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## PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

# Imposition of 15pc tax goes against law

Says owners' association

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The proposed 15 percent income tax on private universities is unacceptable and contradictory to the Private University Act-2010, Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB) said yesterday.

A group of private university students also protested the proposal and gave the government time until June 10 to withdraw the proposal; otherwise they would wage a strong movement against the move.

While placing the budget for 2021-22 fiscal at the parliament on Thursday, Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal proposed 15 tax on private universities, and private medical, dental and engineering colleges, including the ones offering IT education, in the new fiscal year starting July 1.

This proposal has created concern among all stakeholders, including students and their guardians, APUB said in a statement.

The statement, issued by its Chairman Sheikh Kabir Hossain, said private universities are non-profit organisations and operating as trust in line with the Private University Act-2010.

Kabar said imposing 15 percent tax on non-profitable private universities like the same rate tax on profitable private medical and engineering

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Mitali giving her five-year-old son some lessons while sitting on the pavement along the capital's Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue yesterday. Her husband abandoned her after their son was born and she has been making ends meet by charging pedestrians for the use of her weight machine. An SSC graduate, Mitali spends her spare time educating her son.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## ROHINGYA CITIZENSHIP

# Myanmar's NUG to draft new charter to ensure it

PORIMOL PALMA

In a significant development, Myanmar's National Unity Government has announced drafting a new constitution and committed to ensuring citizenship and fundamental rights of all ethnic groups, including the Rohingyas.

It also pledged to repatriate Rohingyas from Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries, revoke the controversial 1982 Citizenship Law and National Verification Card, and invite them to join the shadow government in overthrowing the military junta.

"We invite Rohingyas to join hands with us and with others to participate in this Spring

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## Budget doesn't reflect people's aspirations

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the proposed budget completely failed to address how people's lives and livelihood can be protected amid the pandemic.

Since the government is not accountable to the people of the country, the people's welfare was ignored in the budget, he said while presenting BNP's formal reaction to the budget at the party chairperson's Gulshan office.

Fakhrul, who was once an economics teacher, said only an elected government could come up with a budget that reflects the people's hopes and aspirations.

"There is no direction on how people will be protected during the pandemic,"

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**ROAD TO FREEDOM**  
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

## A conversation with Yahya Khan

JUNE 5, 1971  
SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

**US AMBASSADOR CALLS ON YAHYA KHAN**

In a telegram sent to the US State Department on June 5, 1971, US Ambassador in Pakistan Joseph Farland provided a detailed account of his conversation with Pakistan President Yahya Khan. The meeting was held on the same day.

During the 50-minute conversation they discussed, among other subjects, the general refugee situation and the multitudinous problems which it presented.

Farland introduced the subject by underscoring President Nixon's satisfaction with the May 24 statement of Yahya. Noting that Washington was encouraged by the Government of Pakistan's plan to set up refugee reception centres in East Pakistan, he expressed the hope that these centers would quickly be activated.

Farland pointed out that it would be most helpful if Yahya would specifically indicate that Hindus would also be welcomed back, suggesting that this could be done by emphasising publicly

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## VACCINES THRU' COVAX

# US to give Bangladesh, 15 countries 7m doses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh and 15 other Asian countries will receive approximately 70 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccine out of nearly 1.9 crore doses that will be shared by the US through COVAX, according to a White House fact sheet.

Indian Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu said India will be a "significant recipient" of US Covid-19 vaccines.

The other countries to get these vaccines from the US are Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan,

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## SpaceX carrying research squids to ISS



AFP, Washington

A SpaceX rocket took off Thursday for the International Space Station carrying supplies for scientific experiments, including some surprising passengers -- squids and virtually indestructible microorganisms called tardigrades.

The rocket, leased by Nasa, launched from Florida at 1:29 pm local time (1729 GMT). The Dragon capsule detached from the Falcon 9 rocket about 12 minutes after take-off and is scheduled to dock at the ISS today.

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## VACCINE PRODUCTION

# Bangladesh seeks waiver of TRIPS obligations

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has made a strong call for a temporary waiver from certain TRIPS obligations for the production of vaccines, medicines and health technologies to effectively respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

The call was made at the 74th session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) held on May 24-June 1 in Geneva virtually.

A Bangladesh delegation, led by Health Minister Zahid Maleque and in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh in Geneva, attended the assembly.

TRIPS stands for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

The Bangladesh delegation, in a statement, said the pharmaceutical industries across the developing countries, including Bangladesh, capable of producing vaccines, therapeutics,

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Children enjoying themselves as they bathe in the Buriganga river in the capital to get relief from the intense heat and the scorching sun. After a spell of rain that led to a brief drop in temperature, sweltering heat has once again become the norm around the country. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## TRANSITION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY

# Initiatives underway to cover potential losses

Finance minister lays out plans in budget

JAGARAN CHAKMA

The government is cautious about addressing the challenges the country would face after its transition to a developing country in 2026.

This was reflected in the finance minister's budget speech in parliament on Thursday.

"We have already incorporated the necessary strategies for this purpose in the 8th Five Year Plan and a detailed action plan is being prepared by the Economic Relations Division," said Finance Minister

AHM Mustafa Kamal.

Economists said the minister's statement regarding initiatives to deal with the challenges showed the seriousness of the government's intent to address the issue.

They, however, suggested timely implementation of the work plan.

Kamal in his budget speech said the government has already taken steps to avail the advantage of GSP+ in European Union countries after the graduation.

As part of its initiatives, Bangladesh has signed a preferential trade agreement

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**PRAYER TIMING JUNE 5**  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 4:05 12:45 5:00 6:45 8:15  
JAMAAT 4:40 1:15 5:15 6:50 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## 'Delta' variant highly infectious

Warns India, says it can infect people who have had Covid or partially vaccinated; WHO voices concern at Covax vaccine shortfall

AGENCIES

The coronavirus variant first identified in India is highly infectious and can be caught by people who have already had the disease or been only partially vaccinated, a panel of Indian government scientists said in a report published yesterday.

Dubbed the "delta variant" by the World Health Organization, it is estimated to be 50% more transmissible than the coronavirus variant first found in Britain, researchers at Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genetics Consortium and the National Centre for Disease Control said.

They warned that "prior infections ... and partial vaccination are insufficient impediments to its

spread, as seen in Delhi, and strong public health response will be needed globally for its containment."

The variant has spread to over 50 countries, including the Britain, where Prime Minister Boris Johnson has warned that its rapid spread could affect the reopening of the economy.

India's new cases have steadily declined in large cities over the past few weeks, but rural areas remain in the grip of a disastrous second wave of infections.

The country yesterday reported 132,364 new coronavirus infections over the last 24 hours, while deaths rose by 2,713 - the lowest in over a month.

The tally of infections stood at 28.6 million, the second highest in the world, and the death toll at 340,702,

the health ministry said.

Experts have warned that India needs to ramp up the pace of vaccinations to avoid future surges in infections among its population of more than 1.3 billion people.

In Nepal, the health ministry reported first death from mucormycosis or "black fungus", the highly deadly infection affecting thousands of coronavirus patients in India.

Ministry spokesman Krishna Prasad Poudel told AFP that there are now at least ten cases in Nepal, which like India has been hit by a huge Covid-19 surge.

The World Health Organization yesterday said a shortfall in Covid-19 vaccine doses going through the

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