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Ravaged in a foreign land

Hundreds of shops owned by Bangladeshis in South Africa vandalised since May 16



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RASHIDUL HASAN and JAMIL MAHMUD

Around 10,000 Bangladeshis in South Africa are now living in fear after several hundred shops of expatriates were vandalised, torched, and looted by mobs in Free State's Bloemfontein last week.

Bloemfontein saw waves of xenophobic attacks since May 16 after protests broke out there over poor service delivery by the local government there. This was the largest attack on migrants in Bloemfontein in the last 13 years, Bangladeshi expatriates told The Daily Star over the phone.

Although no Bangladeshi casualties were reported, the expatriates are now facing uncertainty over their future and security.

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With the severe cyclonic storm Yaas approaching, boats are moored along the bank of the Meghna at Tulatuli point of Bhola yesterday. Operation of water vessels remain suspended across the country as rivers continue to swell in coastal districts.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

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Over 200 villages under water as levees break

Yaas on course to hit Indian coast today

STAR REPORT

Houses, crop fields, and structures in over 200 villages in Barguna, Patuakhali, Khulna, Sathira and Noakhali have been inundated as embankments breached due to storm surges caused by cyclone Yaas.

Thousands of people have been affected. Low-lying areas in the coastal zone were inundated as the full-moon tide was above three to six feet higher than normal yesterday, said the Met office.

Cyclone Yaas, which was around 345km south-southwest of Payra port at 12:30am today, has already turned into a very severe cyclone with wind speeds between 120 kmph and 140 kmph and is likely to hit Odisha and West Bengal coast this noon, said the Met office in a special bulletin.

"The cyclone is moving towards the Indian coast at a speed of eight to 10km per hour ...", Abdul Mannan, of the Met office's storm warning centre, told The Daily Star yesterday.

One suspected to have black fungus dies

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

A patient suspected to have mucormycosis, also known as the black fungus, has died in the capital's Birdem Hospital, doctors said yesterday.

They hinted that this was probably the first case in the country in which a person who had recovered from Covid died of the rare fungal infection.

It comes after doctors at the same hospital said they had detected two other patients with black fungus. All three had recovered from Covid-19.

Alarmed by the development, the government yesterday instructed all hospitals and clinics across the country to report any suspected case of mucormycosis immediately.

"We have already instructed all hospitals and clinics to report any suspected black fungus case to the communicable diseases division," Nazmul Islam, director (disease control) at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), told The Daily Star.

He said the Public Health Advisory Committee was preparing a prevention and treatment protocol on black fungus

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Stepping up in Sri Lanka's hour of need

- ▶▶ Bangladesh offers Sri Lanka \$500m in foreign reserves
- ▶▶ Sri Lanka's Central Bank is expected to return the amount in 3 months
- ▶▶ Sri Lanka's foreign exchange reserves stood at only about \$4 billion
- ▶▶ Bangladesh's reserves crossed \$45 billion-mark in April

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

In a first for Bangladesh, the country has extended a lifeline of sorts to the beleaguered Sri Lankan economy, offering to top up the island nation's depleting foreign reserves by as much as \$500 million.

The global coronavirus pandemic has deprived Sri Lanka, which has \$3.7 billion of foreign debt maturing this year, of important sources of foreign currency such as tourism and exports.

Its \$4.5 billion tourism industry, which was already reeling from the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings that killed 279 people, was hit particularly hard, while its exports were down about 17 percent in 2020.

At the end of April, Sri Lanka's foreign exchange reserves stood at about \$4 billion, which is enough to cover the import bills for three months.

On the other hand, Bangladesh's reserves are hitting a new high each

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Water Tariff Dhaka Wasa hikes it again by 5 percent

HELEMUL ALAM

Amid allegations of poor quality of tap water in the mega city, Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority has once again increased the price of water by 5 percent for residential and commercial uses.

At a virtual meeting on Monday, the Dhaka Wasa board approved the price hike proposal. It's

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

1.5CR DOSES OF SINOPHARM VACCINES Delivery starts in June

Says foreign minister; inoculation with Sinopharm shots begins

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will purchase 1.5 crore Sinopharm vaccines from China, and its first consignment is likely to arrive in Dhaka in June, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said yesterday.

Following a meeting with UN General Assembly President Volkan Bozkur at the Foreign Service Academy, he said, "The deal in this regard is almost final. It will be signed very soon."

The update comes when the country saw a steep rise in deaths and new cases of Covid-19 yesterday.

Momen said Dhaka sought to buy the 1.5

crore vaccines initially from China with 50 lakh vaccines each month of June, July and August.

Referring to his telephone conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week, he said the Chinese minister termed Bangladesh as a good friend and that they would ensure a steady flow of the vaccines.

He said Bangladesh has also approved emergency use authorisation for another Chinese vaccine of Sinovac. A Chinese team will also visit Bangladesh in a week or so to see the feasibility of vaccine co-production, he noted.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Mushfiqur Rahim (L) raises his bat after reaching a century -- the eighth of his ODI career -- during the second match of the three-match series against Sri Lanka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Mushfiqur's 124 powered Bangladesh to 246 runs and eventually helped them win the match by 103 runs (DLS method) and confirm series victory with one game remaining.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Mushfiqur, bowlers deliver series win

Tigers rise to top of ODI Super League points table

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh registered their first-ever bilateral series win over Sri Lanka, thanks to a magnificent century from Mushfiqur Rahim in a 103-run win in the second match of the three-match ODI series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The foundation was laid by 'Mr Dependable' Mushfiqur, who fought a lone battle with the bat as the Tigers posted a fighting total of 246 in a rain-affected game before the bowlers restricted the visitors to 141 for nine in 40 overs, with the revised target being 145.

It was an all-round performance from Bangladesh in the second part of the match -- the bowlers were disciplined while the fielders grabbed some brilliant catches as the hosts completed a dominating win and reached the top of the ICC ODI Super League points table with 50 points.

Sri Lanka, on the other hand, repeated the same mistakes from the first game and kept losing wickets at regular intervals, with Danushka Gunathilaka's 24 being the highest of the innings.

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It's horrifying

UNGA president on current state of global vaccine distribution

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The current state of global vaccine distribution is "unacceptable" and "horrifying", the UN General Assembly president said yesterday, pointing at the nationalistic attitude of developed countries and vaccine manufacturing nations.

"Only 0.3 percent of all vaccines is going to low-income countries. This is terrifying, horrifying. This is unacceptable. This is beyond all human and moral belief," Volkan Bozkur said while delivering his speech at the Bangabandhu Lecture



SEE PAGE 2 COL 3




অলিম্পিকে স্বর্ণ জয়ের লক্ষ্যে তীর-এর প্রচেষ্টা



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