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Home rush set to get madder still

MUNTAKIM SAAD and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Be it on the highways or on ferries, people's desperate rush to go to their home towns for Eid only heightened yesterday, despite mounting difficulties.

This mad rush has been going on for the last four days and authorities fear it will get madder still from today as offices and garment factories will be closed for the Eid.

Pressure of vehicles had already increased yesterday on the Dhaka-Tangail and Dhaka-Chattogram highways.

The government had suspended inter-district public transport and asked all to stay at their present location to check the spread of Covid-19, but the move did little to stop the desperate home-goers from embarking on the difficult journey.

They left the capital by any means, disregarding physical distancing guidelines and ignoring the prime minister's request to celebrate Eid where they are to help check the spread of Covid-19.

Hundreds, including women and children, were waiting for hours under the scorching sun at ferry terminals and on roads. Many took detours and changed vehicles multiple times to go home. Some jumped on trucks, pick-ups and many even walked long distances to get home.

Low-income people bore the brunt of the rush as they had to pay fares hiked as much as double the usual amount for the journeys.

Health experts said the Covid-19 situation in Bangladesh could worsen due to the increased public movement. They had earlier warned that the situation could turn more

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A huge number of shoppers seen on Bashundhara City shopping mall escalators. Even with the Covid-19 scare, and that too with the new Indian variant entering the country, people are not paying any heed to health restrictions and have been carrying on Eid shopping as usual. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



'Cyber-bullying must end'

Artistes protest after Chanchal Chowdhury, mother, abused online

SADI SHAHNEWAZ

As the entire country celebrated mother's day on May 9 with pictures, felicitations and tributes to the women who raised them, National Award winning actor Chanchal Chowdhury was harassed on his Facebook account for following a different religion.

The shameful incident stuck out like a sore thumb on an otherwise beautiful social media feed.

As the actor uploaded a picture with his mother with the caption "Maa", some people were surprised at seeing vermilion on his mother's head, which is worn by married women in Hindu communities.

Among those who made the comments, there

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10 RMG workers hurt as police fire on their demo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ten garment workers were seriously injured when police shot "rubber bullets" at demonstrators in Tongi, Gazipur yesterday.

Police said the workers blocked a road and threw brick chips at police prompting the use of firearms.

The workers of Ha-Meem Group's Creative Collections Ltd and That's It Garments Ltd were demonstrating near their factories around 11:00am, reports our correspondent in Gazipur.

"The workers have not been taking a day off for one and a half months... They protested after the management declared that the Eid break would only be for three days," said Joly Talukder, general secretary of Garment Workers Trade Union Centre (GWTUC).

"There was a meeting between the government, labour leaders and manufacturers' associations at the Sram Bhaban where the state minister for labour said the workers will be given their due holidays as long as they don't leave their workstations. However, these two factories announced that the holiday would only be for three days," she said.

Police and locals said several hundred

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Weekly Jai Bangla launched

MAY 11, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

SWISS HELP TO REPATRIATE STAFF ACCEPTED

India and Pakistan agreed to accept Swiss help to repatriate their respective mission staff from Dhaka and Calcutta. This was the first time the two governments accepted a mediation offer by a third country for resolving the deadlock.

The latest development indicated that Pakistan had given a rebuff to the Soviet Union which, on May 5, had kept ready two Soviet planes at Tashkent to transport Indian and Pakistani personnel from Dhaka and Calcutta respectively.

The main purpose of the use of the good offices of the Swiss was to help resolve the dispute between Pakistan and Bangladesh missions in Calcutta headed respectively by Mahdi Masud and Hossain Ali. The problems arose over the insistence by Masud that he must interview individually every one of about 70 members of the Pakistan deputy high commission in Calcutta who gave up their loyalty to Pakistan in favour of Bangladesh, in order to find out how many of them wanted to be repatriated to Pakistan.

It was Pakistan who first approached Switzerland for this after the country had decided to deliver a riposte to the Soviet Union indirectly.

WEEKLY JAI BANGLA STARTS OFF

The first issue of Weekly Jai Bangla, the publicity organ of the Bangladesh government in exile at Mujibnagar, was published today. The Bangla weekly aimed at highlighting the progress of the war, success and achievements of the freedom fighters, creating

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Cops detain Covid patients who fled

STAR REPORT

Seven of the 10 Covid-19 patients, who fled Jashore General Hospital on April 23 and 24, were held by police for almost five hours yesterday.

Police arrested them at the hospital after the doctors discharged them around 11:30am, said Mohammad Touhidul Islam, additional superintendent of Detective Branch Police in Jashore.

The three others are still being treated at the hospital.

Judicial Magistrate Mahadi Hasan granted them bail around 4:30pm, Inspector Kamruzzaman told The Daily Star.

On Saturday, police filed a petition with a local court seeking permission to arrest them under the Contagious Diseases (Prevention, Control and Eradication) Act 2018.

The court then issued the arrest warrant for them,

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Mexico City sinking

Land depressing up to 20 inches a year



MAIL ONLINE

Mexico City is sinking at an "unstoppable" rate with some parts decompressing up to 20 inches a year over the past decades.

A new report highlights centuries of pumping water from the aquifer under North America's most populous city that has caused its foundation to compress at an alarming rate.

The city was built on what was once Lake Texcoco and the lake bed acts as an infrastructure

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38 more die of Covid, 1,514 infected

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh's coronavirus fatalities are nearing another grim milestone with 38 more people dying from the virus in 24 hours until yesterday morning.

With this, the total number of fatalities reached 11,972.

However, the mortality rate remained static at 1.54 percent for the last four days, said a handout of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Meanwhile, 1,514 new cases were detected in the 24-hour period after testing 16,848 samples, pushing up the total case count to 775,027.

Bangladesh has so far carried out 5,647,742 tests.

The daily infection rate rose to 8.99 percent from 8.19 percent a day ago.

After a massive upsurge, the number of daily cases fell below 2,000 since May 1.

However, the number of tests as well as new cases has declined from May 4, according to corona.gov.bd.

The DGHS handout said

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People gathered around Narayanganj's Digu Babu Bazaar as plumes of black smoke billowed from a fire that began in a polythene factory and then spread to the wholesale market in the area. The photo was taken yesterday. Inset, a man consoling his relative after the latter lost a general store, his only source of income, in the blaze.

PHOTO: STAR

COVID-19 CRISIS IN INDIA

Cases hold close to record highs

Dozens of suspected Covid corpses found in Ganges river; 'black fungus' adds to woes

AGENCIES

Coronavirus infections and deaths held close to record daily highs yesterday, increasing calls for the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lock down the world's second-most populous country.

The 366,161 new infections and 3,754 deaths reported by the health ministry were off a little from recent peaks, taking India's tally to 22.66 million with 246,116 deaths as hospitals run out of oxygen and beds and morgues and crematoria overflow.

Experts have said India's actual figures could be far higher than reported.

Sunday's 1.47 million tests for Covid-19 were this month's lowest yet, data from the state-run Indian Council of Medical Research showed. The figure compared with a daily average of 1.7 million for the first eight days of May.

The number of positive results from the tests was not immediately clear, however.

Many states have imposed strict lockdowns over the last month while others have placed curbs on movement and shut cinemas, restaurants, pubs and shopping malls.

But pressure is mounting on Modi to announce a nationwide lockdown as he did during the first wave of infections last year.

"A failure of governance of epic and historic proportions," Vipin Narang, a political science professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the

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