

## Three isolation centres opened at prisons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To contain the spread of Covid-19 inside prisons and ensure better treatment of affected inmates, the government yesterday launched three isolation centres.

The directorate of prisons launched the isolation centres in Dhaka Central Jail, Kishoreganj District Jail and Feni District jail with the support of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). These centres have a capacity of about 139.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal inaugurated the isolation centres virtually.

While addressing the virtual programme, the minister said a number of significant steps have been taken to ensure good health of the inmates during the Covid-19 outbreak.

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**Nurul Amin does not like to live off begging. Despite his physically challenged frame, Nurul would rather earn his living through hard work. After looking for a while, he managed to land a helper's job at a Rajani Gandhi minibus at Moahammadpur. Since then, the last four-five years have been all about this job. It is strenuous, but at least it is dignified. This photo was taken from in front of the Jatiya Press Club.**

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## JOURNALIST ROZINA GETS BAIL

# Hope the 'misunderstanding' will be solved: info minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the Rozina issue was an unwanted incident and hoped all the misunderstanding will be solved after her bail.

"We have to work, we have to ensure free flow of information and at the same time, we have to obey the law," said the minister during a meeting with leaders of different journalist organisations at his office in the secretariat.

Former and current leaders of a faction of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Dhaka Union of Journalists, Jatiya Press Club, Broadcast Journalist Centre, Dhaka Reporters' Unity and Editors Forum took part in the meeting.

"What happened there [at the health ministry] is a matter of investigation and the facts will come out through investigation," said the minister.

If any unjust behaviour happened with her, it will also come out in investigation, and if it was the case then it is not acceptable, he said.

About the Official Secrets Act 1923, the minister said official secrecy is still active in India and Pakistan and around 40 other commonwealth countries of the world.

The minister also hoped the mass media workers' protection law will be finalised soon.

"We received it from the ministry of law over two months back but there were many observations and our ministry could not solve those observations unilaterally, and due to the coronavirus pandemic, there were some delays," he said.

Responding to a question about the abuse of Digital Security Act, the minister said the law was formulated to ensure security of people of the country, but there is always an opportunity to misuse a law.

"I am trying to stop its misuse," he said.

"I want to work together with you to stop misuse of the act."

About displaying partial videos of the Rozina incident on the health ministry's Facebook page, the minister said he will talk with the ministry in this regard.

Noted journalist Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury said this is for the first time in the history of Bangladesh that Official Secrets Act 1923 was applied.

Former president of BFUJ Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul said four cases were filed against journalists in India and the supreme court of India rejected the cases, as

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## 323 people killed on roads in 15 days of Eid rush

*Highest in four years; 45.28pc of total accidents involve motorcycles, says Jatri Kalyan Samity report*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although operation of long-route buses remained suspended during this Eid rush, at least 323 people were killed in 318 road crashes in 15 days, according to a report of Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity.

This is the highest number of road crashes during the Eid rush in last four years, said the organisation at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday.

Motorcycles are the single largest reason for the sharp rise in road accidents, as the two-wheelers caused 45.28 percent of total road crashes, the passenger welfare association said.

Lack of government's measures to prevent road accidents, and operation of huge number of small vehicles including private cars and motorcycles in absence of long-route buses are the main reasons for it, the Samity said.

Mozammel Hoque Khan, secretary general of the Samity, revealed the report. The organisation prepared it on the basis of media report.

The government suspended long-route bus service and launch and train services from April 5 to control the second wave of the pandemic.

But many left Dhaka with private and small vehicles, paying extra money, to celebrate Eid in their village home ignoring government request to celebrate Eid wherever they were.

Similarly, thousands left Dhaka ahead of the two Eids last year.

Reading out the report synopsis, Mozammel said at least 323 people were killed and 622 injured in 318 road accidents between May 7 and 21 this year.

That meant 21.2 accidents occurred every day on an average.

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## Educationist Dr Zillur Rahman passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Zillur Rahman Khan, a renowned Bangladeshi-American educationist and professor of political science, passed away while undergoing treatment at a nursing home in Orlando of Florida, USA on Saturday.

The 83-year old political scientist, educator, and writer breathed his last around 2pm, USA time.

Hailing from Faridpur, Dr Zillur was president of Bangladesh Foundation USA for 39 years, since 1982. He was also an adviser of Awami League's central Florida unit.

He was the Rosebush Professor Emeritus of University of Wisconsin in USA.

Even after his retirement from the



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## INOCULATION DRIVE IN CHATTOGRAM

# Second dose seekers continue to swarm vaccine centres

*Allegations of nepotism, mismanagement run rife at Chattogram General Hospital*

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Cg

After a brief break following the Eid holiday, vaccination centres in Chattogram have resumed operations with second doses of the Covid-19 vaccine from Saturday. Only this time, they are providing 100 doses per day, due to severe shortage of stocks.

This is despite the fact that thousands of people are rushing to the vaccine centres everyday. But doctors and officials say there is little they can do until new supplies arrive.

Although most of the city's 11 centres continued their programme until the Eid vacation, most completely stopped since May 16, as vaccine supplies from the district's central store dried out.

Against the backdrop, Dr Selim Akter Chowdhury, chief health officer of Chattogram City Corporation (CCC), declared on Saturday that only 100 people will get the second dose of vaccine

per day at Chattogram General Hospital (CGH), on a priority basis, until stocks are available again.

He said people over 65, frontliners, and those who are nearing 90 days of receiving their first dose will be given preference when it comes to the second round.

As of Saturday, 338,025 people have managed to receive the second round of their vaccines, although 453,760 received the first dose. This means another 115,735 are left to receive the second dose and complete their course.

But according to sources in Chattogram civil surgeon's office, only around seven thousand doses were in stock on Saturday.

During a visit to some of the centres on Saturday, this correspondent saw people gathering regardless, scrambling to get their second doses, though there were notices pasted on the walls of CGH and CCC General Hospital that read "Vaccination stopped

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## Budget must be more pro-women

*Speakers tell BMP webinar, say allocation should reflect consequences of pandemic*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women have become more vulnerable in the current Covid-19 pandemic, and it is crucial that 2020-2021 budgetary allocation reflects the consequences of the pandemic on women, said speakers at a pre-budget webinar yesterday.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) organised the event.

Maleka Banu, general secretary of BMP, said the pandemic has further increased the inequality between men and women in the past one and a half years, tarnishing the past achievements of women.

"The government must pay special attention in the budget to improve the status of women in the ongoing pandemic and to maintain the development targets," she said.

Dhaka University Economics Professor Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha, who is also the research director of South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM), presented her study titled "Impact of Covid-19 on Women" at the webinar.

She said in the pandemic, women tend to be affected more strongly than men.

According to Bidisha, the results of various surveys conducted by SANEM showed that women faced challenges in terms of job loss, accessing health services, attending online education, experiencing gender based violence and much more.

She recommended that a gender budget monitoring cell should be

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## Empower youth to achieve SDGs

*Speakers tell virtual dialogue*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A space has to be created for youth so that they can participate in the country's development policy, said speakers at a virtual dialogue yesterday.

They said youth make up more than a third of the national population and the importance of their roles have been emphasised since the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) have been envisioned and Agenda 2030 has been adopted around the globe.

The dialogue titled "Accountability for SDG Implementation: Local Perspectives and Youth" was organised by Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh and ActionAid Bangladesh.

Speakers said the experiences of the youth-driven voluntary local reviews (VLR) to promote youth relevant issues have to be examined, reviewed and shared.

Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, convener, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, in his speech said among the 122 indicators of SDG, eight are directly focused on youth employment, various injustice, and educational rights.

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**To put the 'hati' in Hatirheel, a sculpture of a herd of elephants has been erected at Hatirheel, to add to the attractions of one of the favourite leisure destinations of the capital's residents. This photo was taken yesterday.**

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



**Workers struggle to haul large tyres towards a warehouse in Kadamtali area of Chattogram city yesterday. Imported from China, these are half as big as a human being, and costs Tk 24,000-30,000 each. The truck that transported them cannot enter the narrow alleyway that the warehouse is located in, and therefore difficult manual labour is necessary to move these.**

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Preserve Kolkata building that housed Mujibnagar govt

*Officials of first government of Bangladesh demand*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Officials of the Mujibnagar government on Saturday demanded that the government take necessary steps to preserve the building on Theatre Road in Kolkata, which housed the wartime government in 1971.

The government that took oath on April 17, 1971 was the first government of Bangladesh and not a provisional one, they said.

Pro-liberation war organisation Muktiyuddho 71 organised the discussion titled "Mujibnagar Government, First Government of Bangladesh: Formation and Operation History."

Mujibnagar government official Akbar Ali Khan, said that he visited Kolkata five years ago and found a Ram Krishna Mission office at the building that housed wartime government.

"I think in these five years, situation of the building has changed further... Bangladesh and India have very good relationship, we need to preserve the Mujibnagar government's memory. I think if we neglect the matter we will not be able to preserve this significant memory of our

Liberation War," said Akbar Ali Khan, who later become Cabinet Secretary and acted as former adviser to a caretaker government.

Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam, special aide and an adviser to the Mujibnagar Government's Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmad said that Akbar Ali Khan made an accurate observation regarding preserving of the Mujibnagar government's office in Kolkata.

Post-independence, there were informal discussions on Bangladesh government officially contacting India. Then the Indian government would respond positively on building a museum at Theatre Road, he said.

"But it never happened," added Amir, who drafted the Proclamation of Independence and was an organiser of oath-taking ceremony on April 17, 1971.

Amir, Akbar, and another Mujibnagar government official Kamal Siddiqui all said that the Bangladesh liberation war was truly a people's war in which common people played a significant role.

Mujibnagar government employee Waliul Islam also reminisced his wartime experience at the programme that was moderated by economist Ahmad Ahsan.

## Three killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed and three others injured in road accidents in two districts yesterday.

In Natore, Mizanur Rahman (25) and Bachchu Sardar (65) were killed when a fish-laden human hauler overturned at Chakamhati.

Abdul Matin, inspector of Natore Sadar Police Station, said human haulier driver Mizanur and pedestrian Bachchu were seriously injured. They were later taken to Natore Sadar Hospital and later to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where they succumbed to their injuries.

In Pabna, a man was killed and three others were critically injured as a truck collided with a three-wheeler on Pabna-Rajshahi highway in Muladuli area.

The deceased was identified as Salam Hossain Selu (56), said police.