



# The Daily Star



REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXI No. 150

ASHAR 5, 1428 BS

Your Right to Know

ZILQAD 7, 1442 HIJRI

12 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00



**"There is a kind of verbal ceasefire. That's good but it's not enough."**  
FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JEAN-YVES LE DRIAN ON FRANCE-TURKEY TIES AFTER MONTHS OF RANCOROUS EXCHANGES



**"The first thing I need to say is sorry. It's (actions taken) not good enough. We've got to do a lot better."**  
UK JUSTICE SECRETARY ROBERT BUCKLAND APOLOGISES FOR FAILING RAPE VICTIMS



**"Today's global displacement figures are an epic failure of humanity. ... Far more people are on the move today than anytime during World War II."**  
HEAD OF THE NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL JAN EGELAND

## RMCH turns into a Covid hotspot

*Untidy state of the top hospital in Rajshahi struggling to cope with the situation*

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Faced with the twin challenge of treating Covid-19 as well as general patients under one roof, the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital has become a hotspot of coronavirus infection.

In the 11 days till yesterday, the hospital authority transferred at least 251 patients to the Covid unit from different wards, according to the hospital's data.

Those patients were admitted to the hospital with various diseases, but had subsequently been diagnosed Covid-19 positive and then transferred to the corona unit, which also accommodates patients displaying Covid-19-like symptoms.

The data shows that in those 11 days, an average of around 23 patients were transferred to the corona unit daily, with the highest 38 being transferred on Thursday.

The figure is alarming. Healthcare professionals in the RMCH said it was due to the limited scope of screening and testing of patients when they were entering the hospital, lack of awareness among patients and general disregard for health rules from their attendants as well as hospital staffers.

- Patients transferred from other wards to Covid Unit in last 11 days - **251**
- Total Covid deaths at the hospital so far - **866**
- Covid deaths at the hospital in June - **193**
- Total beds at RMCH - **1,200**
- Beds in Covid Unit - **309**

Yousuf Ali, for example, was found infected with Covid-19 on Wednesday night after having undergone treatment at a nephrology ward for a week.

The 50-year-old was admitted with kidney and diabetic issues on June 10 and was shifted to the corona unit in the early hours on Thursday, his son-in-law Hazrat Ali told The Daily Star.

"His samples were tested [for Covid-19] when he developed fever and coughs after staying in the hospital for a week," Ali said. Zahirul Islam, 35, was among three patients at neurosurgery ward 8 who tested Covid-19 positive on Wednesday night.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Patients undergoing treatment in a Covid ward of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, with their attendants exposed to infection. As the number of Covid cases rise sharply in Rajshahi division, the hospital is struggling to provide patients with the care that they need. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: ANWAR ALI

## RESUMPTION OF FIRST-DOSE INOCULATION

### Good news, but not for all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After around two months, the administration of the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine resumes today, on a limited scale, with around 11 lakh Sinopharm jabs in hand.

Almost 15 lakh people have registered for the vaccination but haven't received their first shots yet, said health officials.

They also said the authorities were yet to decide on those who haven't got their second dose.

Besides, the authorities have 1,0620 doses of Pfizer vaccine from Covax in stock. The decision on when to start administering them, however, has not been made yet, they added.

The first dose inoculation against Covid-19 resumes with the Sinopharm vaccine at a time when the country keeps witnessing a rise in coronavirus cases and deaths.

The positivity rate yesterday jumped to 18.59 percent -- the highest since April 19. Fifty-four people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, according to a press release from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The government suspended the countrywide administration of the first dose on April 26 due to a shortage of the AstraZeneca vaccine doses from the Serum Institute of India.

Bangladesh received the Sinopharm doses as a gift from the Chinese government in two installments.

The jabs will be administered in 67 centres across the country, including

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Mass inoculation began

**February 7**

First-dose vaccination stopped

**April 26**

First dose recipients

**58,20,015**

Second dose recipients

**42,64,362**

#### VACCINES RECEIVED SO FAR

Covishield  
**70 lakh**  
(Purchased from Serum)

Covishield  
**32 lakh**  
(Gift from India)

Sinopharm  
**11 lakh**  
(Gift from China)

Pfizer  
**106,000**  
(From Covax)

## Tk 3.77cr stolen from bank vault

*2 officials of the pvt bank held, sent to jail*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent two officials of Dhaka Bank to jail on charges of stealing Tk 3.77 crore from the vault of the bank's Bangshal branch in the capital.

Rifatul Haque, 33, in-charge (cash), and Emran Ahmed, 46, manager (operations), were arrested on Thursday after the bank authorities handed them over to Bangshal Police Station.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Masud-ur-Rahman fixed June 21 for hearing their bail petitions.

Dhaka Bank Managing Director Emranul Huq told The Daily Star that the crime was detected on Thursday during a routine audit by an internal team.

"The accused individuals confessed to the audit team that they stole the money," he said.

In his forwarding letter to the court, Sub-inspector Pradip Kumar Sarker wrote that the arrestees were entrusted with taking care of the vault and its keys were with them.

According to the complaint received by police, the audit team found Tk 3,77,66,000 missing from the vault and informed Abu Bakar Siddique, manager of the Bangshal branch, about it.

The duo confessed to misappropriating the amount, while Siddique interrogated them, the letter reads.

It mentions that the alleged crime was an offense under Section 409 of the Penal Code and that it is for the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

## Missing preacher reappears after eight days

STAR REPORT

Young Islamic preacher Abu Taw Haa Muhammad Adnan returned to a relative's house in Rangpur city yesterday, eight days after he went missing reportedly on his way to Dhaka.

His two associates, who according to his family, were accompanying him and the driver of a car in which "they were heading to the capital" on June 10 were also found yesterday.

Around 12:30pm yesterday, a neighbour found Adnan entering the house of the parents of his first wife Abida Noor in the city's Masterpara.

The news of his return spread to the locality and a local informed police of the matter. On information, police raided his in-law's house around 2:00pm and found Adnan there.

He was then taken to Kotwali Police Station, said Officer-in-Charge of the station Abdur Rashed.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Toxic foam floats over the surface of a water body near the Turag river in Rupnagar area of the capital's Mirpur. Sewage and drainage water pumped from Rupnagar into the river causes serious pollution that endangers animal life in the river. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## SAUDI-BOUND WORKERS

### Uncertainty still hangs over them

*Inoculation with Sinopharm won't help them avoid quarantine in KSA as China vaccine not on kingdom's priority list*

JAMIL MAHMUD and RASHIDUL HASAN

Although the government has decided to vaccinate migrant workers with Sinopharm Covid-19 vaccine, the initiative will not resolve the problems of Saudi Arabia-bound workers as the vaccine is not yet on the Kingdom's priority list.

As per a travel advisory of the Saudi General Authority of Civil Aviation, effective from last month, a Bangladeshi passenger travelling to the Kingdom requires to be vaccinated with any of the Pfizer-BioNTech, Oxford-Astrazeneca, Moderna, or Johnson and Johnson vaccines.

Otherwise, the passenger has to undergo a seven-day institutional quarantine there at a cost of up to Tk 80,000. Expatriates say this is an additional financial burden on them amid the pandemic.

Yesterday, officials of different manpower recruiting agencies, who hire workers on behalf of Saudi employers, urged the government to immediately negotiate the matter diplomatically with the Saudi authorities to reach a conclusive solution in this regard.

They proposed allocating Pfizer vaccine, now available in the country now, for the expatriates.

The officials also suggested importing Johnson and Johnson vaccine for migrant workers since one dose of it will complete the course. They argued that it would save time for both the agencies and migrant workers.

Ahmed Munir Saleheen, secretary of expatriates' welfare ministry, said they have already informed the health ministry in writing that Sinopharm is not among the four vaccines approved by Saudi Arabia and some other Middle Eastern countries. So, appropriate vaccines will be given to Saudi-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1