

Univ official

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 chairman of the upazila parishad, filed a general diary (GD) with police in this connection.
 However, Nazrul in his GD did not specify what actually Samrat wrote.
 Following the GD, police detained Samrat from Shazadir Haat area in the upazila yesterday noon for interrogation, said Tomas Barua, officer-in-charge (OC) of Kabirhat Police Station.
 The Daily Star correspondent talked to Samrat over phone on Friday night, hours after the GD was filed, when Samrat claimed that his Facebook ID had been hacked.
 Contacted, the university's registrar Md Abul Hossain said Samrat would be suspended temporarily for his "misdeed".

A new campaign

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 The Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said today that there was no possibility of any summit meeting between India and Pakistan on the Bangladesh issue until the massacre of Bangalees was completely stopped. Addressing a crowded press conference Indira Gandhi made it clear that India was fully prepared to meet any fresh aggression by Pakistan. "We are also prepared to foil all attempts of Pakistan to create communal troubles and disruption in our country," she added.

The prime minister said that it was very unfortunate that some people in Kashmir had started comparing Kashmir with Bangladesh and had even described the Kashmir Chief Minister as Yahya Khan of Kashmir. "Either it is deliberate mischief or it shows how misinformed the Kashmiris are," Gandhi added.

BELGIAN ENVOY VISITS EVACUEE CAMPS

C Kerremans, Belgian ambassador in India compared the exodus of refugees from Bangladesh with that of the evacuation of his countrymen in 1940 when his country was overrun by the Germans. He told newsmen at Dum Dum Airport today that the only difference between the two was that "in our case it was a total war." The international bodies, the ambassador said, besides giving aid to India should also find ways and means by which these unfortunate people could go back to their homes.
REFUGEE NUMBER EXAGGERATED: TIKKA

The Military Governor of East Pakistan General Tikka claimed that India had seriously exaggerated the number of East Pakistan refugees crossing its borders. The total number of refugees from Bangladesh entering India had not exceeded one million, he added. Talking to newsmen Tikka Khan noted that railroads and bridges between Dhaka and Chittagong destroyed in the fighting were still damaged. Only one bridge, he said, had so far been repaired.

SOLUTION NEEDS AWAMI LEAGUE SUPPORT: NURUL AMIN

Nurul Amin, former chief minister of East Pakistan and the province's only non-Awami League member of National Assembly, said that settlement of the present Pakistani political impasse could not be put off for long. A political solution, Nurul Amin said, would be ideal, but the main need was to create conditions for economic recovery to relieve suffering in East Pakistan. Recently, Nurul Amin told French journalists that a political solution would need to win support from Awami League members in the National Assembly.
 Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

Nasa reports trouble with Hubble Space Telescope

AFP, Washington
 The Hubble Space Telescope, which has been peering into the universe for more than 30 years, has been down for the past few days, NASA said Friday.

The problem is a payload computer that stopped working last Sunday, the US space agency said. It insisted the telescope itself and scientific instruments that accompany it are "in good health."
 "The payload computer's purpose is to control and coordinate the science instruments and monitor them for health and safety purposes," NASA said. An attempt to restart it on Monday failed.
 NASA said initial evidence pointed to a degrading computer memory module as the source of the computer problem. An attempt to switch to a back-up memory module also failed.
 The technology for the payload computer dates back to the 1980s, and it was replaced during maintenance work in 2009. Launched in 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope revolutionized the world of astronomy and changed our vision of the universe as it sent back images of the solar system, the Milky Way and distant galaxies.
 A new and more powerful one, called the James Webb Space Telescope, is scheduled to be deployed late this year. It is designed to peer deeper into the cosmos than ever before.



Iran's outgoing President Hassan Rouhani meets with Iran's President-elect Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran, Iran, yesterday. Ultraconservative cleric Raisi was elected president with just under 62 percent of the vote, according to figures released Saturday by Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli.

DU students charged dorm, transport fees despite closure

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 development fee by 50 percent for the 2019-20 academic year.
 According to the decision made at its Academic Council Meeting on June 1, DU will conduct the final exams of different departments and institutes, which were delayed by 15 months. Before sitting for the exams, students must fill up forms (regarding the previous year's fees). The submission of the forms will begin online tomorrow.
 Seeking anonymity, a residential student of Bijoy Ekattor Hall said, "We are not allowed admission until we renew our hall cards. And if we want to renew the card, those who are non-residential must pay Tk 1,000 and those who are residential have to

pay Tk 1,700.
 "Why should we pay this money as all of us are having to live outside the halls for the past year and half?" He also said they didn't use the university's transport facilities. "Then why pay Tk 1,080 for this purpose?"
 Students, former leaders of Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU), and other student organisation leaders strongly criticised the authorities' decision and urged them to take a student-friendly decision.
 Many are making posts on social media, protesting the decision of charging transport and residential fees.
 Slamming the decision, former

DUCSU vice president Nurul Haque Nur, told The Daily Star, "Amid the pandemic situation, DU authorities should have been on the students' side. But they didn't do that. Their decision is totally illogical and unethical."
 "We will talk with authorities in this regard immediately," said Saddam Hussain, general secretary of DU Chhatra League.
 Speaking to the Daily Star, Foez Ullah, president of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, said, "From the beginning, we have been urging authorities of all educational institutions to waive the tuition fee due to the Covid-19 situation. But the DU authorities are taking extra fees, including transport, residential,

library and other fees. The decision to do so is in conflict with the values of the university."
 According to the university transport office sources, the university was in an agreement with BRTC, where it would charge according to the trips made. If there is no trip, there is no money charged. With the current pandemic situation, there has been no trips.
 DU Vice Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman said, "Establishment services fees will not be reduced, as these services are continuing on a limited scale for the university's employees. However, students are not using these facilities as the university has been closed due to the pandemic situation."

South Asia failed to play due role

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 Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM).

Not only that, the government's weak capacity to enforce lockdowns, incapacity to contain virus transmission, collecting and administering vaccine rollout drive has worsened the situation in the region, he said.
 Prof Rehman Sobhan said he does not see that the governments of the regions have come up with innovative solutions to the crisis.
 He said people in bordering districts use to cross borders quite frequently even for less important reasons. And here, there was a responsibility of governments to control movement so that transmission could be stopped, the spread could be controlled.
 "Collective responsibility was there but there was a collective failure," he said.
 In the case of Bangladesh, he said there was a lack of enforcement of lockdown.
 Days after the beginning of the lockdown, traffic jams were seen in Dhaka. As a result, the lockdown is seemed to have a questionable impact, he said.
 He said Bangladesh has the lowest level of testing records, and as a result it is difficult to know the actual infection rate.
 "We have no idea of what is the level of infection is. We are operating in a no man's land in terms of infection rate," he said.
 In case of death, he said, the actual number of casualties might be higher than the reported cases and added that

there might be an underestimation of deaths.
 Prof Sobhan also pointed out the lack of efficacy of lockdown measures taken by the governments as those were enforced without ensuring adequate support needed for poor and low-income people.
 As a result, people had to come out for their livelihoods despite the risk of

programme began very well with the collaboration of AstraZeneca and the first phase of the vaccine came very rapidly. But then the whole thing broke down. In the second wave, there was a big contract default on the part of Serum Institute who did not deliver two-third of its obligation to deliver, Sobhan said.
 So a significant portion of the

"Services and informal sectors are standard victims," said Rehman.
 He said stimulus funds channelled through banks and most of the funds went to known regular and known clients while many who needed support might be missed out on. He termed the situation as a business governance failure.
 Sobhan said, "One of the big problems in South Asia is the low allocation for social protection. This is also worst governed sector."
 There is also intervention failure, he added.
 Prof Sobhan called for increased collaboration among civil society bodies in research and experience sharing.
 "I will not bet a great deal of money on governments of South Asia," he said.
 Rehman also talked about economic growth.
 He said the pandemic and subsequent effect caused slowed growth in economic growth. India fell into recession. Bangladesh also suffered but it was not that much affected like India.
 "Certainly, Bangladesh is in better shape than India," he said but raised doubts about the growth statistics.
 "We are never really sure about the validity of statistics.... We are left in the grey area," he said.
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Prof Rehman Sobhan



Prof Deepak Nayyar

infection and spread. There has also been a weakness in the enforcement of lockdown by the government.
 In the case of Bangladesh, the authorities could neither enforce lockdown properly nor could stop people coming from lockdown areas in bordering districts, he said.
 So here it is also a case of no man's land, he said.
 In terms of the recovery process, the hope for high profile vaccination

people who got the first phase of the vaccine could not get the opportunity of the second dose, he said.
 The vaccination programme is a classic example of the failure of the Indian government, said Prof Deepak.
 He said lockdown imposed in India just hours before its implementation had created a humanitarian crisis there.
 Deepak said the crisis has caused increased poverty and inequality.

20 families now all smiles

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 With the house came electricity and water, the bills of which the family does not need to pay, Das said.
 "We express our utmost gratitude to the PM," she added.
 Jiban Malakar, 58, who runs a tea stall, also received a house -- which came with two rooms, a kitchen, a toilet and a porch -- in the area five months ago after being nominated by his local Union Parishad Chairman Al Amin.
 Previously, Jiban, who has a wife and four children, lived in a cramped house with feeble roofing at Chandra area in Sultanpur for which he had to pay Tk 400 per month as house rent and electricity bill.
 "We had to face much sufferings and difficulties in Chhapra house during rain. We are very well now," he said, showing gratitude to the PM for the initiative.
 At Jangal village, three Hindu families and 17 Muslim families have received new houses, he said.
 Like them, housewife Dalia Begum, 40, received a house under the

Ashrayan-2 project at Jangal village.
 Her husband Ratan Miah, 50, is a rickshaw puller.
 They used to live in a house in Shilapur village earlier and had to pay Tk 2,000 every month as house rent and also pay the electricity bill.
 But due to a financial crisis, they could not afford to pay the house rent and electricity bills.
 "Now we don't have to pay the bills and we are living in a very good house," a happy Dalia added.
 As many as 53,340 more houses to landless and homeless families will be provided with houses under the Ashrayan Project-2.
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will give the houses as part of her government's campaign to bring all such destitute families under a housing scheme, Project Director Md Mahbub Hossain told reporters at a briefing at Jangal village on Friday.
 He said the premier will inaugurate the handover ceremony virtually today under the second phase of the Ashrayan-2 project.
 "This is an inclusive development

model under the leadership of the PM. This will play a very important role in reducing the poverty in the country," Hossain said.
 Earlier in January, the prime minister handed over 69,904 houses to homeless and landless families under the first phase of the project on the occasion of the birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
 Under the scheme, joint ownership of two-decimal house land alongside a modern abode will also be given to the husband and wife of each family.
 The tin-shed pucca houses will be given to 53,340 more homeless and landless families, according to Hossain.
 According to an official statement, each family is getting assets worth some Tk 2.6 lakh, if the value of two-decimal land is on an average Tk 50,000.
 The construction cost of every house is nearly Tk 2 lakh, while the cost of utility connectivity (electricity and gas) is some Tk 10,000.
 On Sunday, 12,436 houses will

be given in the Rangpur division, while 10,547 in Chattogram, 7,630 in Dhaka, 7,172 in Rajshahi, 37,153 in Barishal, 911 in Khulna, 2,512 in Mymensingh and 1,979 in Sylhet divisions.
 According to the lists prepared under the Ashrayan project, the number of homeless and landless families (under class-Ka) is 293,361 in the country, while that of only homeless families (under class-Kha) is 592,261.
 According to the PMO officials, the joint ownership documents of the two-decimal homes along with a tin-roofed pucca dwelling will be given to both husband and wife of a family ensuring gender equality, reports UNB.
 Besides, 100,000 more houses will be given by December next as part of the government's move to rehabilitate the country's homeless people in the Mujib Year.
 A total of 373,562 houses have so far been given to homeless families under Sheikh Hasina's Ashrayan project run by the PMO, says UNB report.

Space reproduction

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 Scientists said they produced 168 offspring using mouse sperm cells that were stored aboard the International Space Station (ISS) for five years and 10 months and then rehydrated back on Earth, injected into unfertilized egg cells and transferred into female mice at a Japanese laboratory.
 The sperm cells were exposed to radiation in 170 times greater than sperm kept in ground storage for comparative purposes at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's (JAXA) Tsukuba Space Center. The higher radiation levels present in space are attenuated by Earth's atmosphere.
 University of Yamanashi developmental biologist Teruhiko Wakayama, who helped lead the study published in the journal Science Advances, said the space radiation did not damage the sperm's DNA or reduce its fertilization ability compared to the ground-stored sperm.
 The baby mice were just as healthy as those produced using ground-stored sperm, with normal appearance and no abnormalities in gene functioning, Wakayama added. Their offspring - and even their grandchildren - also were healthy, Wakayama said.
 Scientists are seeking a greater understanding of how space conditions affect reproduction. There is concern that greater radiation levels could foster harmful mutations and that reduced or zero gravity conditions could impede embryonic development. Previous research in orbit has involved animals such as fruit flies and fish.
 The study examined radiation's effect on the male reproductive cell - or gamete - but not the issue of gravity. It was the first space study involving mammalian reproductive cells.
 "If space radiation results in mutations, maybe the next generation would be changed a little bit. However, if animals live in space for many generations, the mutations would accumulate," Wakayama said. "We have to know how to protect against this."
 Wakayama said that in August researchers will send frozen early-stage mouse embryos to the ISS, where they will be thawed and cultured under zero-gravity conditions.
 "By this experiment, we will know whether gravity is essential for mammalian embryo development or not," Wakayama said.
 These issues might be of concern if humankind in the future establishes off-world colonies - perhaps on the moon or Mars or in large space stations - or develops technology to send astronauts on lengthy missions to destinations beyond our solar system such as the closest star, Proxima Centauri.

Crores siphoned

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 who used to have four agent accounts with online gambling sites."
 The man named Md Mohiuddin Parvez, 27, was arrested in the capital's Badda area on June 14, said Additional Deputy Commissioner Tohidul Islam of the CITC.
 The CITC officers seized six laptops and five mobile phones from him.
 Parvez, a graduate of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, maintained the four agent accounts over the last seven months. He only had a small rented room for office in the capital's Badda area, Tohidul said.
 But his daily earning could be as high as Tk 1.5 lakh, the officer said, "In four agent accounts, Parvez used to make transactions of up to Tk 50 lakh a day. On June 14, right before he got busted, Parvez deposited around Tk 82 lakh to different bank accounts in the country."
 Each of his six employees were paid Tk 30,000 a month.
 Parvez made a confessional statement at a Dhaka court yesterday after the end of being on remand for three days.
 "We have the details of over a dozen people with gambling agent accounts. They are on our watch. Through these 2,300 gambling agent accounts, at least Tk 50 crore could be siphoned from the country in a day," added Tohidul.
 Officers have identified two individuals from Russia and Cyprus as the ringleaders, he said.
 "We would seek support from the Interpol to track them down," he said.
 Parvez told investigators that he had communications with someone named Michel Victor. Parvez requested him for an agent account of the online gambling site 1xBet.
 Victor then asked Parvez for his personal details. Once he provided it, someone named Tom contacted him and asked him to deposit \$5,000 dollar to the bank accounts of a Bangladeshi fashion house and an IT firm, investigators said.
 "Once Parvez deposited the money, he had his agent account," Tohidul said.
 The money was sent back to the agent in the form of cryptocurrency, he said.
 "We have several fashion houses and IT firms on our list. We are investigating their link with the gambling nexus."
 Besides 1xBet, Melbet and Linebet are also popular gambling sites in Bangladesh. The sites are maintained from Russia.
 Parvez told investigators that agents like him mainly receive money from local gamblers through Bkash and other mobile banking services.
 People like Parvez maintain several agent accounts with the mobile banking services, also known as MFS. Once a gambler deposits money through MFS, the agent launder the money out of the country.