



The Daily Star



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"Covid-19 vaccine was imported from a single source from a business perspective. The people in the country are not getting vaccine because of this."
JATIYA PARTY CHAIRMAN GM QUADER



"Substitutes for female UNOs at freedom fighters' guard of honour are unacceptable. It contradicts the constitution."
LIBERATION WAR AFFAIRS MINISTER AKM MOZAMMEL HAQUE



"The transmissibility is unquestionably greater...it is associated with an increased disease severity."
US INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXPERT DR ANTHONY FAUCI ON DELTA COVID VARIANT

CURBS IN 7 DISTRICTS OF DHAKA DIVISION

Enforcement still falling short

Govt wants stricter restrictions but reality different

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

As Covid-19 deaths and infections continue to rise, the government aims to enforce the ongoing restrictions in seven districts around Dhaka more strictly to guard the capital against the virus.

The government also plans to extend the restrictions, imposed till June 30, for a week, sources in the Cabinet Division told 'The Daily Star' yesterday.

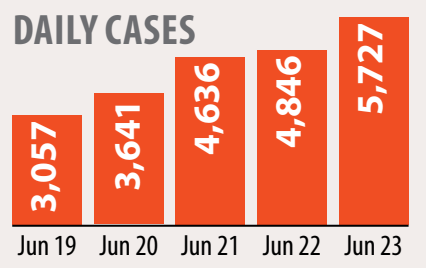
The extension may come at a time when experts are warning that the situation across the country may deteriorate in the coming days due to the lax enforcement of the Covid curbs.

If proper measures are not ensured right away, the situation may become like the one witnessed in India recently, they also warned.

Visiting different places of the seven districts yesterday, correspondents of this newspaper found that the "lockdown" was being enforced in a relaxed manner.

Most shops were open. Small vehicles like CNG-run auto-rickshaws, packed with passengers, plied the roads as buses remained parked inside depots.

Vehicles were even stuck in traffic in some of the districts. Also, hundreds of passengers crossed the Padma river through the



Shimulia-Bangla Bazar ferry route on their way to Dhaka.

All this happened as the health crisis continues to deepen across the country.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday reported 85 more deaths from Covid-19, the highest single-day deaths recorded in nearly two months. Eighty-eight deaths were reported on April 29.

In 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, 5,727 new infections were recorded, the DGHS said.

Yesterday, the positivity rate dimmed to 20.27 percent, the highest in the last 71 days.

The Cabinet Division sources said the government was set to heighten the restrictions in the seven districts to save

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People in their hundreds wade through river water to get off a ferry pontoon and on to the shore at Mawa yesterday. With only a handful of ferries running to cater to emergency vehicles, people heading for Dhaka are cramming onto those ferries to bypass the movement restrictions imposed to curb Covid spread.

PHOTO: SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Taking effective steps to ensure vaccine for all

Hasina says at AL founding anniversary programme

UNB, Dhaka

Taking a swipe at those criticising the government over its Covid vaccine management, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged them to have patience and see what the government can do to ensure vaccines for all.

"I would like to tell the critics to have patience and see what we can do. Why do you criticise?" she said.

Speaking at a virtual discussion marking the 72nd foundation anniversary of Awami League, the PM said the government would ensure vaccines for all.

Hasina, also the AL president, joined the event from the Gono Bhaban, while other party leaders from its Bangabandhu Avenue central office.



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Khulna on edge of health disaster

Logs 32 deaths in a day; hospitals crumbling under pressure

DIPANKAR ROY

Three days after testing positive for Covid-19, Abul Kashem Sheikh started having severe breathing difficulties on June 18.

The family of the 63-year-old from Paikgachha in Khulna got worried and took him to the 130-bed Covid-19 unit in Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH).

But he was turned away as there was no room in the unit. "The private hospitals were charging hefty amounts. We had no other option but to seek treatment in government facilities. But getting him admitted to a public hospital was an uphill task. We felt so helpless," said Kashem's son Akhter Sheikh.

The family was eventually able to get him into Khulna Sadar Hospital. "His condition is very critical. Only God knows what will happen," said Akhter.

Khulna has become the worst Covid-affected district in the country. The numbers of deaths and positive cases have been spiralling. Three Covid hospitals in Khulna, including KMCH, have patients either above capacity or almost at capacity.

Of the 85 deaths reported yesterday, 32 were in Khulna division, by far the highest among all divisions, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The number of casualties reached 13,787 yesterday. At least 5,727 new infections were recorded during this period, taking the total number of people infected to 8,66,877, according to the DGHS press release.

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CHINA VACCINE 'VERO CELL' Green light for human trial in Bangladesh

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

Bangladesh has approved the human trial of a Chinese Covid-19 vaccine in the country, a move experts say will help develop skills needed for producing the vaccine locally.

Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC) yesterday announced that the Chinese Academy of Medical Science's vaccine candidate called Vero Cell was approved for human trials.

The trial could begin in just two weeks, officials said.

Icddr had earlier requested permission for carrying out the clinical trials of Vero Cell on people aged 18 and above.

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LOCKDOWN IN DHAKA'S BORDERING DISTRICTS

Most don't have plan for relief

STAR REPORT

As Dhaka's bordering districts clamp down on people and businesses to protect the capital city, an age-old question arises: lives or livelihoods?

None of the district administrations has any concrete plan in place to find out how many will be left without income during this period, and few have relief distribution activities planned out.

Among the districts where curbs were put in place, Manikganj has a vast number of poor. As much as 60 percent of the district's population live below the poverty line, according to a poverty map created by the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM) over November and December last year.

The poverty line for rural areas in the Dhaka division is estimated to be a monthly per capita income of Tk 2,152, while in urban areas, it is Tk 2,657.

Yet this is one district with no concrete plan in place regarding doling out relief during this period when all economic activities and public movement have come to a halt, leaving thousands of daily wage earners without an income.

"Currently anyone can reach us via the national hotline number 333 and we will go to them with relief," said Md Abdul Latif, the district commissioner of Manikganj.

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THE BUSINESS

Private sector faces difficult business climate: IFC

The private sector in Bangladesh faces one of the most burdensome business environments in the world, said the International Finance Corporation in a report yesterday. "To improve business environment and attract more local and foreign investment, the country needs to embark on a new round of reforms," it said.

STORY ON B1



Pedestrians dodge motorbikes and a microbus which got on the pavement to get ahead of the gridlock on Panthapath-Tejgaon Link Road near Sonargaon intersection yesterday. The fish traders across the street are also drying fish waste on the pavement.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Unacceptable, contradicts constitution

Mozammel on proposal for excluding female UNOs at FF's guard of honour

RASHIDUL HASAN

A parliamentary body's recommendation to find substitutes for female UNOs at freedom fighters' guard of honour is unacceptable and it is contradictory to the constitution, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque said. "This recommendation directly contradicts the country's constitution. There is no way to consider this recommendation. We will not accept such recommendations," the minister told 'The Daily Star' yesterday.

On June 13, the parliamentary standing committee on Liberation War affairs ministry at a meeting asked the ministry concerned to find substitutes for female upazila nirbahi officers during the guard of honour given to valiant freedom fighters after their deaths.

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Jamuna Bank Remembers Its Sponsor Director on his 46th Birthday



Anindya Majumder (Bappu)
24 June 1975 | 16 January 2007

On his 46th Birth Anniversary, we honour and cherish the memory of **Anindya Majumder (Bappu)**, a loving son, a doting brother, a devoted friend and a dedicated professional.

He had been a founding director of Jamuna Bank Ltd. and a director at New Generation Construction Co. Ltd.

We miss him dearly everyday,
Family, Friends And Colleagues