabinet also approved in principle the Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Act, 2021 for scrapping two

ordinances that were promulgated in the military regimes in 1976 and 1986. There will be a corporation for which the authorised capital will be Tk 5,000 crore while the paid-up capital Tk 200 crore. The

corporation will have a chairman. As per the proposed law, it can form a company,

Bracing for

buses are not running. If the service is resumed, it would help members of lowermiddle income group, as they have no alternative but to go to work.

The government-imposed "lockdown" appears to be in place on paper only, as there is little to no restrictions being

implemented in reality, he said. Some said resumption of public transportation will pose a risk of spreading coronavirus more, as buses carry more passengers.

Traffic police were seen busy at some key intersections like Bijoy Sarani, Karwan Bazar, Manik Mia Avenue, Shahbagh, Kalabagan, and Nilkhet areas, to control tailbacks.

Meanwhile, sellers at different shopping centres and malls think that the number of customers may increase from Thursday, when intra-district public transport services

They said many customers from the city and surrounding districts of Dhaka would

rush to the markets ahead of Eid.

Visiting some major shopping malls and markets in Dhaka -- including New Market, Chandni Chawk, Gausia, Noor Mansion, Metro Shopping Mall and Bashundhara City Mall -- vesterday, The Daily Star correspondents found customers pouring into shops from 11am.

At most shopping centres, maintaining health and safety rules appeared to be a big challenge due to the heavy flow of customers.

In the afternoon, the crowd got heavier in the markets.

To attract more customers ahead of Eid, shop owners demanded business hours be extended till 12am, keeping iftar time in

Talking to this correspondent, a police official, wishing not to be named, said they now rarely check for movement pass, as it may increase tailback on the streets.

"However, random checking of vehicles is going on," he added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh College Education Development Project (CEDP)



Memo No. 125/mkc/2021

Website: www.mkc.edu.bd Date: 04/05/2021 e-Tender Notice 08/2020-2021

E-mail: mkc_1972@yahoo.com

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following package: SI. Tender Name of works Last date and time Tender No. ID No. of tender security closing date & submission time Procurement of Laboratory 20-May-2021 13.00 20-May-2021 Equipment and 14.00 Mohammadpur Kendriya College, Dhaka.

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.

Portal To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP (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 [19May-2021 16.00].

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP held desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Syed Jafar Ali Principal

Mohammadpur Kendriya College

Noorjahan Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207 E-mail: mkc 1972@yahoo.com



Strand Road, Sadarghat, Chattogram-4000 3rd Corrigendum Notice

Project name: Construction of 12 (G+11) Storied Modern Residential cum Commercial Office Building with 02 (two) Basements of Padma Oil Company Limited at 6, Paribag, Dhaka-1000. Invitation Ref. No. 28.22.2675.854.17.001.21, date: 24/02/2021.

This is for inform of all concerned that the above tender has been published on the Daily Samakal, The Daily Observer on 24/02/2021 & the Daily Kalerkantho, the Daily Jugantor, The Daily Star on 25/02/2021 and the websites of POCL, CPTU, BPC from 24/02/2021; 1st Corrigendum Notice has been published on the Daily Kalerkantho, the Daily Samakal, The Daily Observer, The Daily Star on 05/04/2021 & the Daily Jugantor on 06/04/2021 and the websites of POCL, CPTU, BPC from 05/04/2021 and 2nd Corrigendum Notice has been published on the Daily Kalerkantho on 22/04/2021, the Daily Samakal, The Daily Observer, The Daily Star on 23/04/2021 & the Daily Jugantor on 25/04/2021 and the websites of POCL, CPTU, BPC from 22/04/2021. Now due to unavoidable circumstances the following

amendments have been carried out: Clause No., Page Description in Description as per To be read No. original documents 2nd Corrigendum (Corrected as) Notice Tender last selling Tender last selling In Tender Notice SI Tender last selling date: 18/05/2021 No. 15 date: 11/04/2021 date: 04/05/2021 In Tender Notice SI Tender submission Tender submission Tender submission date time: No. 16 and in date & time: date & & time: 12/04/2021 up to Technical Offer ITT 05/05/2021 up to 19/05/2021 up to 42.1, ITT 42.3, ITT 1400 hrs. 1300 hrs. 1400 hrs. 42.4 Page No. 38 In Tender Notice SI Tender opening date Tender opening date Tender opening date No. 17 and in & time: 12/04/2021 & time: 05/05/2021 & time: 19/05/2021 Technical Offer ITT at 1400 hrs. at 1500 hrs. at 1500 hrs.

48.1 Page No. 38 All other terms and conditions of the tender schedule shall remain unchanged.

সবাই মিলে গড়বো দেশ, দূর্নীতিমুক্ত বাংলাদেশ

Engr. Md. Mosaddeque Hossain **Project Director** Mobile: +88-01777-703334 Tel: +88-02-58615385 Email: pdparibagh@gmail.com

GD-883

GD-884

ह प्रसा



People in one of the affected areas in Bagerhat place pitchers and all sorts of containers to collect purified water from a mobile water purification truck, set up by the district administration in collaboration with Department of Public Health Engineering.

Water purification capacity low, inadequate

Say people in Mongla, Morrelganj and Sharankhola upazilas where five mobile water purification plants are dispensing purified water

Our Correspondent, Bagerhat

The district administration of Bagerhat, in collaboration with the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), has started emergency supply of water from five mobile water purification plants in Mongla, Morrelganj and Sharankhola -- three of the upazilas that are facing severe drought and water scarcity.

However, since a large number of people are waiting in queues for hours every day in front of the water dispensing trucks, it is apparent that the amount of water being distributed from each unit is inadequate, said residents of the affected areas.

Bagerhat is a coastal district where tube wells are not installed due to high salinity in groundwater. Hence, locals have to rely on harvested rainwater or filtered freshwater from ponds for consumption and everyday use.

Recently, waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea broke out in a number of upazilas in the district after residents were compelled to consume saline water, as the freshwater sources dried up in months of drought.

Despite the ongoing heat wave, people in the affected areas are now seen scouring nearby villages in search of potable water.

Jannati Khatun, a homemaker in Khuriakhali

village of Sharankhola upazila, said, "Tube wells are of no use in our area due to salinity. We have to depend on ponds and rainwater.

"But this year, extreme heat dried up water in the ponds. Water in the canals also has high salinity. So, we have no choice but consume the saline water and use it for bathing."

Many of them are having stomach aches while many others are falling sick due to the consumption of saline water, she also said.

Ruma, from Panirghat area in the upazila, said she was going home after collecting a pitcher of water from a pond in a neighbouring village.

Two members in her family had to be hospitalised for several days after they contracted diarrhoea, she added.

In Morrelganj, Saleha Begum was returning home carrying a jar filled with purified water that she got from a DPHE dispenser truck. She said she had not been able to find potable water in the area over the past 25 days and survival this way was getting quite difficult.

Hasibul from Rayenda Bazar area in Sharankhola upazila said he had to wait two hours before he got his turn to get water from a water purification unit in the area.

He also said that it is unimaginable how hundreds of people have to wait eagerly in

lines every day in the scorching sun, for some drinking water.

Rayenda Union Parishad Chairman Asaduzzaman Milon said about 1.5 lakh residents of the union depend on harvested rainwater as well as on water preserved in ponds.

Although water is being dispensed from mobile water purifying units in the area, the dispensing capacity is below the local demand, he observed.

DPHE Executive Engineer FM Ismail Hossain said that following visits in the severely affected areas, the DPHE, in collaboration with the district administration, set up two mobile water purification units in Mongla, one in Morrelganj and two in Sharankhola upazilas.

Each unit is capable of dispensing 600 litres of purified water every hour, he said, adding that they would continue the service until the water scarcity in the areas is resolved.

Bagerhat Deputy Commissioner ANM Faizul Haque said that with the help of the DPHE, they were working on to meet local demands for purified water in the affected areas.

In the meantime, people in those areas should only consume water that is either boiled or purified with water purifying tablets, he advised

Mysterious fires worrying villagers in Thakurgaon

Our Correspondent, Thakurgaon

Dwellers of Choto Singia Munshipara village in Baliadangi upazila of Thakurgaon are passing days in great worries over recurrent fire incidents.

However, the cause of the origin of the fires which have been occurring for about one month is yet to be determined.

Even amidst vigilance the fire breaks out suddenly engulfing rooms, furniture, clothes, straw heaps or sacks of food grains. For this, the villagers cannot sleep without fear.

To douse the fire, villagers have set up pumps at different points, they are also reserving water in pots with their reach.

Police and firefighters are yet to determine the actual cause of fire incidents after visiting the village.

During a recent visit, this correspondent observed that there are about 80 households in the village. Signs of anxiety could be seen on the people's faces especially among the women and children.

They have kept their belongings including clothes, bags, and books in their courtyard to save those from the fire.

Talking to this correspondent, the villagers said, the fire originated at the house of one Muslim Uddin about a month ago, which was doused by the firefighters. Soon after extinguishing the fire, it (fire) also broke out at Sirajuddin's straw heap. Fire service also doused the fire.

After these incidents, the fire originated at the houses of Babul Hossain, Abdus Salam, Delwar Hossain, Moksedul, Merina Begum and Saifullah at the same village.

egum and Saifullah at the same village. It broke out at different places including straw heaps, bedcover, clothes, fences, sacks but the villagers are yet to find the source of the fire.

Moksedul Islam the fire broke out over fifty times at different houses during the period. The number of incidents is increasing for a week in comparison to the previous couple of weeks.

Amena Begum said they cannot keep clothes on the racks. Their clothes including Sharee, Lungi, and dresses were burnt.

Villagers have set up pumps at different points, they are also reserving water in pots with their reach to douse the fire.

Now, they keep the clothes on the floor instead of racks to save them.

Station Officer of Baliadangi Fire Service and Civil Defense Delwar Hossain said, "We cannot say the exact reason of the fires on the houses." However, he has ruled out any supernatural connection of the fire as some villagers are saying.

Superintendent of Police in Thakurgaon Mohammad Jahangir Hossain said officials of Baliadangi Police Station have been asked for strengthening police patrol there.

Twelve persons in the village were detained in connection with the incident early yesterday, said DB police in the district.



A panicky situation is prevailing among the villagers at Choto Singia Munshipara in Thakurgaon's Baliadangi upazila over recurrent fire incidents. Some villagers were trying to douse the blaze in a straw heap in the area. The photo was taken last

PHOTO: STAR



A 10-bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU) ward for Covid-19 infected critical patients was inaugurated at Tangail General Hospital. Lawmaker from Tangail Sadar constituency Sanowar Hossain inaugurated the ward on Sunday. Among others, Tangail Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dr Ataul Gani was present during the inauguration.

PHOTO: STAR

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Govt. Sundarban Adarsha College 231, Khan Jahan Ali Road, Khulna Website: www.gsac.edu.bd

Websit Memo No. GSAC/Goods/CEDP/G-8/2020-2021/05/84 Date: 03/05/2021

GD-873

e-Tender Notice 02/2020-2021

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following package:								
SI. No.	Sl. No. Tender ID Name of works Last date and time of							
	No.		tender security	time				
			submission					
1.	575594	Procurement of Laboratory Equipment's for Science	20-May-2021	20-May-2021				
		Lab of Govt. Sundarban Adarsha College, Khulna	1:00pm	2.00pm				

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 19-May-2021 5.00pm.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Professor Dr. Md. Mizanur Rahman
Principal (In Charge)
Govt. Sundarban Adarsha College
Phone: 02477721915
E-mail: govt.sundarban.ac@gmail.com

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Bangladesh Police Central Police Hospital Rajarbag, Dhaka.

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tender are hereby invited from the Suppliers/Local Agents Vehicles in their official pad for the purchase of the following items for the Project of "Modernization of Existing Police Hospital's" for the year 2020-21.

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affai					
2.	Agency		Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka				
3.	Procuring Entity Name		Project Director, Bangladesh Police, Central Police Hospital, Dhaka.				
4.	Invitation for	Ambulance.					
5.	Invitation Ref No	MEPH/Tender-Vehicle/20	-21/1460				
6.	Date	29/04/2021					
		KEY INFORMATION					
7.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method					
		FUNDING INFORMA	ΓΙΟΝ				
8.	Budget and Source of Funds	ADP Budget					
		ARTICULAR INFORM					
9.	Tender Publication Date	03/05/2021 & 04/05/202	21.				
10.	Tender Last Selling Date	16/05/2021.					
11.	Tender Closing Date and Time	At 12.00 Noon on 17/05					
12.	Tender Opening Date and Time	12.30 pm on 17/05/2021					
13.		Name & Address of t					
	Selling Tender Document	Office of the Project Di					
	Receiving Tender Document Office of the Project Director, Central Police Hospital, Rajarbag, Dhaka						
	Opening Tender Document	Office of the Project Di					
14.	Place / Date / Time of Pre-Tender	Office of the Project Di		Date	Time		
	Meeting (Bidder must present for	Central Police Hospital	, Rajarbag, Dhaka	09/05/2021	11.00		
	avoiding any fature hassle of ensure						
	quality Product).				L		
		FORMATION FOR TE			100 100 11		
15.	Eligibility of Tenderer	(1) Up-to-date Trade 1 Registration Certificate	icense (2) Up to	late Income tax cer	tificate (3) V		
		Pegictration Certificate	and (4) Other docum	ients described in tend	der document		
				ients described in ten	i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i		
16.		Brief Description	of Goods				
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16.	No 1. Ambulance	Brief Description Price of Tender Document Tk. 1000.00	Tender Security in Taka 13,00,000/-		ime in Days		
16.	No 1. Ambulance	Brief Description Price of Tender Document	Tender Security in Taka 13,00,000/-	Completion ti	me in Days		
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(Dr. Md. Emdadul Haque)
Superintendent of Police & Deputy Project Director
For- Project Director
"Modernization of Existing Police Hospitals"
Central Police Hospital
Bangladesh Police, Rajarbag, Dhaka
Phone-8312075 Fax-9342297



City

A family member (L) mourns a Covid-19 victim, as the number of deaths increases, amid the spread of the coronavirus disease in Kathmandu, Nepal yesterday.

РНОТО:

PANDEMIC DISRUPTIONS

1 in 2 people globally lost income: Gallup

THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION, Nairobi

One in two people worldwide saw their earnings drop due to the coronavirus, with people in low-income countries particularly hard hit by job losses or cuts to their working hours, research showed yesterday.

US-based polling company Gallup, which surveyed 300,000 people across 117 countries, found that half of those with jobs earned less because of Covid-19 pandemic disruptions. This translated to 1.6 billion adults globally, it said.

"Worldwide, these percentages ranged from a high of 76% in Thailand to a low of 10% in Switzerland," said researchers in a statement.

In Bolivia, Myanmar, Kenya, Uganda, Indonesia, Honduras and Ecuador, more than 70% people polled said they took home less than before global health crisis. In the United States, this figure dropped to

The Covid-19 crisis has hit workers across the world, particularly women, who are over-represented in low-paid precarious sectors such as retail, tourism and food services.

A study by the international charity Oxfam on Thursday said the pandemic had cost women around the world \$800 billion in lost income. The Gallup poll found that more than half of those surveyed said they temporarily stopped working at their job or business - translating to about 1.7 billion adults globally.

In 57 countries including India, Zimbabwe, the Philippines, Kenya, Bangladesh, El Salvador, more than 65% of respondents said they stopped

Countries where people were least likely to say they stopped working were predominantly developed, high-income countries.

'Spine is straight' Myanmar rebels 'down military copter'

Mamata Banerjee on West Bengal voters after polls victory

West Bengal's soon-to-be three-time Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who pulled off a stupendous victory after an all-out fight by the BJP, yesterday declared that the BJP is "not all in all" and the people have put them in

AGENCIES

their place.



"The people have stopped the ruination... the spine is straight," added the chief minister, who ahead of the election had repeatedly told the people about the BJP will use money power to buy their votes.

"Take their money but vote as you please," she had declared in rally after rally.

She yesterday appealed to everyone to maintain peace and not indulge in any violence. "We know BJP and central forces have tortured us a lot but we have to maintain peace. At present, we have to fight Covid-19," Mamata said.

Violence broke out in parts of West Bengal on Sunday night. Houses and vehicles of some Bharatiya Janata Party candidates were allegedly attacked and a party office at Arambagh was set on fire. The vehicle of Suvendu Adhikari, who defeated chief minister Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram, was also attacked. The Union ministry of home affairs yesterday asked Bengal government for report over post-poll violence in state.

Meanwhile, party secretary general Partha Chatterjee said yesterday TMC chief will be sworn in Chief Minister for a third straight term tomorrow.

The decision was taken at a meeting Mamata had with TMC newly-elected lawmakers in the state in Kolkata.

SAMYA ROSE STUMO FELLOWSHIP FOR

ThinkWell is launching the Samya Rose Stumo Fellowship for Global Health.

The fellowship is for extraordinary young women change-makers

who have inventive ideas that look to revolutionize global

health. The fellowship will support the entrepreneurial ideas of young

women who may otherwise have never had the opportunity. We are honored

to offer a platform to inspire fellows, incubate their ideas, and launch their

careers. This first year, we plan to source fellows from Kenya, Indonesia,

Bangladesh, and the Philippines. Fellows will be part of an inaugural

12-month cohort where they will be mentored by leading ThinkWell global

health experts, experience health systems challenges first-hand, and have

https://apply.workable.com/thinkwell/j/5BC41A1F42/

support to build their own professional networks.

Please find the fellowship application here

No. 06.3/247/396

GD-879

MORE INFORMATION AND APPLICATION

To learn more about the fellowship, please visit our website

https://thinkwell.institute/samyastumo/

The deadline for the 2021 applications is May 14th.

GLOBAL HEALTH

4 people die in hospital after junta's artillery shells hit monastery in Kachin

The Kachin Independence Army (KIA), one of Myanmar's most powerful rebel groups, said yesterday it had shot down a helicopter after returning fire following air strikes by the military, an official at the group said.

The United Nations estimates that tens of thousands of civilians have fled their homes as a result of the fighting between the military and ethnic minority insurgents in remote northern and eastern frontier

The conflict intensified after Myanmar's generals seized power on February 1, ousting the elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi. The KIA's information department head,

Naw Bu, said the helicopter was shot down around 10:20 am at a village near the town of Moemauk in Kachin province.

"The military council launched air strikes in that area since around 8 or 9 this

morning ... using jet fighters and also fired shots using a helicopter so we shot back at them," he said by telephone. He declined to say what weapons were used. News portals MizzimaDaily and Kachinwaves

next to photographs showing a plume of smoke coming from the ground. A resident in the area, who declined to be named, said by telephone that four people had died in hospital after artillery

also reported the downing of the helicopter

shells hit a monastery in the village.

Reuters could not independently verify the reports and a military spokesman did not answer a phone call seeking comment. Myanmar has been in turmoil since the

coup, with protests almost daily against

military rule across the country. On Sunday, Myanmar security forces opened fire on some of the biggest protests

in days, killing eight people, media The protests, after a spell of dwindling crowds and what appeared to be more

restraint by the security forces, were coordinated with demonstrations in Myanmar communities around the world to mark what organisers called "the global Myanmar spring revolution". The Assistance Association for Political

Prisoners advocacy group said security forces have killed at least 765 protesters since the coup. Reuters is unable to confirm the toll.

Talks on to make Oxford vaccines here

Asked whether Beximco could import the doses in bulk and put them in ampules here, Papon said, "This will not be a viable option for us.

Serum CEO Adar Poonawalla recently said he was planning to launch production in other countries to keep up with the

in the next few days," Adar Poonawalla doses of the vaccine from the India was quoted as saying by The Times in an government as a present. interview on Friday

The Covax Facility, a global vaccine alliance, was supposed to receive from Serum a total of 1.1 billion doses of the AstraZeneca or Novavax, with 200 million committed, and the rest on option, reports

It had expected a total of more than 100 million doses from Serum between February and May, excluding supplies for India, but has so far received only about 18.2 million. Bangladesh is supposed to receive 6.8 crore vaccine shots from Covax by the end of 2021.

Bangladesh started the mass inoculation campaign with the AstraZeneca vaccine it purchased from Serum. But the campaign stumbled as Serum failed to fulfil its commitment of supplying 50 lakh doses

each month for six months in a row.

Bangladesh purchased 3 crore doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from Serum. But the country has so far received only 70 lakh in two shipments.

Serum delivered the first shipment of 50 lakh doses properly but the second shipment contained only 20 lakh. Serum has not provided Bangladesh any doses "There's going to be an announcement since. Bangladesh also received 33 lakh

The Indian government restricted export of vaccines amid rising demands at home and the dearth of raw materials.

Serum has the capacity to produce 65 million doses of the vaccine each month.

The Bangladesh government has recently given China's Sinopharm and Russia's Sputnik V emergency use authorisation and there are talks of local co-production.

Contacted, Md Sayedur Rahman, chairman of pharmacology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, said, "We welcome such initiatives. But the more the state and academia will be engaged in such initiatives, the more welfare of the people will be ensured."

The government has already requested AstraZeneca to authorise production of its Covid-19 vaccine in Bangladesh.

A proposal was sent last month to the British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical company seeking its technology to produce the vaccine from seed or the vaccine in bulk.

AstraZeneca has yet to respond. The company has over 20 supply partners in 15 countries and more than 20 analytical testing sites -- three manufacturing sites in the UK and over five in the EU.

In South Asia, Serum is its sole manufacturing partner.

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi pharmaceutical company Renata Limited has sought permission from the government to bring Moderna's Covid-19 vaccine.

Dr Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services, said, "If brought to Bangladesh, the Moderna vaccine, that needs to be stored in sub-zero temperature, can be stored in Dhaka. We still do not have the resources to store them outside

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Media must report fully': Indian SC on EC's protest

The media cannot be stopped from reporting any court hearing and "must report fully" what happens in court, India's Supreme Court said yesterday as the Election Commission complained about being "castigated without any evidence" on political rallies during the campaign for state elections. "The media is powerful and communicating what happens in court. Not only our judgements, but raising of questions, answers and dialogues is a concern for citizens. Media not reporting observations is far-fetched," the Supreme Court told the Election Commission. The Election Commission last week approached the Supreme Court against what it called "blatantly disparaging remarks" by the Madras High Court over holding polls amid the deadly second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

2 rockets target Baghdad base housing US troops

Two rockets targeted an airbase at Iraq's Baghdad airport housing US-led coalition troops on Sunday, in the second such attack in 10 days, the Iraqi army said. One of the projectiles was intercepted by the C-RAM counter rocket, artillery and mortar system deployed to protect US troops in Iraq, a security source told AFP. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack which the army said caused no casualties. Washington routinely blames Iran-linked Iraqi factions for such attacks on its troops and diplomats. Sworn foes Tehran and Washington have both had a presence since 2003 in Iraq, where 2,500 US troops are still deployed. Last week, three rockets crashed into the sector of the Baghdad airport base occupied by Iraqi troops, wounding one soldier.

Saudi Arabia to lift travel curbs on 'immunised' citizens

Saudi Arabia will permit citizens immunised against Covid-19 to travel abroad from May 17, the interior ministry said Sunday, more than a year after Saudis were barred from external trips. The ministry said three categories of people would be considered immunised -- those who have received two doses of the coronavirus vaccine, those administered a single dose at least 14 days prior to travel, and people who have recovered from the infection within the last six months. Saudis under the age of 18 -- an age group that is not receiving vaccines -- would also be allowed to travel from May 17, provided they carry an insurance policy approved by the central bank, the ministry said in a statement published by the official Saudi Press Agency.

Palestinian woman killed, 2 **Israelis hurt in West Bank**

A Palestinian woman was killed and two Israelis were seriously wounded in two separate shooting incidents in the occupied West Bank on Sunday evening, Israeli and Palestinian officials said. An Israeli soldier shot a Palestinian

woman who tried to carry out a stabbing attack, the military said. Palestinian officials said the woman, aged 60, died of her wounds. Later in the day Palestinian gunmen opened fire at a busy intersection, seriously wounding two Israelis. Israeli soldiers were searching for the gunmen, who fired from a car near a Jewish settlement before driving off, the military said. Tensions have been high in the West Bank and Jerusalem during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, peaking with several days of clashes near Jerusalem's Old City between Israeli police and Palestinians over access to a popular nighttime meeting spot. The Israeli army said it would be sending additional troops to the West

Bank following a "situational assessment." SOURCE: **AFP, REUTERS, NDTV**

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD Road Division, Natore

2 0771-66870 Fax: 0771-66810 E-mail: eenat@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.6900.453.07.001.21-949 Date: 03/05/2021

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division,

e-GP	Name of work	Tender	Last date and	Tender closing				
Tender ID		document last selling/	time for tender security	date and time				
		downloading date and time	submission					
575649	Protective work at 16th(P) & 17th(P) km of Natore (Dalsorok)-Bildahore-Gurudaspur Road (Z-5211) under Road Division Natore, during the year 2020-2021.	17-May-2021 16:00	18-May-2021 11:00	18-May-2021 11:30				
575650	Repair of culvert's damaged wheel guard, railing, parapet wall at 40th km, 42th Km, 44th Km, 45th Km, 47th Km, 52th Km, 53rd Km of Naogaon-Atrai-Natore Road (R-548) & at 3rd km, 6th km of Natore (Dalsorok)-Bidhahore-Gurudaspur Road (Z-5211) under Road Division Natore during the year 2020-2021.	17-May-2021 16:00	18-May-2021 11:00	18-May-2021 11:35				
575651	Supply and installation of guard rail at 91st(p) km (Ahmedpur Bridge) and 76th(p) km (Dhanaidoho Bridge) of Kashinathpur-Pabna-Dashuria-Natore-Rajshahi (N-6) road and Cantilever traffic sign at different location of Kashinathpur-Pabna-Dashuria-Natore-Rajshahi (N-6), Natore Town Portion (N-602) road and Bonpara-Gopalpur-Lalpur (Z-6014) under Natore Road Division during the year 2020-2021.	17-May-2021 16:00	18-May-2021 11:00	18-May-2021 11:40				

Accepted tenders will be opened online immediately after closing time.

GD-878

Md. Rayhan Imtiuj ID No. 602418 Assistant Engineer, RHD Road Division, Natore

Abdur Rahim ID No. 602227 Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD Road Division, Natore

বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড Bangladesh Development Bank Ltd.

Head Office, 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka-1000 Website: www.bdbl.com.bd

Real Estate Department

Date: 03/05/2021

e-GP Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/)

for pr	for procurement of the following goods described below:							
SI.	Tender	Tender	Name	e of work	Last date of	Date of		
No.	Notice No.	ID			tender document	tender		
					selling &	closing &		
					downloading	opening		
01.	BDBL/RED	574404	Supply,	Installation,	19/05/2021 up to	20/05/2021		
	/OTM/2021		Testing	&	02:00pm	at 12:00pm		
	/01		Commissi	oning of Air				
			Cooler	for Different				
			Branches	& Khulna				
			Zonal Offi	ce of BDBL.				

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

2. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

3. The fees of downloading e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited through any branches of any registered bank.

4. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Engr. Md. Reazul Islam **Deputy General Manager** Real Estate Department BDBL, Head Office 8, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka ©: 02-9555582

No homegoing for Eid

"If any of the markets or malls is found flouting the guidelines, it will be shut if necessary.

He also said the Shop Owners Association has assured the government that it will cooperate with the administration in this regard and also see that the health safety guidelines are properly followed at markets.

Anwarul warned that action will be taken if anyone is found outside without a mask. About inter-district transport, he said public transport

operators will have to ensure that the health safety guidelines are followed properly. "Transport operators have given us assurance in this

regard... But if there is any violation of the guidelines, we will

shut the transport service.' He also mentioned that no organisations -- public or private -- will be allowed to grant extra holidays to their employees for the Eid.

The cabinet secretary said this when it was pointed out that a large number of factory workers leave the capital en masse during the Eid holiday.

"The government has decided not to extend the holiday. The three-day holiday will start on Thursday, and the remaining two days are weekends -- Friday and Saturday," he added. Following the meeting, Health Minister Zahid Maleque

said, "Once the infection rate shoots up, it takes a long time to bring it down... Now if we lift the lockdown, all our achievements will go in vain."

He referred to high infection and death rates in cities, including Dhaka, Chattogram and Khulna, and said these city

corporation areas will be monitored strictly In reply to a query, he said around five lakh doses of Covid

vaccine will arrive from China by May 10. "We've sent a proposal to China for procuring more vaccines," he said, adding that the government has a plan to

buy 5-6 crore doses. Last week, Bangladesh government approved emergency use of China's Sinopharm vaccine. Earlier in the day, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said public transports cannot cross the

boundaries of cities and districts by any means. "Transport owners must keep half of the seats in vehicles vacant...," he said, adding that transport workers and

passengers must wear masks and use hand sanitizers. The buses must be disinfected after every trip, he mentioned. LAW OPINION

The Book about Bangladesh

RUMANA ISLAM

7 hen everything surrounding is so grey and gloomy due to the pandemic, publication of the book, 'Bangladesh and International Law' (Routledge 2021) edited by Professor Mohammad Shahabuddin, brought some colors of joy, pride, and excitement among the Bangladeshi law scholars who take some sort of interest in international law. The book also came at the time when Bangladesh is celebrating its 50th anniversary of its independence, the very birth of which in 1971 had challenged, disrupted, and reshaped many conventional doctrines of international law in a Cold War era, making the publication of this book

The book came at the time when Bangladesh is celebrating its 50th anniversary of its independence, the very birth of which in 1971 had challenged, disrupted, and reshaped many conventional doctrines of international law in a Cold War era, making the publication of this book with what we call 'a perfect timing'!

with what we call 'a perfect timing'! The editor passionately tweeted about the book as, "A collection of international law stories of suffering, solidarity, resilience, resistance, and success from the Global South"— fascinating enough for a reader to grab the book to know more about those stories!

The book is a comprehensive analysis of international law from Global South perspectives, wherein 29 Bangladeshi legal scholars representing four generations have contributed to this grand project making it as the editor claims, the 'first ever of such kind'. Professor Shahabuddin in the introduction to the book, titled captivatingly as "Introduction or a prelude to the stories of an ambivalent relationship," describes how the dominance of "eurocentrism" in mainstream international law narrative is problematic and in reaction to such Westphalian legal scholarship the

rise of Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) tracing the heterogeneity of the development of international law. He highlights the fact that, the international law scholars from the Global South despite their colonial past and ongoing imperialism have come up with some innovative ways to interpret international law from the lenses of the Global South. In tune with that intellectual tradition, the book project aimed to offer 'stories of an ambivalent relationship between international law and postcolonial states, seen through the optic of Bangladesh'. With that pledge this intellectual tapestry is divided into seven parts comprising of nicely weaved 27 chapters encompassing from classical international law concepts to contemporary concerns.

Part I of the book starts with general issues involving Bangladesh's unique relationship with international law. Part II is allocated for sources of international law focusing on two main sources namely customary international law and the law of treaties and reservations. As the book advances, it goes on to address more complicated issue of international law, namely statehood in international law in Part III. Part V touches upon another very important issue, international economic law and their implications for Bangladesh. Part VI focuses on a very important aspect of international law where Bangladesh has significantly contributed in recent times — the international criminal law. Part VII, the final segment of the book, focuses on 'the State and Its Others', addressing the 'others' in post-colonial states. Collectively these well-crafted 27 chapters of the book offer the readers the reminder of the duality of international law's relationship with post-colonial states like that of Bangladesh, as Professor Shahabuddin as put, "as a problem-solving tool and also as a part of the problem".

However, here I did not intend to write an 'academic review' of the book because it is beyond the scope of this short piece; and I am pretty sure there will be many competent enthusiastic international law scholars who can take up the charge of proper 'intellectual grilling' of the book. Rather as a Bangladeshi academician who takes an interest in teaching and researching international law, I would like to point out some significance of the book for the legal academia of this country.

Firstly, as the editor has claimed the book is 'first ever of such kind"—

published any scholarly manuscript on international law before. There are good number of Bangladeshi law scholars who have pursued their higher studies on international law and have published books on different issues of international law (some focusing on Bangladesh and developing countries perspectives), majority of which came as an outcome of their doctoral research. Some Bangladeshi scholars also have engaged in researching on different topics of international law and have published scholastic journal articles in internationally reputed law journals or have contributed chapters edited books. Very few have gone beyond the doctoral research and conducted comprehensive study on Bangladesh's perspective with a focus on international law, of course with a notable exception BANGLADESH AND of Professor M INTERNATIONAL LAW Rafiqul Islam's authoritative book 'National Trials of International Crimes in Bangladesh' 2019). But all these ventures were done on individual account. Therefore, when a book project has brought together 29 Bangladeshi law scholars representing four generations of

well certainly it is not meant to say

that no Bangladeshi legal scholar

'the first ever of such kind'! Secondly, I see that, six female scholars have contributed to the book. Certainly, the number is not good enough to claim 'equal representation' of half of the population. But what I find significant here is that they are now making intellectual contribution to different fields of international law, going beyond the stereotyped 'research fields' (women's rights, violence against women, family law) supposedly reserved for the female legal scholars in this country. However, to avoid any misunderstandings, I do strongly recognise the need for female legal scholars in this country

scholars teaching and researching

international law at home and abroad

under one umbrella and produced such

a colossal compendium — that is truly

to take the lead when it comes to the foregoing issues. But at the same time, I also feel the need that, they must also take a different rout, venture other avenues of law, and claim their authority with their male counterparts, particularly in different segments of international law given the importance of the discourse for Bangladesh and the world. The female scholars in this country still need to go a long way to claim an authority in international law discourse, but surely the book is a good step in the right direction.

Thirdly, I see that the majority of the contributors represent the fourth generation of Bangladeshi law scholars, whom we fondly call the 'millennials.' For many this might be their very first international publication. In

Bangladesh, we all know the

pain and challenges

of teaching and

researching

in a resource

constrained

academic

environment and the lack of state-of-the-art databases. Getting a proper guidance and a platform to conduct a quality research and sharing it with an international audience is crucial for a researcher's intellectual growth. Again, a note of appreciation must go to Professor Shahabuddin for his mentorship, for giving this platform and the opportunity to this dynamic young cohort, integrating them as a group into the global intellectual

system and presenting their work before an international audience. Surely the experience that this bunch of young scholars have gathered from this book project at their early stage of career, will encourage and inspire them and give them the muchneeded confidence to conduct quality research on international law in future. The previous three generations of Bangladeshi legal scholars did not get such opportunities in their early days of career and I think it is fair if they envy the 'millennial scholars' for that!

Fourthly, the significance of publication of this book, which in my opinion the most important one is — I see it as 'branding of Bangladesh' in international law discourse at global intellectual system. The book has added a new voice (the Bangladeshi voice) to

the TWAIL and Global South discourse, an area of international law which in this part of the region for a long time is dominated by scholars from our next-door neighbor. By doing so, it also pushes that idea of 'soft power' in international law discourse of the Bangladeshi legal scholarship at global intellectual system. An enthusiast might even call it a 'defining moment' for Bangladeshi legal academia. I hope and believe this book might be the 'first ever of such kind' but it will certainly not be the last one.

The foreword of the book is written by another eminent Bangladeshi international law scholar Professor A.F.M Maniruzzaman. Therefore, I think I do not wrongly profess when I call it "The Book about Bangladesh".

Before I conclude something must be said for the protagonist of this project — Professor Shahabuddin, an internationally acclaimed international law scholar from Bangladesh and a foremost TWAIL-er in his own right. It must also be acknowledged that he is not the only one, there are few other Bangladeshi scholars who have attained such accomplishments in different disciplines at international level. But I would like to point out something else here. Those of us who have lived abroad at some point of our life either for our higher studies or as part of our profession, we have interacted with the Bangladeshi community living there and have witnessed their multiple belongings and their profound love and care for the motherland. It is quite visible how the Bangladeshi émigré somehow always carries 'Bangladesh' - either in their accents, food habits, social conventions, cultural norms; or their tensions over a political crisis in the country; their excitement when our cricket team wins or their frustration when they lose; or their desperation to inject the 'deshi' values into their next generations — 'Bangladesh' always matters for them. Professor Shahabuddin is one of those rare Bangladeshi émigré scholars who went the extra mile to make sure that 'he' matters for Bangladesh.

In this short piece, I have not gone into intellectual investigation of the stories that the book promises in its pamphlet nor did I mention any names of the contributors. To know more about those stories about the storytellers — my dear readers, please read the book.

THE WRITER IS PROFESSOR OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA.

RIGHTS ADVOCACY

Mainstreaming human rights in business to protect workers' rights

Mohammad Golam Sarwar

study led by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) revealed that more Lthan 3,50,000 workers in the RMG sector have lost their jobs during Covid-19 pandemic while most of the workers have been laid off without proper compensation. A staggering official record is of 56372 workers being laid off. The report also finds that the high rate of retrenchment was occurred in small factories amounting to over 10% of total work force. However, the actual number of laid off and terminated workers is much bigger than officially reported. The discrepancy in data indicates the vulnerability and exploitation of workers while leaving the voices of a large number of workers lost and

Right of laid-off workers to compensation
The Labour Act 2006 guarantees compensation
for the laid off workers. Section 16 of
the Labour Act states that the amount of
compensation shall be equal to half of
the total amount of the basic wages and
dearness allowance and ad-hoc or interim
wages, if any, and equal to the full amount
of housing allowance. However, in order to
avail compensation, the worker has to to work
continuously for one year under the employer
and such compensation shall be paid for
45 days unless there is an agreement to the
contrary between the worker and the employer.

The labour Act allows the employer to terminate a worker under the ground of retrenchment by giving one month's notice in writing indicating the reason of retrenchment. However, the requirement of giving notice can be waived by paying wages in lieu of such notice. It is noted that though the Act requires to indicate the reason of retrenchment, such requirement is mostly dependent on the subjective satisfaction of the employer which entertains no say of the workers against unjust as well as discriminatory termination. In addition, the optional nature of the requirement of giving notice leaves room for instant and unjustified termination.

It is mentionable that as per the aforementioned CPD study, majority of factories did not follow the lay-off and termination rules while terminating the workers during the pandemic. The study reveals that only 3.6% complied with the compensation principle in case of laid off workers while non-compliance as the norm, was rampant among the employers. In addition, the research report of the



reveals that due to the rigid requirement of working continuously for one year for getting compensation for lay off under the Labour Act, 20% of the laid off workers are being left without any kind of compensation. Legal responses to workers' rights It is worthy to note that ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 1998 identifies four core labour rights that include freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. The Constitution of Bangladesh envisages an array of welfare measures for and rights of the workers including just wages, reasonable rest, recreation and leisure (Article 15), rights of forming union (Article 38), protection from all forms of forced labour as of right (Article 34) and protection from all forms of

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)

exploitation (Article 14). It is mentionable that Bangladesh has ratified seven of the eight core conventions and several other conventions of the ILO. Despite such constitutional and international commitment and obligations, human rights of the workers are being constantly violated.

The Labour Act 2006, being the core enabling law, attempts to provide a detailed framework to guarantee the entitlements of workers. However, the Act has failed to integrate human rights perspectives comprehensively within its approach. The Act provides, in many cases, unfettered power to the employers while making the workers immensely vulnerable and dependent. The monitoring mechanism under the Act is not clearly demarcated which makes the responsible stakeholders unaccountable. Trade unions fail to function effectively and to make things worse, workers face challenges to freely form or join independent unions. The Labour Act also fails to address the

concerns and needs of informal workers who suffers most during the pandemic. The most important fact is that implementation of the law undergoes little to no enforcement. Though the Act in its latest amendments prohibits child labour, however, the number of child workers are alarmingly increasing due to the Covid-19 induced economic crisis and nationwide closure of educational institutions including schools. Human Rights based action plan Considering the aforesaid discussion, a human rights-based assessment regarding the impact of the ongoing pandemic on worker's rights needs to be undertaken. In this regard, the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), while advocating 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' framework for transnational corporations and other business enterprises in terms of adopting a human rights-based approach, provides comprehensive guidelines to integrate human rights perspectives into business policies

and practices. In addition to recognising the responsibilities of the States under international human rights law, the UNGPs imposes specific responsibilities on the business enterprises. The UNGPs recognises the fundamental right of individuals to access effective remedy when their rights get adversely impacted by business activities. The UNGPs also requires States to establish effective grievance mechanisms including administrative and judicial means to guarantee remedies for business-related human rights abuses. It will not be out of place to note that the overburdened judicial system of Bangladesh fails to ensure access to remedy of the workers. Awareness and proper understanding of these mechanisms is important to ensure access to remedy.

While preventing and mitigating adverse human rights impact, business enterprises should adopt the parameters for human rights due diligence defined in UNGPs. In order to assess whether the human rights policies are being implemented optimally, business enterprises are required to track, and review their performance and modify their practices accordingly. It is noted that such monitoring mechanism should be incorporated into our labour laws and other business laws, in order to review the activities of the industries and corporations and to prevent the adverse impacts of business practices as well.

The most significant feature of UNGPs is that they not only identify the needs of the rights holders but also categorise the responsibilities of the duty bearers. In the present case, workers are the rights holders while suppliers, brands and the government are the duty bearers to guarantee rights and welfare measures for the workers. While making this human rights framework a reality, workers should be informed, made aware and empowered about their entitlements in order to hold the employers, brands and the government accountable in the context of Bangladesh.

As we have observed International Workers' Day 2021 recently during the pandemic, it is the demand of the hour to mainstream and implement UNGPs in order to formulate laws, policies, and action plans to tackle the impact of the pandemic while guaranteeing the human rights, justice, and dignity for the workers.

THE WRITER IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA.

8 | The Baily Star



LATE S. M. ALI

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 4, 2021, BAISHAKH 21, 1428 BS

Isolate big cities but don't just stop there

Govt must ensure health guidelines are properly enforced

T'S reassuring to know that despite a lower Covid-19 positivity rate in recent days, the authorities are not lowering their guard yet. That's the message we are being given as the government plans to isolate big cities with higher transmission rates from the rest of the country as an attempt to disrupt the spread of the coronavirus. That means, no public transport including buses will be allowed to enter or leave these cities. However, they will be allowed to operate within the city perimeters. As part of that plan, the cabinet secretary on Monday made two important announcements: the ongoing nationwide restrictions have been extended until May 16—that is, until after the Eid holiday—and intra-district public transport has been allowed to run starting May 6. But train and inland water transport will remain suspended as before.

The question, however, is whether these directives will be enough to stop the flow of homebound travellers during the Eid holiday. Eid holidays are typically times when the largest exodus of people takes place, and the trend hasn't stopped even during the pandemic. People have been found to resort to ingenious methods to bypass movement restrictions and they may well do so this time, too, unless the government adopts equally ingenious methods to prevent them. Failure to do so can be costly, as we already know from previous occasions, as the virus spread far and wide along with them. Another persistent thorn in the side of the authorities has been people's reluctance to follow health guidelines. The recent increase in people's movement following a slackening of the "lockdown" and large gatherings seen at markets and shopping malls, which were reopened on April 25, may eat away all the gains of the planned district-wise lockdown.

While the idea of boxing the virus in may seem like a right decision, enforcing the lockdown will be the challenge. It will not contain the virus unless the authorities adopt and strictly enforce supporting measures, such as a zero-tolerance policy for violations of all guidelines, penalising violations, largescale testing and tracing, sufficient aid interventions for the poor and informal workers so they can stay indoors, etc. Also, with so little testing in the country (only 14,158 samples were tested on May 2), there is always the risk that both the public and policymakers will be misguided by incorrect data leading to unwise choices and decisions. This must be addressed. Let's admit it: what we have now is nowhere near a lockdown, but we can forgo a lockdown if the government can just ensure judicious planning and effective enforcement in whatever guise it chooses to do so.

Press freedom is in danger

Without it, democracy cannot exist

NE essential element of any democracy, universally acknowledged throughout the ages, is a free press. But sadly, in Bangladesh, press freedom is becoming increasingly more restrictive and is diminishing. Just in the month leading up to World Press Freedom Day (May 3), five journalists were sued under the Digital Security Act, according to one voluntary research outfit. A total of 24 journalists were sued under different laws in April, with most of the cases being filed by ruling party lawmakers or their men.

According to the UK-based rights organisation Article 19, a total of 631 incidences of attacks on journalists and human rights defenders took place in 2020, in which a total of 265 journalists were attacked. As a result, the rights organisation expressed serious "concerns about the rising numbers of cases against journalists and online communicators under the DSA" and the "overall lack of security and protection of journalists" and others in Bangladesh.

Over the past year, journalists who have risked their lives to cover the pandemic and expose corruption in important government aid programmes have been relentlessly harassed for their service to society, particularly using the draconian DSA. As a result, Bangladesh saw one of the highest numbers of press freedom violations linked to the pandemic in the Asia-Pacific region—during a period when press freedom across the world seemed to have suffered a serious blow—according to data from the International Press Institute (IPI). And this trend has been observed to be perpetrated mostly by "authoritarian and illiberal-minded" regimes, according to the IPI.

Despite the protections guaranteed by Article 39 of our constitution to freedom of thinking and conscience as well as the freedom of speech and expression of all citizens which essentially also ensures freedom of press—the failure of the state to ensure these rights are protected is a grave travesty. In fact, in many cases of violations of these rights, the state has been implicated, either directly or indirectly, which is even more concerning.

Despite these realities, or perhaps even more so because of them, now is the time when we must all raise our voices to reclaim this most precious right of ours—the right to free speech. And as an extension of that, the right to free press. The importance of these rights in our eternal search for the truth, which is the only guiding beacon any civilised society has at its disposal, has to be recognised.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Accountability for lawmakers

The example recently set by Thai people, that even an incumbent prime minister can be fined swiftly for violating a law, is quite remarkable. Following Thailand's steps would help eradicate the sense of impunity that is unabashedly enjoyed by some of the unscrupulous state actors in Bangladesh. Furthermore, it would also strengthen the faith of our people in law and

Irfan Emon, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University

India's Covid 19 catastrophe: The cost of complacency



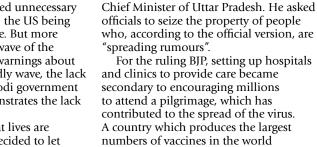
AST year, in ☐ February-March, a lot of experts had said that India will be the worst-affected country, there will be tsunami of cases. They predicted two million deaths in the country.

But India moved ahead with a proactive public participation," Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proclaimed on January 28, 2021, not too many months ago. Modi boasted his success on a world stage, claiming that India has proven every prediction wrong about the potential impacts of Covid-19 on the country. The gloating was not concealed. Addressing the World Economic Forum's Davos Dialogue, Narendra Modi said, "Today, India is among countries that have succeeded in saving the maximum lives. The country, which comprises of 18 percent of the world's population, has saved the world from disaster by bringing the situation under control." To humbly sav that "we" have succeeded in averting a catastrophe, or cautiously say that the dire predictions have not come to pass is one thing—but to be gleeful is another. Modi's tone and posture were clearly triumphant. In early March, he continued the victory lap, saying that India would serve as "the world's pharmacy," as it was rolling out vaccines for developing nations. His cabinet members proclaimed that India has entered the "endgame" of the pandemic.

India's official death toll surpassed 218,000 on Sunday, a figure which is by all accounts an undercount; experts have suggested that the death toll could be ten times higher than the official count. India's Health Ministry reported 401,993 new infections on Saturday—a global record—and the total infections are expected to surpass 20 million by Monday. Indeed, any global epidemic can wreak havoc in any country. Ill-prepared nations, especially those who neglected their healthcare systems for decades, paid a high price in the first wave of the pandemic in early 2020. Inept leadership, disregard of experts' suggestions, and unwillingness to acknowledge the

pandemic itself have caused unnecessary deaths in many countries, the US being the most obvious example. But more than a year after the first wave of the pandemic, and repeated warnings about an imminent second deadly wave, the lack of preparedness of the Modi government is shocking. It only demonstrates the lack of respect for human life.

Instead of ensuring that lives are saved, Modi and his ilk decided to let





A man runs past the burning funeral pyres of those who died from the coronavirus during a mass cremation, at a crematorium in New Delhi, April 26.

REUTERS/ADNAN ABIDI

and hold elections to improve their political fortunes. Modi's exuberant tweet that he has not seen so many people after an election rally was a reminder of Donald Trump's election rallies ahead of the November 2020 election, but more importantly, of his complete disregard for the consequences of such rallies. Clamping down on the press and social media have been prioritised by the incumbent over providing oxygen to millions. The Indian government ordered Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to take down posts criticising the government for mishandling the situation. The Covid-19 pandemic is now matched with the threat of persecution by the government, as demonstrated in the statement of the

own people be fully vaccinated while it embarked on vaccine-diplomacy to extend its sphere of influence in the region and beyond. Building an image of the leader became more important than saving the lives of its citizens, a hallmark of an authoritarian ruler. The penchant for spectacle triumphed prudence and compassion.

The message from the government, even when the surge began in March, was loud and clear: we have defeated Covid-19. It was heard by Indians across the country—they went on to have a "normal" life, enjoyed the IPL cricket matches, and had expected that the government would deliver the vaccine when needed. It was not only

irresponsible to declare a victory but it essentially created a situation which pushed thousands to peril. Although upon being pressed by internationally acclaimed journalist Christiane Amanpour, the ruling BJP spokesperson Narendra Taneja acknowledged that responsibility for the devastating situation belongs "first and foremost" to the government, there is still an effort to suggest that others should take responsibilities, too, and that there was an absence of a warning. Nothing is farther from the truth. But the most important question is whether anyone will be held accountable for the unnecessary deaths of thousands of people.

Now, for weeks, the pyres have been burning in Delhi and elsewhere, oxygen has become the scarcest commodity, and the healthcare system has crumbled; yet there is no plan in sight to bring the situation under control. The spokesperson for the BJP expressed hope that India will soon overcome the pandemic. His optimism is not contagious, but the virus is. When and how India will be able to turn the tide are open questions. One can only hope that the current surge will not be a repeat of the last pandemic a century ago. During the 1918-19 pandemic, 60 percent of all deaths worldwide occurred in India. At that time, it was the deliberate mismanagement of the colonial British powers which was to be blamed. Who will take the responsibility now?

The world has stepped up to help India face the catastrophe; medical supplies have begun to pour in. The US has decided to resume supplies of raw materials for the vaccine to India. Expectedly, things will improve. The heartbreaking pictures of mass cremations will disappear from the media, but sufferings and slow deaths will continue in the years to come. Malnutrition, long-term health impacts of the coronavirus, the loss of livelihoods all will remain for years to come, too. At least 75 million people have become poor because of the pandemic in 2020, and the second wave will have devastating effects on them and millions of others. How will India face the impending crisis is a question we cannot wait to ask until all the funeral pyres stop burning.

Ali Riaz is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the Illinois State University, a non-resident Senior Fellow of the Atlantic Council, and the President of the American Institute of Bangladesh

Bengali (sub)nationalism trumps Hindu nationalism



L thaaklo (Bengal has stayed with its own daughter). When Trinamool Congress (TMC) came out with the slogan "Bangla nijer meyekay chai" in February, it could not have

been more prophetic. Mamata Banerjee may have lost her own electoral battle in Nandigram constituency, but she won the war in Bengal for her party Trinamool Congress, single-handedly—a remarkable landslide victory to stop the mighty electoral machine of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. The sweep and extent of TMC's win, which matched its performance in the previous assembly poll five years ago, was unexpected even to Mamata, who said as much in her first press conference post-victory. Although Mamata lost the poll in Nandigram to her former protege Suvendu Adhikari, it will not prevent her from returning to the Chief Minister's chair immediately. All she has to do is face fresh by-elections within six months of becoming the CM.

The elections were held in five states but the most watched-for election was, of course, West Bengal—considered by the BJP as the "final frontier" in its unending quest for expanding its footprint in all the states. Bengal remained elusive for the saffron party, although it has reasons to be satisfied with the substantial gains made in West Bengal, moving up from just three seats in the previous assembly poll in 2016 to 75 this time and claiming the space of the principal opposition force in the state's political landscape, dislodging the decimated Congress and the Left. Its hold on most parts of north Bengal remained intact; Modi's visit to the Matua's shrine in Orakandi, Bangladesh on March 27 helped the BJP win seats in Bangaon in North 24 Parganas district. However, it did not work in Barrackpore, nor in Barasat and neighbouring Kolkata. Another important reason why the BJP could not hold on to its 2019 general elections momentum was its failure this time to win a seat in Howrah, Hooghly and East and West Bardhaman districts, despite the party's top leadership's intensive electioneering there. Besides, the adivasis in Jhargram and parts of West Medinipur did not favour the saffron party in the assembly polls this time as much as they had done in the 2019

don a new look with the demise of the Congress-Left alliance, which failed to win a single seat this time after winning 77 seats in 2016. This is the first time that the Bengal legislative assembly will not have a single representative of either the Congress or the Left, which had between them ruled the state for 64 years. What should be more worrying for the Left and the Congress is that the BJP made

The Bengal political landscape is set to in Bengal was fuelled by its impressive show in the parliamentary polls in 2019, when it stunned all by bagging 18 of the total of 42 Lok Sabha seats. The party wanted to build on that performance in the just-concluded assembly elections, but could not do it. The nearly two percent dip in the BJP's vote share of 40.6 percent (recorded in 2019) and the five percent rise in the Trinamool Congress' vote share this time (from 43.6 percent in 2019) was



A woman poses after voting in the assembly elections in West Bengal.

DIBYANGSHU SARKAR/AFP

inroads into their traditional strongholds in Malda, Murshidabad, Baharampur and South 24 Parganas, toppling the former from numero uno or second positions.

How did Mamata pull off this feat? Despite the baggage of anti-incumbency set against her uninterrupted decadelong rule, she got certain things right from the get-go. With a blend of welfare schemes, promised doles and Bengali sub-nationalism and a catchy jingle "khela hobey", Mamata plunged into the electoral war to take on the BJP's Hindu nationalism narrative, which frequently flagged the issues of the Citizenship Amendment Act and illegal immigration into Bengal from Bangladesh. Moving in a wheel chair with a plastered leg for most part of the long-drawn polls (nearly 50 days) after being attacked in Nandigram, she has clearly landed on her feet on the day it mattered the most. Her Bengali subnationalism was also aimed at countering one of BJP's main weapons of attacking the Trinamool Congress on the issues of corruption and nepotism.

the decisive swing that saw the saffron party stop well short of the three-figure mark in seat tally and pushed it to the rank of a distant second. Two factors are behind this: the total consolidation of votes of Muslims, who make up 27 percent of Bengal's total electorate, and an overwhelming chunk of the anti-BJP votes in the Congress-Left camp going to Trinamool Congress. In fact, Mamata had during electioneering appealed to people in the traditional bastions of the Congress and the Left, in places like Malda and Murshidabad, not to waste their votes and instead back her party to stop the BJP.

The BJP projected the battle for Bengal as a battle between Modi and Mamata. The BJP's performance in Bengal exposed its failure to produce a credible chief ministerial candidate of its own to match Mamata's charisma, and the limitations of its policy of inorganic growth by engineering defections in other parties

and swelling its own rank and file. In the run up to the assembly polls, the BJP lured several leaders from the TMC and

The BJP's appetite for capturing power put them forward as its own candidates but all of them were defeated barring four including high-profile Suvendu Adhikari who won against Mamata in Nandigram. The lack of a chief ministerial candidate stuck with the saffron outfit, despite Modi and Shah repeatedly stressing that a person born and brought up in Bengal would be the Chief Minister if BJP is voted to power. That there is no substitute to grooming its own local level leadership should be the big lesson for BJP in Bengal. The results in Bengal also drove home the view that BJP has failed to enter the psyche of the Bengali urban class. The party failed to win a single of the 16 assembly seats in Kolkata.

The victory of Mamata, India's only woman Chief Minister now, has established her in a league of her own and has major implications for India's national politics ahead of fresh general elections, due in 2024. By successfully resisting the surge of the BJP's election charge in Bengal and with the Congress in steady decline, Mamata can again reclaim her status as a glue around which anti-Modi forces can gather in the run-up to the 2024 elections. This was a role Mamata unsuccessfully tried to take on in the run-up to the 2019 general elections.

Mamata has proved that that the BJP is not an unstoppable force and can be defeated by a strong-rooted regional leader. A debilitated Congress and the victory of the Left in Kerala, of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu and of Trinamool Congress in Bengal, has thrown up the possibility of a clutch of powerful regional parties coalescing to counter the BJP. However, doubts remain as to the viability of such an anti-BJP coalition without the help of any party, other than the Congress, with a pan-India presence. The biggest drawback of the regional outfits is that none of them have an appeal to voters beyond the borders of their respective states, as was demonstrated by the BJP's improved show in the 2019 general elections.

However, having lost the assembly polls in Bengal, which elects 42 Lok Sabha members, the third highest after Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Maharashtra, pressure will grow on the BJP to retain its hold on Uttar Pradesh, where fresh assembly elections are due in April 2022. A good show in the 2017 UP assembly polls was at the heart of BJP's parliamentary elections

Bengal has historically been the cradle of Indian socio-cultural renaissance. Will the state assembly poll lead to a new dawn in India's overall political scenario?

Pallab Bhattacharya is a special correspondent of *The* Daily Star. He writes from New Delhi, India.

Food insecurity increases amidst the latest Covid-19 spike



¬ OOD insecurity **⊣** in Bangladesh during the pandemic is rising. Even in the best of times, millions of people in the country go hungry. The Global Food Security Index 2020 ranked Bangladesh 84th out of 113 countries globally,

which was worse than

many of its neighbouring countries, such as India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Myanmar. Bangladesh's position among these 113 nations ranked by EIU varies from year to year, but each of the last five years has revealed that there is more food insecurity in Bangladesh compared with its neighbouring countries. So, it is not important if over the years we ranked at 82 or 84—or, even if we improved our position from the previous year—what appears to be true is that, even in normal years, there is a prevalence of moderate to severe food insecurity in many segments of our population.

Undoubtedly, we have made progress on several fronts of the economy, including income, employment, and nutrition intake. However, it is a fair estimate to say that 20 percent of our households live below the poverty level and 25 to 30 percent of the people are hungry and face constant food insecurity. A cataclysmic external shock such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the on-andoff lockdown measures are likely to disrupt the daily balance in food intake that might be expected under normal circumstances. As one study observes, "Despite substantial progress in attaining food self-sufficiency at the aggregate level, a large number of people remain food insecure and hungry in the face of periodic shocks". And, since hunger, starvation, and malnutrition make up the flip side of economic disruption, the role of the government and NGOs is important, and the national government must take proactive measures to stave off long-term damages that a pandemic might leave on the health and physical condition of the poor.

Has the pandemic increased the number of

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) indicated that among populations who are

already malnourished, weak, and vulnerable to disease, a "crisis within a crisis" could emerge, in which the current health crisis will be compounded by a hunger crisis. According to an assessment done by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the number of people with severe food insecurity has been rising globally since 2014 and the Covid-19 pandemic will likely reduce food security even further. The current pandemic crisis has been long-lasting, and it is also affecting the food security of households that were not poor prior to the pandemic due to debt, temporary or permanent job loss, or catastrophic illness.

The Daily Star reported last week that a sample survey concluded that the pandemic has created 24.5 million new poor, increasing the country's rate of poverty to around 42 percent. The survey was carried out by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) before the second wave hit the country. The study found that the majority experienced "significant depletion of household income and fragile recovery from last year's shock". In a nutshell, the recovery from the pandemic, after a year of its onset, has been conditional and weak.

The reaction from our Finance Minister was swift and dismissive, labeling the study as "a distortion of the real position." He played down the significance of the findings, and declared that "the government would accept the data on the number of new poor only from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), not from any private company." Incidentally, earlier in January, another study released by SANEM showed that "the people living below the poverty line (upper poverty line) almost doubled to 42 percent in 2020 from 21.6 percent in 2018.

One can only hope that the BBS is in the process of collecting data on the incidence of poverty and hunger triggered by the pandemic and will provide the appropriate foundation for government policy and post-pandemic economic measures without much delay.

Coming back to the latest surge of the pandemic, it has been met aggressively by the government with new rounds of lockdown. One can see from the newspaper stories that the new lockdown will most affect the population who are on the extreme end of the hunger spectrum: weak and less well-equipped to fend off the viral infection. For our poor, the



Food insecurity falls relatively more in the moderate to severe category for households that are primarily farmers and wage labourers. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAO

lockdown feels like salt to their wounds.

Mohammed Hossain, a small-scale vendor from the capital's Farmgate area, vented his frustrations to a journalist, "It is very easy to declare a lockdown. But it is people like us who have to face the difficulties that come with the lockdown. Provide us with food first, and then enforce the lockdown."

What is food insecurity?

Food insecurity, a condition defined by limited or uncertain access to sufficient, nutritious food for an active, healthy life, disproportionately affects low-income communities and the urban poor. Food insecurity is associated with numerous poor health outcomes in both the short and long term. The unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, and the associated social and economic response (school closures, stay-at-home orders, business closures and job losses) have the potential to dramatically increase food insecurity and its related health disparities among already at-risk populations. According to a study published in Nutrients, a journal affiliated with the US National Institutes of Health, "Households already struggling with food insecurity may find their current situations exacerbated by Covid-19 with fewer resources to comply with social distancing recommendations. Food insecure individuals also may have less flexibility in their jobs to

allow them to earn income while staying home, or may be at higher risk of losing their jobs completely, thereby decreasing (or eliminating) their incomes.'

Income loss and food insecurity are strongly correlated across households. According to a study done by researchers affiliated with Monash University of Australia on food insecurity during Covid-19 in rural Bangladesh, households with no changes in income are mostly food-secure, and food insecurity appears to increase with income loss. In terms of occupation, food insecurity falls relatively more in the moderate to severe category for households that are primarily farmers and wage labourers than among households with more stable occupations, such as having public sector jobs or owning businesses.

The primary risks to food security in the aftermath of the pandemic are already manifest and come from higher retail prices, combined with reduced incomes. Many have reduced their purchase of fresh food and vegetables, the reasons including poor availability, higher prices, reduced store trips, and concerns of contamination. These factors mean more and more households are having to cut down on the quantity and quality of their food consumption. Reduced calorie intake and compromised nutrition threaten gains in poverty reduction

and health, and could have lasting impacts on the cognitive development of young children. While levels of extreme poverty are in decline, nearly 32 percent of Bangladeshis still live below the national poverty line, according to the UN World Food Programme (WFP). Approximately 25 percent of the population in Bangladesh remains food-insecure and 36 percent of children younger than five years of age suffer from stunting (a common measure of chronic malnutrition), WFP reports.

According to a World Bank brief published on April 13, 2021, the impacts triggered by the pandemic "have led to severe and widespread increases in global food insecurity, affecting vulnerable households in almost every country, with impacts expected to continue through 2021 and into 2022". This is corroborated by a study published in Lancet based on a randomised control study in rural Bangladesh. The authors conclude that the immediate effects of eight weeks of stay-at-home orders are visible on family economic outcomes and food security, and on women's mental health and experiences of intimate partner violence. One survey found 31 percent of the female respondents have lost their jobs in the last one year—"Covid-19 lockdowns present significant economic, psychosocial, and physical risks to the wellbeing of women and their families across economic strata in rural Bangladesh. Beyond supporting only the most socioeconomically deprived, support is needed for all affected families."

Policy implications

The policy implications are clear and apply to all aspects of the government. There is a need for adequate food assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic and in any future pandemics, as well as public health messages that promote healthy eating. Our national budgets must reflect the desire to promote inclusive economic growth, with attention to the segments of the population that struggle most with poverty, hunger, and undernutrition. We ought to develop a comprehensive national strategy on nutrition advocacy and communication by aligning advocacy, social mobilisation, and behaviour change in communication interventions.

Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist and has been working in higher education and information technology for 35 years in the USA and Bangladesh. He is also Senior

Will Mars ever be habitable?

PROTITI RASNAHA KAMAL

LON Musk's mission to populate Mars seems to be always on trend, even when nobody is particularly talking about it. It's been several years since the announcement of such an endeavour, and in 2020 we've seen some stories about the first space crew for this grand mission (even though nothing has been finalised). Once they will set foot on Mars, there's no turning back—other crews in batches will likely join them, and then colonies, cities and civilisations will be formed on the Red Planet, and it will cease to be one of the lonely occupants of our universe, hanging around through the passage

At least, that's the plan, but as we all might have guessed, landing humans on Mars isn't the only difficult part of the mission. Living there is a greater challenge. Mars is not Earth, it has its own identity—the arid world doesn't compare to the bearer of about 75 percent water on its surface. So, the real mission is making Mars habitable for humans.

The first colonisers will be given the task of turning Mars into an environment which can sustain life. Simply put, they need to "terraform" Mars, which means the Martian atmospheric conditions need to be manipulated to make them more like that of Earth, so that humans can live, breathe and reproduce freely.

Surely, that is not going to be an easy undertaking. However, Robert Zubrin, in his celebrated book The Case for Mars, is able to a put the subject in an optimistic light. His argument is that if Earth could be made into a self-sustainable planet, the same can be done

In its infancy, Earth did not have any oxygen and was barren, much like Mars is now.



A selfie taken on Mars by NASA's Curiosity Mars Rover on Martian Sol 2082 (June 15, 2018 Earth time). The 26 rock samples and six soil samples collected by Curiosity revealed that ancient Mars was indeed suitable for life. PHOTO: NASA/JPL-CALTECH

Only due to the presence of photosynthetic organisms, which used carbon dioxide up and gave out oxygen, the composition of Earth's atmosphere had evolved, leading to the evolution of human beings. So, if the atmosphere of Mars can be manipulated to make it denser and warmer, theoretically it could also support life.

We understand what needs to be done, but how exactly can we go about making Mars hospitable to humans? The answer may lie in the reservoir of carbon dioxide present in the ice caps or under the soil surface on

Mars. Carbon dioxide, among other things, is infamous for being a greenhouse gas and contributing to global warming on Earth. We may not want Earth to heat up as a result of global warming more than it has already, but frankly, Mars could use some greenhouse gases. Zubrin points out that the release of carbon dioxide, methane and the production of chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs could lead to a thicker Martian atmosphere, which will be able

To accomplish such a feat, Zubrin proposes some innovative solutions. The first, is using

to trap heat and make Mars warmer.

orbiting mirrors to direct heat towards specific areas in Mars' south pole. A temperature rise of five degrees (in Kelvins) would be able to cause the dry ice to evaporate, releasing carbon dioxide. The mirrors could also be used to melt the ice to form liquid water, which can be used in biological reactions. Another far-fetched idea is to build factories which can release halocarbons into the Martian atmosphere. However, setting up factories that can generate a substantial volume of the gases requires a substantial amount of money as well, which is why such a project does not seem feasible to the layman. The third solution is to contaminate Mars with photosynthetic microorganisms such as bacteria. This would lead to the release of ammonia and methane as waste products, which would contribute to the greenhouse effect.

If any of these ideas or even a combination of them can be realised on Mars, it could become less hostile for humans. However, if people dream of walking around Mars without special suits and masks, they need to come up with a plan for oxygenating the atmosphere. For this, simple organisms will not be enough—large volumes of oxygen are required to support advanced life forms. Genetically engineered plants that can carry out photosynthesis in harsh Martian conditions can provide a solution. The idea is to increase the volume of gases in the atmosphere bit by bit, and as it warms up it can support more advanced plant life. This goes on in a cycle that can be continued until the conditions are suitable for humans.

However, this process would take centuries if the plan is to terraform Mars completely. Instead, "Paraterraforming" can provide a solution for the moment. Here, domes can be built to form an enclosed space that humans

can live in. Microbial reactions with the carbon rich Martian soil that can give off oxygen will occur in that restricted region, but out of that enclosed sphere, life would not be supported. The advantage here is that less time and resources will be used. Carrying such a project out is not impossible; in fact, a few years ago, scientists at a company called Techshot had successfully used microbes to create a self-sustaining ecosystem within a localised region that mimics Mars' harsh atmospheric

Theoretically, everything seems possible, and recent news about the conversion of carbon dioxide on Mars to oxygen by NASA's Perseverance rover is giving us hope that theories can be put to practice. At this point, landing a spacecraft on Mars with humans is a challenge, judging by the sheer amount of time it takes to complete the journey. The first humans to land on Mars will have to build the "biodomes" where further experiments can be carried out and crops can be grown under controlled conditions. Also, resources that are not readily available on Mars need to be made on Earth and imported to Mars. Are we going to be able to devote vast amounts of resources and time to such an endeavour? Will the money required for such a venture be better spent if we were to spend it on Earth? These are some of the questions that could be asked before we take on the challenge of turning Mars into another Earth. We need to keep in mind that the first step a human takes on Mars will be just that—the first step. There is a long way to go from there, and it will be interesting to see how that story unfolds in the near future.

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QUOTABLE Quote



SAINT TERESA OF AVILA (1515-1582)Saint

What peace can we hope to find elsewhere if we have none with us?

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 1 Dances jazzily 5 Unassuming 11 Neighbor 12 Slow movement 13 Rum mixer 14 Signify 15 Tech's place 17 Quarter-back Manning 18 Flower part 22 Did some programming 24 Curação's neighbor

25 Clumsy one

30 Grill waste

32 First odd prime

26 Crafty

27 Squall

33 "Golly!" 34 Scheduling aid 38 Rainbow color 41 Bushy do 42 Some autos 43 Clothes, in slang

DOWN 1"St. John Passion" composer 2 Clarinet cousin

45 Amorous archer

44 Yards tools

3 Encouraged to succeed 4 Paper fastener 5 Put together 6 Black Sea port 7 More moist 8 Sense of self

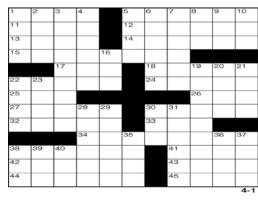
16 Performed 19 Advocated 20 Skilled 21 Puts down 22 Price tag info 23 Solemn promise 28 Cookbook entry 29 Scant 30 Wisdom bringer 31 Capitol group

9 Take a load off

10 Low digit

35 Red-ink amount 36 Jason's ship 37 Flag creator 38 Tea cooler 39 Signal of approval 40 Really liked

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BEETLE BAILEY





BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES





Project staring at long delays pillars underground left decades ago. FROM PAGE 12 Harun in three cases filed over Hefajat's Brahmanbaria

extended till June 2022.

The estimated project cost was fixed at Tk 1,366 crore. As per the revised proposal, the cost has now gone up by 14.3 percent to around 1,561 crore.

Of the amount, South Korean government organisation Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) would provide Tk 1,047 crore in soft loans. The rest of the amount is coming from the government.

South Korean company Hyundai is the project contractor while the medical equipment is being supplied by Samsung.

As of December last year, around Tk 682 crore of the allocated money was spent, according to the revised

Project officials said they could finish the job on time as the Covid-19 slowed things down, among other reasons.

"Due to the delay in the project implementation, the excise duty has increased. All other expenditure has remained the same," Project Director Prof Zulfiqur Rahman Khan told The Daily Star yesterday.

Zulfiqur, also chair of the BSMMU's Department of Hepatobiliary, Pancreatic and Liver Transplantation Surgery, said, "After we started the construction work, we found 44

It took time to remove those. Besides, the work remained suspended for five months due to the pandemic. THE PROJECT

BSMMU officials said the building's construction work was already over and around 70 percent work related to the internal infrastructure was

"Hopefully, we will start receiving the medical equipment by the end of this month. As per an agreement, the Korean company has agreed to complete the project by December this year. We have asked for an additional six months considering any unexpected situation," Zulfiqur said.

The objective of the project is to increase the capacity of the BSMMU by providing treatment for general and complex diseases, establishing a "safety net hospital" through modernisation of medical care and management, and ensuring skill development of professionals. Officials believe once the project is done, many opting to go abroad for treatment will go to the BSMMU.

The hospital will have 846 beds, including eight VVIP cabins.

"It will be a state-of-the-art facility. The treatment cost will also be

affordable," Zulfiqur added.

Rights (FIDH) and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.

The letter was copied to the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, ambassador/head of delegation of the EU to Bangladesh, EU Special Representative for Human Rights and US ambassador to Bangladesh.

The rights bodies said seven years ago, UN special mandates communicated with the Bangladesh government to give attention to "the arrest of journalists and the adoption of disproportional punitive measures disrupting the activities of newspapers and televisions".

However, since retaining power in December 2018, the ruling Awami League party has taken an even tougher line with the media, the letter

With widespread repression of the media and the harassment of editors who publish reports critical of the government, journalists have taken to self-censoring at unprecedented levels given the risks of imprisonment or closure of media outlets, it said.

Journalists have been subjected to violence by party activists, arrested arbitrarily, and news sites have been blocked, the rights bodies said in the

In recent months, according to the letter, a number of journalists have been targeted for their work, and those who expose government corruption or

express dissent are particularly at risk. At least 17 journalists were injured covering protests over the visit by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March 2021.

According to the rights bodies'

Concerned, rights bodies officers hit journalists with rifle butts, sticks, iron rods, stones, and bricks, and journalists were shot with rubber bullets resulting in various injuries including bruises, swelling, bleeding, broken bones, a dislocated shoulder, and a cracked skull.

In 2020, at least 247 journalists were reportedly subjected to attacks, harassment, and intimidation by state officials and others affiliated with the government, the letter said.

It added that authorities continue to use the Digital Security Act to harass and indefinitely detain journalists, activists, and others critical of the government, resulting in a chilling effect on any expression of dissent.

"This overbroad cybercrime law, passed in 2018, effectively stifles journalism by criminalising peaceful speech at the discretion of the government.

The letter said more than 900 cases were filed under the DSA between January and December 2020; with nearly 1,000 people charged and 353 detained. Bangladesh authorities are poised to undertake even more prosecutions of DSA cases, as the law ministry has approved a proposal to expand the number of special tribunals specifically for these types of cyber "crimes".

On April 20, 2021, Bangladesh police arrested Abu Tayeb, a Khulna journalist who was charged under the DSA for an alleged Facebook post.

"We respectfully urge your mandates to explore avenues to hold Bangladeshi perpetrators accountable and urge the government of Bangladesh to respect and protect the right to freedom of expression, repeal the Digital Security Act, and release all journalists, critics, and activists who demonstrators and police are in detention for speaking out.

Never thought I'd be forcefully

told us that he already had a valid Indian visa in his passport when he was found to be entering home from India. Questions arise why he would feel the need to travel to India without a passport when he already had a visa."

Golam Sarwar, a Chattogram who was forcefully disappeared last November, revealed how he was living in constant fear for his life which led him moving to his village home from his Chattogram abode.

He described how unidentified people tried to run him over with a car four times. He said he was also routinely being followed by people and continuously receiving threats.

Jyotirmoy Barua said surviving is more important for Sarwar than doing journalism at the moment.

The journalist said, "I cannot explain how I spent the last six months. I was seriously injured twice when people attempted to run me over [with a car]. During the last attempt, the nail of my big toe came off. That is when I decided to move to my village.

"I can feel Kajol's pain. I will only reveal this -- I was abducted for publishing news. When I was being tortured, my abductors received a call instructing them to ask me if I would stay journalism anymore," he said.

Sarwar said a politically influential family from Chattogram filed three cases against him and police were investigating those.

"But the case I filed following my abduction with Kotwali Police Station is hardly seeing any progress," he said.

Baul singer Rita Dewan said she was also in a similar position in which she cannot work. "People used obscenities and compared me with atheists. People

also called for hanging me."

She described how the Digital Security Act cases filed against her were used for oppressing her for a song she sang last year.

Oppression will always be there. But we have to make sure we keep on protesting," said photojournalist Shahidul Alam who was in prison in a case filed against him in 2018.

Chattogram University Maidul Islam spoke about how a 'disabled and silenced generation" is being created in the country.

Political analyst Firoz Ahmed said, "Democracy means freedom of the press. Suing journalists or arresting them means you do not want

CR Abrar, professor of International Relations at Dhaka University, recommended repealing the DSA immediately.

"Considering defamation as a criminal offence is a violation of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil

and Political Rights," he said. Barua said no functional and independent political system can be

built without free thinking. Meanwhile, Article 19, a Uk based rights organisation, in a press release yesterday criticised the deplorable state

of press freedom in Bangladesh. "No media is free here and people working in the mass media sector in our country still cannot express their opinion freely," the statement said citing rights activist Saleem Samad as

He said journalists were not only being "barred from writing the truth externally, but also facing censorship from the owners and higher authorities of their respective media outlets".

India's Covid peak seen

Family members of the dead staged a demonstration at the hospital and alleged there was a shorten of oxygen at home order and declaring medical and raised slogans, reports our New

Delhi correspondent. At least 11 states and union territories have imposed some form of restrictions on movement to try and

lockdown, concerned about the economic impact.

"In my opinion, only a national stay emergency will help to address the current healthcare needs," Bhramar Mukherjee, an epidemiologist with the

University of Michigan said on Twitter. "The # of active cases is stem infections, but Prime Minister accumulating, not just the daily new Narendra Modi's government is cases. Even the reported numbers state reluctant to announce a national there are around 3.5M active cases."

Harun in three cases filed over Hefajat's Brahmanbaria district President

Narendra Modi, while Jubair was in a

six-day remand in two cases filed with Paltan and Motijheel police stations over the 2013 mayhem and the recent violence in Dhaka.

Jalal was placed on a three-day remand in one of the cases filed with Paltan Police Station over the recent violence in Dhaka. Metropolitan Magistrate Masud-

after investigators produced the three before his court with 24-day remand prayers for them in three cases. The three were produced before the court on completion of their different

Ur-Rahman passed the remand orders

terms of remand in three cases filed with Motijheel and Paltan police stations over the 2013 mayhem in Azizul was shown arrested yesterday

Police Station over the 2013 mayhem. In Chattogram, the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Helal Uddin granted a three-day remand for Mufti

The closure has been extended till

there are 49 public universities in

the country. About 3 lakh students

are studying at these universities

sans National University, Islamic

University and Bangladesh Open

formed by the commission has

prepared a draft guideline on how to

take online exams. The guideline will

be presented before the meeting on

The guideline says public university

students have completed theory

classes for two semesters since April

last year, but they are yet to sit the

semester final exams. Students are

losing interest in their studies as they

are not sure when the exams will be

It mentions that grades can be

awarded to students after taking

online exams on specific subjects

by giving "creative assignments",

'creative quiz/ MCQ questions", and

Practical tests will be held after

"Universities can choose all the

options or two or three of them. But

students should keep the camera

and microphone of their devices on

while taking the exams online," said

a member of guideline formation

The member said the UGG will

keep in mind that there is acceptability

of the exams and no student is

affected. Its other concerns are

shortage of digital devices of students,

uninterrupted internet access and

stopping adoption of unfair means by

Mohammad

Chittagong University of Engineering Technology, said some

universities, including CUET, were

taking semester final exams in line

with the decisions of their academic

disadvantages of online exams.

How long will we sit idle amid the

pandemic? There are some obstacles

including shortage of digital devices

and uninterrupted internet access. We

will need to remove those obstacles,"

Alamgir said they would discuss

In December last year, UGC had

the issues with the VCs in the meeting.

said public universities can hold

their honour's and masters final year

examinations as per decisions taken

by their respective academic councils,

following proper health safety

VCs of many public universities at

that time wanted to hold exams to

avoid session jams and ensure that

students qualify for taking upcoming

Longest suspension

inside the Unesco-recognised Arouca

Geopark, the bridge hangs 175 meters

crossing is not for the faint-hearted.

Held up by steel cables and two

massive towers on each side, it

"I was a little afraid, but it was

so worth it," a relieved Xavier said

already on the other side. "It was

extraordinary, a unique experience, an

The bridge opened only to local residents on Thursday, but from yesterday everyone started to book a

Locals hope the attraction, which

cost about 2.3 million euros (\$2.8

million) and took around two years

to build, will help revive the region,

especially after the devastating

land because it will attract more

investment, more people," said tour

guide Emanuel, adding that the region

was rapidly ageing as many young

people moved to big cities. "It will

bring a new dynamic to Arouca."

"It is a breath of fresh air for our

wobbles a little with every step.

adrenaline rush."

Covid-19 pandemic.

The landscape is calm, but the

above the fast-flowing River Paiva.

"There are some advantages and

president of

Bishwabidyalaya Parishad, association of public university vice-chancellors, and also the VC of

Rafiqul

Bangladesh

students during exams.

holding "time constrained class tests"

and "viva voce" exams.

normalcy returns.

committee.

Prof

he added.

measures.

BCS exams.

UGC top officials said a committee

According to UGC statistics,

UGC mulls

May 23 this year in phases.

FROM PAGE 12

University.

Thursday.

in six more cases filed with Paltan

madrasa students, were killed during the clash there. Meanwhile, the lawmaker from Brahmanbaria-3 mentioned in his case statement that gunpowder, firearms, and various combustible materials

Humayun Kabir.

the district from March 26 to 28. On Saturday evening, lawmaker RAM Obaidul Muktadir Chowdhury, also president of Brahmanbaria Awami League, lodged a case against the Qawmi madrasa-based organisation's

were used during Hefajat mayhem in

"Besides, Mufti Harun was shown

A total of 10 cases were lodged with

arrested in two more cases," he added.

Hathazari police against 100 Hefajat

leaders and BNP men, including

Hefajat chief Junayed Babunagari,

over the March 26 violence, while

over 6,000 unidentified persons were

sued in the cases. Four, including three

2013 and the recent violence after a Maulana Sazedur Rahman and General Secretary Mufti Mubarakullah under seven-day remand was sought for him, the Digital Security Act. said Chattogram Court's Inspector

On behalf of the lawmaker, Abdul Jabbar Mamun, law secretary of Brahmanbaria municipal unit AL, filed the case with Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station for spreading propaganda against the lawmaker through Facebook.

Mohammad Shahjahan, inspector (investigation) of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station, said the Facebook links mentioned in the complaint have been sent to the Criminal Investigation Department for investigation.

Additional SP Md Roish Uddin said a letter was sent to CID in Dhaka to investigate whether there are any antistate or provocative posts. Legal step will be taken after getting the probe

Our staff correspondent in Chattogram and Brahmanbaria correspondent contributed to this report]

Genocide issue will be

Bangladesh, he asserted that there US TANKS USED IN PAKISTAN was enough food stocks there but the problem was one of total breakdown of the distribution system.

Senator Edward Kennedy urged the Nixon Administration to organise a mercy mission and airlift it to Bangladesh. He further said news reports to his sub-committee on refugees confirm a deteriorating situation with a threat of famine for

NO REHABILITATION PLAN: INDIRA Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi told newsmen today that the Government of India had no intention of rehabilitating the refugees who had come from Bangladesh on a permanent basis. She further said her government had been trying to get some international organisation to help in the work but there had not been much response. However, they would be approached further, she

The US state department acknowledged that the central government of Pakistan had used US-supplied tanks and jets in putting down the "rebellion by breakaway East Pakistan". But it said Pakistan was under no obligation to consult with the United States on the transfer of the equipment from one part of the country to the other. The action by Pakistan's central government was taken despite secret diplomatic pressure from the United States, according to the state department. The statements were made by David M. Abshire, assistant secretary of state for congressional relations, to four senators who had asked for information on the status of US military and economic aid to

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

Bangladesh waits

FROM PAGE 12

The announcement came at a time when many countries are struggling to obtain vaccines amid a huge global demand for the jabs, with India witnessing record cases of infections and deaths.

India saw over 350,000 daily cases and more than 3,500 daily deaths over the last few days. In such a situation, it banned export of Covid-19 vaccine.

In November last year, a trilateral deal was signed between Bangladesh government, Beximco Pharmaceuticals and Serum Institute of India over purchase of 30 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from Serum. Bangladesh has so far received 7 million jabs. Besides, the Indian government donated Bangladesh 3.2 million doses.

Bangladesh government has dready suspended the inoculation of first dose as it now has only 12 lakh doses. These are now being used for administering the second dose, and the stock could run out in two weeks, officials said.

The government recently approved emergency use of Russia's Sputnik V and China's Sinopharm vaccines.

Dhaka is in talks with Moscow and Beijing to procure vaccines and also co-produce those in Bangladesh.

China has confirmed it will give Bangladesh five lakh doses of Sinopharm vaccine as gift. Those are likely to arrive by May 10.

Bangladesh is also trying to obtain vaccines from the UK where AstraZeneca has manufacturing

Bangladesh High Commission in London said it has written to the offices of the UK prime minister, the secretary of state, and the minister for South Asia and the Commonwealth.

A diplomatic source in London said Bangladesh has sought several million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine from the UK.

"The overall Covid situation in the UK is much better now. We are regularly contacting the authorities here so that we can obtain vaccines at the soonest," the source mentioned.



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন) এর কার্যালয় চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ দামপাড়া, চট্টগ্রাম

উনাক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৭/২০২০-২০২১

তারিখ ঃ 06 -০৫-২০২১খ্রিঃ।

এতঘারা "The Public Procurement Act-2006" and "The Public Procurement Regulations 2008" (সংশোধিত-২০০৯) এর বিধান মোতাবেক চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ সংস্থায় চলতি ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বৎসরের জন্য নিমুবর্ণিত কাজের ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী/ওয়ার্কসপ/গ্যারেজ পরিচালনাকারী বাংলাদেশী প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী এবং ওয়ার্কসপ/গ্যারেজ পরিচালনাকারীদের নিকট হতে নিজস্থ প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রাদ্ধে সীল্যোত্রকত মুখবন্ধ খামে দ্বপ্র আত্রান কর

ক্রমিক নং	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয় (জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ)।				
2	এজেন্সি/সংস্হা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।				
২	সংগ্রহকারী সংস্থার নাম	পুলিশ কমিশনার কার্যালয়, সি	াএমপি, চউগ্রাম।	,		
9	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবী ও ঠিকানা	উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবর	াহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি,	চট্টগ্রাম।		
		🕾 - ৬১৩৮৩৩, ফ্যাক্স নং-				
8	দরপত্র আহবানের সূত্র ও তারিখ	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্মারক নং-সি	এমপি/সরবরাহ/দরপত্র/১৯ তাবিখ ক 🖢 /০৫/১	২৪ (অংশ- ৮) ১০১১খিঃ।		
•	সংগ্ৰহ পদ্ধতি	উন্মক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।	• ((1) • (1) • (1)	(0 (0)		
	অর্থের উৎস	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, ঢাকা হতে অর্থ বরাদ্দ প্রাপ্তি সাপেক্ষে				
9	দরপত্রের নাম	বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে প্রকাশিত ক্রমিক ন				
ъ	দরপত্র প্রকাশের তারিখ	.6.8/০৫/২০২১ খ্রিঃ।	1-03 200 0 110 1110	, नाम । त्यानुर ।		
	দরপত্র তফসিল বিক্রয়কারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সর	ররাহ ও পরিরহন) সিঙ	্যাপি চট্টগায়		
	निवास उपानि विद्यानम् । अपिकान निवास उपानि	দামপাড়া কার্যালয়ের সরবরাহ		1411, 00414		
20	দরপত্র দাখিলের নিয়মাবলী সংবলিত তফসিল (সিডিউল)	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি পত্রিকায় প্রকা		0 6/2023 P		
	বিক্রয়ের সময়সীমা	পর্যন্ত। (প্রতি কার্যদিবসে আ				
22	সীলমোহরকৃত দ রপত্র দাখিলের স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সর		পি, চউগ্রাম এর		
		দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইন্স কার্য				
		,04/.04/২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখ, বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত				
25	টিওসি কর্তৃক দরপত্র বাক্স খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়					
•	विकास स्थ्र स्वाच साज स्ताम स्ता, जावर व सम	সময় উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম এর দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইন্স কার্যালয়ে, ৩৩/ ৩৮/২০২১খ্রিঃ তারিখ				
		সমান্ত্র পুলাবার স্থানার ,				
20	ঠিকাদারের প্রাক্ যোগ্যতা	দরপত্র দাখিলকারী ঠিকাদার/প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূকে নিমুবর্ণিত কাগজপত্রাদি (১১				
•	10 11 110 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11	শ্রেণীর কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত) দাখিল করতে হবে।				
		(ক) নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র, (সেন, (গ) দরগ		
		বিজ্ঞপ্তি পত্রিকায় প্রকাশের				
		তফসিলভুক্ত যে কোন বাণি	জ্যক ব্যাংকের সাথে [°] লেন	দেন এর স্টেটমে		
		এবং ব্যাংক কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত আর্থিক স্বচ্ছলতার সনদপত্র, (ঘ) প্রতিষ্ঠাতে				
		মালিকানা সনদপত্র, (ঙ) টি	আইএন নম্বর উল্লেখসহ	হাল সনের আয়		
		পরিশোধ সনদপত্র, (চ) ভ্যাট রেজিষ্ট্রেশন সনদপত্র, (ছ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কালে				
		অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র (জ) ফ				
		আবেদন করতে হবে। (প্রযোজ	্যক্তে) (ঝ) দরপত্র দাখি	লকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান		
	,	কোন সরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান ক		করা হয় নাই ম		
		প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক প্যাডে অঙ্গীকারন	ামা।			
.5.5	কাজের বিবরণ		দরপত্রের সঙ্গে আর্নেস্ট	কাজের সময় সী		
াইটেম নং	দরপত্রের বিষয়	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	দরপত্রের সঙ্গে আনেস্ট মানি (ফেরংযোগ্য)	কাজের সময় স		
	TANKS THE THE THE PARTY WE IN THE TANK THE TANK	(অফেরৎযোগ্য)				
١.	পেট্রোল চালিত যানবাহনের খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ	२,०००/-	90,000/-			
ર	ডিজেল চালিত যানবাহনের খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ	२,०००/-	96,000/-			
૭ .	মোটর সাইকেলের খুচরা যন্ত্রাংশ সরবরাহ	٥,000/-	¢0,000/-			
8.	মোটরযানের টায়ার টিউব সরবরাহ	\$,000/-	৬০,০০০/-	৩০ শে জুন/		
¢.	মোটরযানের ব্যাটারী সরবরাহ	٥,000/-	৬০,০০০/-	২০২২ খ্রিঃ		
৬.	মোটরযানের টায়ার টিউব ভল্কানাইজিং	¢00/-	\$0,000/-	পর্যন্ত।		
٩.	ভাড়ায় যানবাহন সরবরাহ	२,०००/-	\$,00,000/-			
ъ.	মেরামতের জন্য ওয়ার্কসপ/গ্যারেজ পরিচালনাকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান "নতুন	3,000/-	২০,০০০/-	1		
	তালিকাভ্ক্তি করণ" (পেট্রোল চালিত গাড়ি/ডিজেল চালিত গাড়ি/	, , , , , ,	(-,/			

যোটর সাইকেশ) বি. দ্র. ঃ- অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ কর্তৃপক্ষ এই দরপত্রের তারিখ পরিবর্তন/পরিবর্ধনসহ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র বা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন এবং কর্তৃপক্ষ সর্বনিম্ন দরপত্র গ্রহণে বাধ্য নহে; এ বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

> বিপি-৭১৯৯০২০৮৬১ উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ ও পরিবহন) চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ চট্টগ্রাম।

> > ফোন ঃ ০৩১-৬১৩৮৩৩

GD-886

Live from 4:00 pm Bashundhara Kings vs Bangladesh Police

Live from 7:00 pm Sheikh Russel vs Rahmatganj Live from 9:00 pm **STAR SPORTS 1 & STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 Indian Premier League** Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Mumbai

Indians Live from 8:00 pm TEN 2 **UEFA Champions League** Manchester City vs PSG Live from 1:00 am (Tuesday)

Tigers revert to type

SPORTS REPORTER





Bangladesh's performance in two-match Test series in Sri

Lanka was a fare reflection of what happened to them in the past. The Tigers had a good outing with the bat in the first Test, with Najmul Hossain Shanto and Mominul Haque scoring centuries

the most consistent batsman with three half-centuries in two Tests. Pacer Taskin Ahmed showed vast improvement in his comeback Test after four years and was by far the most successful bowler in the Bangladesh side.

The visitors declared the first innings of the first Test on 547 for seven, and although the hosts took a lead, Bangladesh batsmen kept

SCORES IN BRIEF

Sri Lanka: First innings-493 for 7d and Second innings 194 for 9d. Bangladesh: First innings- 251 all out and Second innings-227 all out in 71 overs (Tamim 24, Saif 34, Najmul 26, Mominul 32, Mushfigur 40, Liton 17, Miraz 39, extras 6; Ramesh 4-103, Jayawickrama 5-86) Result: Sri Lanka won by 209 runs. Player- of-the-match: Praveen Jayawickrama.

Player-of-the -series: Dimuth Karunaratne. Series result: Sri Lanka won the two-match series 1-0

their composure in the second innings to eventually draw the first

These were the only positives from the series to take for the

Bangladesh's consistency and hunger to push the limits in tough conditions eventually came to a 'breaking point', according to head coach Russell Domingo, after spending a significant amount of time on the field under hot and humid conditions.

Tigers fumbled badly in the second Test as their batsmen surrendered against a debutant left-arm spinner and an off-spinner who was playing his second Test, the pair accounting for 17 wickets.

After being bundled out for 251 in the first innings, Bangladesh's batting approach in the second innings was questionable as they were set a target of 437 on the fourth day. The top five batsmen tried to charge the Lankan spinners on a pitch which was offering much assistance to the two spinners.

Maybe the batsmen followed instructions of the coach, who had



"I was short of runs before this series, and I had to put my hand up here. I did well here, and so did all the other batters. Everything went well, winning the toss, batting first, the spinners bowled really well. Praveen was fantastic

and Ramesh too, but I think they need to play Test matches regularly, build confidence, and if they do that, they will fill the shoes of Dilruwan and Rangana for sure."

Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne, who won the player-of-the-series award for his scores of 244, 118 and 66 in three innings.

previously stated that he was barely happy with a draw.

Despite losing wickets at regular intervals, Bangladeshi batsmen kept charging the bowlers and were eventually bundled out for 227 on the fifth morning to face a thrashing 209-run defeat.

"I don't think we performed as

(Iqbal) bhai in the first innings. He made a good start but we couldn't capitalise on it. If we could have batted for three or four sessions, things would have been different. We batted six sessions in the first Mominul said after the Test,"

"You can neither be too defensive on these wickets, not can you be

'I think the most important thing in this Test match was the toss. in my view. First two days there wasn't anything for the bowlers. Almost 50% of the Test match was decided by the toss. Obviously there are a lot of positives to take [from this series]. I lost the series but that doesn't mean I lost everything. Obviously, there will be criticism from you people and everyone else but I think there are a lot of positives to take.'

Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque

a batting group except for Tamim too attacking. You have to find a low-risk method. We had to take calculative risks like as a left-hander I can attack the left-arm spinner or the right-hander can attack the right-arm spinner," added the Bangladesh captain.

Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne, who himself had a great outing with 428 runs in two Tests, was all praise for left-arm spinner Praveen Jayawickrama, who bagged a record eleven wickets on his debut. Karunaratne also said that their batsmen worked on their patience and mindset for Test cricket which paid dividends. "In West Indies, we did a lot of good things. It's not an easy place to bat, with the Dukes ball being used. But we fixed our mindset and worked on our temperament and patience. I think that's why we were able to make big scores in this series-Dhananjaya de Silva's 166 [in the first Test], and Thirimanne's 140. We knew that we needed a big score on the board in the first innings to win a match, so that was playing on our minds. We took responsibility," said Karunaratne.

A TEST SPIRIT governed by fear

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI





There was no display of effort, perseverance or mental grind befitting of Test cricket by the Tigers

in their defeat to Sri Lanka in the second Test in Kandy yesterday, and the sphere of their failures has a lot more to it than the margin of defeat inflicted by the hosts.

While a 209-run defeat is a big one, the basic criteria of lacking the crucial elements of the very nature of Test cricket is what stands in obscure darkness about the Tigers' performances in the longest format. Essentially because a Test is what it often has been, a 'true Test of character', Bangladesh team's entity now is shrouded in fear. They have indeed even turned the meaning of 'positive intent' the other way round, into something borne out of fear.

"We are under a great deal of pressure and the fear of failure is tremendously existing on the team and the individuals," Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, a mentor to some of the most recognised stars in the Bangladesh team, told The Daily Star as he reflected on the second Test. He did not cite a lack of ability as cause for

the latest defeat. "Their [Sri Lanka] players face more difficult game circumstances than our players. We have turned out from easier scenarios or challenges.

Being inside this 'bubble' of facing incompetent challenges, having to bat in batting friendly pitches, bowling well on turning pitches, all lack the ingredients of creating that Test character.

"We didn't have a clear strategy of



Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne congratulates left-arm spinner Praveen Javawickrama, who claimed a matchhaul of 11 wickets in a fairytale debut in the second Test against Bangladesh in Pallekele, Javawickrama's figures of 11 for 178 made him the first Sri Lankan to claim a 10-wicket haul on debut and the first bowler to take a 10-wicket haul on debut since Australia's Jason Krejza, who did it in 2008-9. He is also the first bowler since Narendra Hirwani in 1988 to pick up two five-wicket hauls in his debut match.

whether we were playing for a draw or trying to win," Faheem reminded.

Tigers had five-and-a-half sessions to bat in order to get at least a draw but they lacked adaptability.

"No, they didn't play for a draw but there is nothing wrong with that either. If we look at the wicket's nature, only defending for five or six sessions was not the option. If you look at Liton [Das], he tried to stay low profile but it spelled trouble since the ball he got out to, he could have easily turned it to square-leg or swept it. If you allow the bowler to pitch that much further up, it's trouble. There has to be a mixture of offence and defence.

"Every action is a reflection of your mind and when you see someone play, you know who is in control and who is

Mushfiqur Rahim resorted reversesweeping in the second innings and Mominul Haque got out to a fulltoss in the first innings. Such instances culminated from that governing fear. "You can play a delivery to send a message to the bowler that you are

not," Faheem said.

comfortable, which creates pressure on the bowler. In the longer format, if a bowler is hit for even four boundaries, he can get that moral victory and believe that he can get the batsman out."

Joe Root had employed the sweep, getting out of his comfort zone in England's recent series there and scoring big runs. Tigers let inexperienced Lankan spinners dictate terms. "You have to be ready when the ball turns out of the line of the stumps and the requirement is very quick thinking in these situations, agility of playing a fast bowler. Players need to find their limitations and work on it. People have scored runs in far more difficult conditions and it's high time to watch those innings to compare where our batting is," he reflected.

'Conte has justified wages' REUTERS, MILAN

Inter Milan CEO Giuseppe Marotta insists that Antonio Conte is worth every penny of a salary that makes him the highest-paid coach in

Inter won their first league title in 11 years with four games to spare on Sunday, two years after the arrival of Conte who reportedly earns 12 million euros net per year, almost five times as much as the next highest-paid coach in Serie A.

"He was a winner as a player and as a coach, and he managed to transmit these values to the players, since none of them had ever won a title except Arturo Vidal at Juventus," Marotta told Sky

"It is better to sign one less player but have a good coach. He has a salary that reflects the honours he has won.

Inter's triumph ended Juventus' nine-year reign as Italian champions, an era of dominance Conte played a major part in by leading the Turin club to the first three league titles of that run between 2011 and 2014.

The 51-year-old also won the 2016-17 Premier League with Chelsea, and enjoyed a glittering playing career with Juve.

The former midfielder won five Serie A crowns, the Champions League, the UEFA Cup and the Coppa Italia among other honours in Turin.

Departure of a cricket pioneer

SPORTS REPORTER

Former Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Kamal Ziaul Islam, better known as KZ Islam, passed away at his residence in Dhaka yesterday afternoon. He was 86.

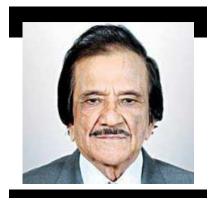
Islam left behind his wife, four sons, their wives, children and a host of well-wishers to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at the Azad Mosque in Gulshan in the evening and he was later buried at the Banani Graveyard.

Islam pioneered Nirman School Cricket, a popular school tournament of the country in the 1980s and 1990s. One of the most important components behind the rise of cricket in Bangladesh in the pre-Test era was the Nirman School Cricket Championships, popularly known as 'Nirman Cricket'.

It all started in the early 1980s and gradually became a household name for more than a decade over which Nirman Cricket produced future stars such as Javed Omar Belim, Khaled Mahmud and Mehrab Hossain.

In the late '90s when the number of participating schools rose to over 400 as Nirman Cricket emerged as the first step for cricketers chasing the dream of one day representing the today.



national team.

Islam served as the BCB president from January 30, 1983 to February 18, 1987.

expressed The BCB bereavement at the passing away of its former president.

BCB's current president Nazmul Hassan paid his tribute to K Z Islam, saying: "He was a pioneer and Bangladesh cricket will forever be grateful to him for his vision and belief. He patronised and encouraged age group cricket with the Nirman School tournament during a period when the game was far from being a professional sport. Because of resourceful personalities like him so many budding players could dream of becoming cricketers and cricket reached every corner of the country. On behalf of the board, I extend deepest condolences and sympathies to the family of K Z Islam."

As mark of respect to the late K \boldsymbol{Z} Islam, the BCB flag will fly at half-mast

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Can PSG's star power deny City's first final?

AGENCIES



With Istanbul firmly in their sights, Manchester City gear up for the second leg

of their Champions League semi-final showdown with Paris Saint-Germain at the Etihad on Tuesday night.

After a loss in the first leg, PSG will have to do much more in the rematch to eliminate City and prevent them from appearing in their first-ever final.

An exemplary second-half showing from Pep Guardiola's men saw them emerge 2-1 winners from last week's first leg at the Parc des Princes, during which Marquinhos's header was cancelled out by strikes from Kevin De Bruyne and Riyad Mahrez.

Both sides boosted their chances of domestic success at the weekend, HIGHLIGHT

Manchester City struggled to

assert themselves for much

of the first half during first-

leg match but found their

rhythm after the interval

and secured a 2-1 advantage

courtesy of second-half goals

from Kevin De Bruyne and

Riyad Mahrez. Paris's Idrissa

Gueye was sent off late on.

as Man City overcame Crystal Palace 2-0 and are mere inches away from yet another Premier League title and may well win the league crown next weekend while PSG kept their title hopes alive with a 2-1 win over Lens.

Both teams have exceptional players in their ranks but Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said earlier this season 'We don't have a specific player to win games,' to explain his side's consistency in a more congested season than ever before. "We have to do it together."

City's strength as a collective was evidenced in Saturday's 2-0 win at Crystal Palace that took them to the brink of a third Premier League title in four years.

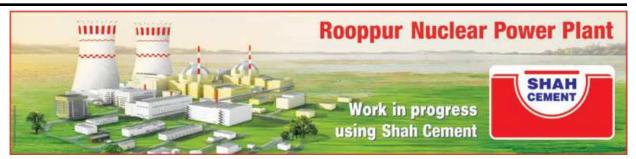
City's depth won out over PSG's stardust in the first leg. After a bright first 45 minutes, Neymar and Mbappe were reduced to frustrated spectators as the visitors dominated possession and got their vital away goals from De Bruyne and Mahrez.

Keeping the ball will key to Guardiola's plan for the second leg on Tuesday to minimise PSG's threat on the counter-attack. "We are good playing in a certain way, we cannot do it another way," said the Catalan coach on how his side cut off the supply to Neymar and Mbappe in the second-half a week

Mbappe alone has scored five goals in PSG's last two away trips to Guardiola's former clubs Barcelona and Bayern. But with the French World Cup winner an injury doubt due to a calf strain, the muchmaligned PSG supporting cast may need to step up if they are to deny City a first ever Champions League final as reward for their careful squad construction over many seasons.







SUPER SPECIALISED HOSPITAL

Project staring at long delays

Due to finish at BSMMU in December 2019, now likely to end in mid-2022

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOUDUD AHMMED SUJAN

The government will again extend the period of a project taken to set up a modern healthcare facility at the capital Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) after the project authorities failed to complete the work on schedule mainly due to the pandemic.

The project authorities are now seeking an extension of one and a half years and an additional Tk 195 crore for

A proposal in this regard is likely to be placed for approval before the meeting of the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecnec) scheduled today, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Under the project, called Super Specialised Hospital, the authorities are developing land and constructing a ninestorey building with a floor area of 45,000 square metres. The building will have 12,643 medical and surgical equipment, 2,256 computer accessories and six vehicles. Doctors and officials will also receive training at home and abroad under the project.

Originally, the project tenure was from January 2016 to December 2019, which was extended to December last year without increasing the fund, according to the revised

This time, the project duration has been proposed to be



A view of the capital's largest bamboo market on the Shitalakkhya river near Kanchpur Bridge in Narayanganj. Shipments of bamboo are brought on boats from all over the country, and the building material is taken from here to various parts of the capital. The photo was taken yesterday.

ANISUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh waits for US response on vaccines

PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh is eagerly waiting for US response to its request for Covid-19 vaccines as the country's stock of AstraZeneca vaccine purchased from India will run out soon.

"We have written to the US State Department. We are in touch with the office of US President Joe Biden and the US Chamber of Commerce," an official at Bangladesh Embassy in Washington told this correspondent yesterday.

"If the US donates the vaccine jabs, it will be great. But if it doesn't, we are ready to buy those," the official said.

Dhaka sought from Washington Covid-19 vaccines manufactured by British-Swedish firm AstraZeneca and also by US

company Moderna. The US on April 26 said it would start sharing up to 60 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine with other countries in the next

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Media Freedom in BD

Concerned, rights bodies write to UN

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Eight global and regional human rights bodies yesterday wrote a letter to the UN human rights chief, expressing concerns over the state of media freedom in Bangladesh and urging authorities to protect and respect freedom of expression.

"On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, we write to draw your attention to the escalating human rights violations perpetrated by the Bangladesh government, exemplified in part by the increasing crackdown on press freedom and the freedom of expression of journalists, activists and dissidents," says the letter.

The rights bodies that wrote to Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, are Asian Federation **Against Involuntary** Disappearances, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, Asian Human Rights Commission, Asian Network for Free Elections, Committee to Protect Journalists, Human Rights Watch, International Federation for Human

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



PRAYER TIMING MAY 4

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha AZAN 4-00 12-45 4-45 6-32 8-00 JAMAAT 4-10 1-15 5-00 6-42 8-30 SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING RAMADAN MAY SEHRI IFTAR

Longest suspension foot bridge opens in Portugal



REUTERS, Arouca

Hugo Xavier became one of the first people to cross the world's longest pedestrian suspension bridge when it opened on Thursday near his tiny hometown of Arouca in northern Portugal.

"Oh...here we go!," the 42-year-old said anxiously as he gathered enough courage to step onto the see-through metal grid pathway of the 516-metre-long (1693-ft) bridge alongside his equally jittery partner and a tour guide.

Hidden between rock-strewn mountains covered with lush greenery and yellow flowers

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Four Hefajat leaders on police remand

STAR REPORT

Four Hefajat-e-Islam leaders were placed on remand yesterday in seven cases filed with police stations in the capital and Chattogram over the 2013 mayhem and the recent violence in Dhaka and Chattogram.

The leaders are: Azizul Haque Islamabadi, organising secretary of Hefajat's now dissolved committee; Maulana Jubair Ahmed, former vice-president of its Dhalcity unit, and Maulana Jalaluddin Ahmed, former assistant general secretary, and Mufti Harun Izhar, education and cultural affairs secretary of the dissolved central committee.

Azizul was put on remand for seven days in two cases filed with the capital's Paltan Police Station over March 26 violence centring the visit of Indian Prime Minister

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Genocide issue will be referred to UN body

MAY 4, 1971 SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGLADESH GOVT

AMASSES EVIDENCE OF GENOCIDE

The Bangladesh government decided to refer to the Human Rights Commission of the

United Nations the question of genocide in the newborn republic. A spokesman of the Bangladesh mission in Kolkata said documentary evidence of the genocide was being collected for submission to the Commission. These evidence would include photographs and eyewitness accounts brought by refugees to India.

SPECIAL TRIBUNAL TO TRY BANGABANDHU FOR HIGH **TREASON**

The Pakistan government decided to set up a three-member special tribunal to try Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for high treason, reported a Karachi daily. The tribunal would consist of a senior judge of the Supreme Court, a judge of the Punjab High Court and a senior military officer of the rank of a major general. The paper said the trial would be held in Rawalpindi. US WILL JOIN RELIEF MISSION IF UN ORGANISES IT The US was willing to join the framework of international assistance organised by the United Nations in providing relief to Bangladesh refugees flowing into India, according to state department spokesman Charles Bray. He hoped that such help could quickly be organised. About the food situation in

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

UGC mulls online exams for public universities

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The University Grants Commission is considering allowing public universities to hold exams online keeping in mind that it would benefit students and also reduce session jams.

Vice chancellors of all public universities will sit in a meeting with the UGC on Thursday to discuss the process of holding online exams.

"UGC is considering that all public iversities will complete student assessments online. We will sit in a meeting with VCs to discuss the assessment system of public universities. We cannot sit idle as the pandemic situation is uncertain," UGC Member Prof Muhammed Alamgir told The Daily Star.

But taking exams online also depends on the universities as their academic councils or other bodies concerned will have the final say in this regard, he added.

Public universities were holding online classes as they could not take in-person classes since March 17 last year when the government closed all educational institutions due to the pandemic.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



A tailor etching out a design on a garment using a sewing machine in the capital's Gausia market yesterday. As Edi approaches, tailors like him are in high demand as customers get the designs of their choice on their clothes ahead of the festivities. The photo was taken yesterday.

ANISUR RAHMAN

India's Covid peak seen nearing

Experts urge nat'l stay-at-home order as over 300,000 new cases reported for 12th straight day

AGENCIES

India reported more than 300,000 new coronavirus infections for a 12th straight day yesterday to take its overall number of cases to just shy of 20 million, as scientists predicted a peak in the pandemic in the coming days.

With 368,147 new cases over the past 24 hours, India's total infections stand at 19.93 million, while total fatalities rose by 3,417 to 218,959, according to health ministry data. Medical experts say actual numbers across the country of 1.35 billion may be five to 10 times higher than the official tally.

The health ministry offered a glimmer of hope, reporting that positive cases relative to the number of tests conducted fell yesterday for the first time since at least April 15.

India's coronavirus cases may peak between May 3-5, according to a mathematical model from a team of scientists advising the government, a few days earlier than a previous estimate as the virus has spread faster than expected.

Hospitals have filled to capacity, medical oxygen supplies have run short and morgues and crematoriums have been swamped as the country deals with the surge

At least 24 patients died in Chamarajanagar district, about 175km from Bengaluru, in the last 24 hours due to alleged oxygen shortage in the district hospital.

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