



UKRAINE CRISIS
Blinken urges
Russia to cease
'reckless
actions'
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Your Right to Know

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"Public transports have been allowed to operate in the capital and within the districts due to pressure from various quarters."
HEALTH MINISTER ZAHID MALEQUE



"We won't be intimidated by these manoeuvres."
FRENCH EUROPE MINISTER CLEMENT BEAUNE AFTER UK SENDS WARSHIPS TO CHANNEL ISLAND OF JERSEY OVER FISHING ROW



"The extraordinary circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic call for extraordinary measures."
WASHINGTON'S TRADE REPRESENTATIVE KATHERINE TAI AMID GROWING INTERNATIONAL CALLS

FIRST 9 MONTHS OF THIS FISCAL YEAR Tk 14,295cr cash, assets legalised

10,000 people pay Tk 1,439cr in taxes to legalise their undisclosed wealth

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and DWAIPIYAN BARUA

Undisclosed assets worth a staggering Tk 14,295 crore have been legalised in the first nine months of this fiscal year.

At least 10,034 people paid Tk 1,439 crore in taxes to legalise the record amount of assets, taking the opportunity the government gave aiming to boost the economy during the pandemic, said a high official at the National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday.

Some 9,693 people legalised assets by paying Tk 1,390 crore in taxes for their undeclared fixed deposit receipts (FDRs), saving certificates, cash, and properties.

They legalised assets worth Tk 13,860 crore. Of the amount, 90 percent was in cash, FDRs, saving certificates, etc, the official said.

Another 341 people, who had invested their undisclosed money in the share market, paid Tk 49 crore in taxes to make Tk 435 crore in investments legal.

In 15 tax zones in the capital alone, some 4,885 people legalised assets by paying around Tk 980 crore against their undisclosed FDRs, saving certificates, cash, and homes.

Another 204 legalised their share market investments paying Tk 34.02 crore.

In four tax zones in Chattogram, 1,106 people took the government issued opportunity and paid around Tk 121 crore against their undisclosed FDRs, saving certificates, cash, and homes.

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Buses back on streets; crowds at city malls

Safety rules hardly followed at markets

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Heavy traffic returned to the streets of the capital after operation of public buses resumed within districts yesterday following over three weeks of suspension.

Besides, Eid shoppers continued to pour into the malls, which struggled to ensure the health safety rules. It raised concerns over the spread of Covid-19.

Addressing a virtual discussion, Health Minister Zahid Maleque yesterday said buses were allowed to run within Dhaka and other districts in the face of pressure from different quarters.

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Celebrate Eid where you are now

PM urges all to help curb spread of virus

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked Muslims to celebrate the upcoming Eid-ul Fitr in their present locations to help check the spread of novel coronavirus in the country.

"We shouldn't travel risking our lives on the occasion of Eid. Celebrate Eid where you are now," she said.

The PM was addressing a programme marking the inauguration of a good number of infrastructures and water vessels of different agencies under the shipping ministry through a video conference from the Gono Bhavan.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

All for money?

137 recruited at RU on last day of VC's tenure; ministry terms it illegal, orders probe; BCL men clash over recruitment

ANWAR ALI with ARAFAAT RAHAMAN

Outgoing Rajshahi University Vice Chancellor Prof M Abdus Sobhan violated a ministerial embargo by appointing 137 teachers and staffers on his last day in office yesterday, giving rise to daylong chaos and clashes on the campus.

After news of the recruitments leaked around noon, a clash ensued between leaders and activists of RU Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) who went to the campus to receive appointment letters and a city unit BCL group, which opposed the recruitments.

Shortly afterwards, the education ministry termed the recruitments "illegal" and formed a four-member committee headed by University Grants Commission member Prof Muhammad Alamgir to investigate the VC's action.

In December 2020, acting on a report of the UGC on corruption at the university, the education ministry had issued an embargo on all kinds of recruitment at RU.

"It appears [from the chaos] that the VC signed the appointment letters under pressure of the ruling party's student leaders, but it was only money that worked behind the last-minute corruption," said Prof Sultanul Islam, the convener of Teachers' Society against Corruption, which has been protesting irregularities at the public university.

"As we were protesting the VC's corruptions, many job seekers were pleading with us to stop and save them. Many told us that they paid [for the appointments] with money they gathered by selling off their lands and properties," he said.

Earlier, the RU authorities under Prof Sobhan had called meetings of the finance committee on May 2 and the university syndicate on May 4 to fulfil the requirements for approving recruitments.

But teachers and students foiled the attempt by staging protests and requesting the committee members not to attend the meetings.

The VC then requested RU Registrar Prof Abdus Salam to sign the appointment letters, but the registrar denied the requests on Wednesday.

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TREATMENT ABROAD Khaleda not fit for long-haul flights

Say doctors; legal issues regarding her travel still unresolved

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's health might not be stable enough for a long flight, her doctors said as her family members want to take her abroad for better treatment.

Her travel abroad also depends on renewal of her passport, visa from the destination country, and the Bangladesh government's approval.

BNP Secretary

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

QUEST FOR COVID VACCINE Dhaka seeks 4m doses from US

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has sought immediate delivery of 4 million vaccine doses from the US, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said yesterday.

"We've sought immediate release of 4 million doses of vaccine," he told reporters after his meeting with US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl Miller at his foreign ministry office, reports UNB.

This was the latest government effort to collect vaccines from alternative sources as the stock of Oxford-AstraZeneca jabs is running out fast, making the ongoing countrywide vaccine inoculation uncertain.

Already, the government suspended administration of the first dose on April 26, immediately after the Indian government barred export of Covishield -- the AstraZeneca vaccine manufactured by Serum Institute of India.

The Bangladesh government had a stock of 1.02 crore doses of the Oxford vaccine. After 58,19,185 people received the first doses, there is a shortage of 14,39,708 doses for the second doses, according to the health directorate.

Momen said the government wants to continue the vaccination programme collecting vaccines from alternative sources.

He informed reporters that his ministry has sought a total of 10 to 20 million jabs of vaccine from the US.

The foreign minister said the US government needs permission from the Food and Drug Administration to export vaccines which is a time-consuming process. "But we need it immediately."

Momen also said they have written to Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar requesting for 3 million shots of vaccine to address Bangladesh's immediate need.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

SUHRAWARDY UDYAN Trees felled to implement mega project

Legal notice served on government

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After facing backlash from different organisations and environmental activists, the public works department said it cut down trees at the Suhrawardy Udyan upon directives of the Liberation War affairs ministry for the implementation of a mega project at the historic site.

On Wednesday, the Liberation War affairs ministry in a statement claimed that there was a misunderstanding among people due to different media reports that published partial news regarding the project implementation.

It, however, admitted that some trees were felled at the Suhrawardy Udyan as part of the implementation. But at the same time, around 1,000 new trees will be planted there, said the ministry, adding that it expects support from citizens in this regard.

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READ MORE ON PAGE 3

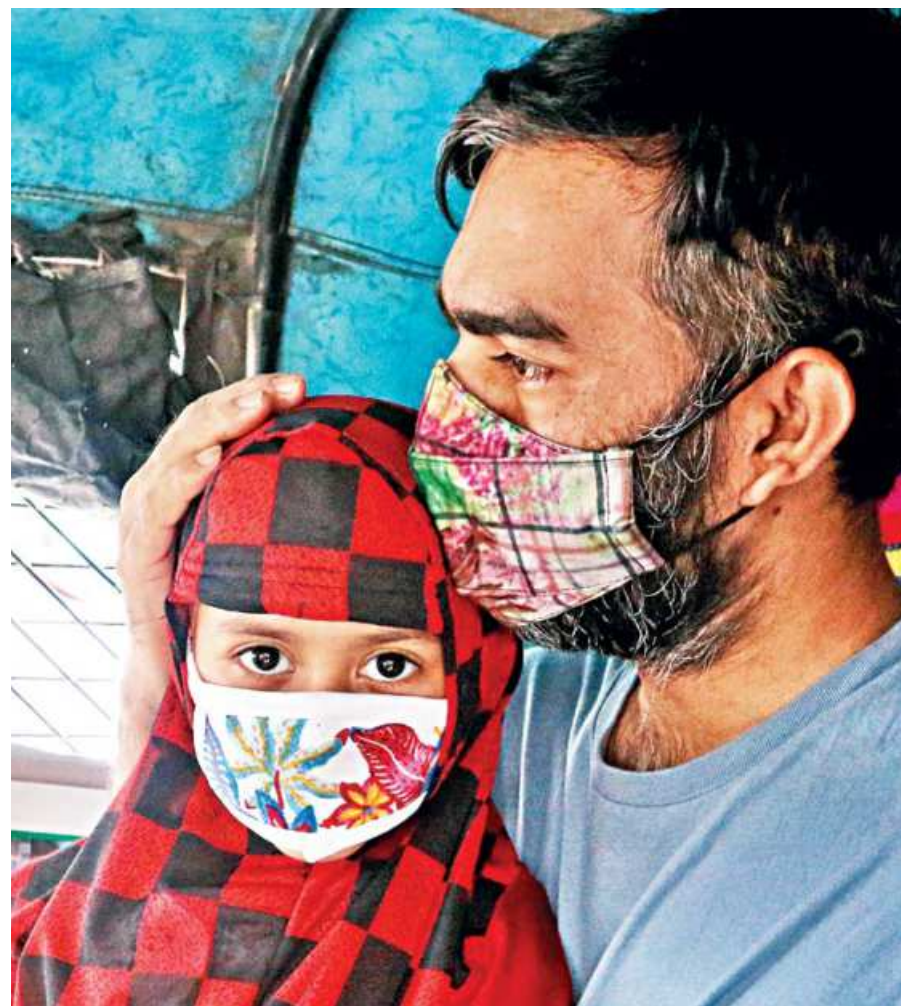


PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

PROVOCATIVE SPEECH Cops to take action against such speakers

CTTC unit making list
MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Counterterrorism officers are preparing a list of extremist speakers making provocative speeches online and at public gatherings.

Seven individuals have already been identified and the list is being updated, officers said.

The number of militant acts has fallen, thanks to crackdowns, but the threat of radicalisation is on the rise, said Saiful Islam, deputy commissioner of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of police.

"The list we have been making contains the names of several leaders of Hefajat-e-Islam. We are working to bring to book the extremist speakers who are popular among militants," he said.

The speakers will be accused under the anti-terrorism act as "instigators".

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Seven-year-old Jannat came to take her father Alamin home after he was released from the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. Alamin contracted the Covid-19 and had to be at the hospital for over a month. He was allowed to go to his family in the capital's Banasree after his coronavirus test result came negative recently.