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Swelling rivers flood parts of the north

STAR REPORT

Water levels of the Jamuna, Teesta, Dharla and Doodhkumar, and their tributaries have kept rising, inundating low-lying areas in northern districts.

The flood forecasting and warning centre (FFWC) said the water levels of those rivers will rise for next two days as there has been continuous rainfall in the upstream areas in the Indian states of Sikkim, Assam, West Bengal and Meghalaya.

Our correspondents from the northern districts reported that people living on the banks of rivers and in low-lying areas have been marooned.

Around 4,500 families of different char areas in Rangpur's Gangachara upazila remained stranded in the water for the last six days as an embankment on the Teesta river had eroded.

Although, the river's water has been flowing below danger levels, the people have been resorting to boats and banana-leaf rafts for shelter in areas such as Paschim Ichli, Shankardah, Bagerhat, Binbina, Motukpur, Chilikhal and Kholaichar.

Abdullah Al Hadi, chairman of the upazila's Laxmiti union parishad, said around 1,000 families of the union have been marooned due to the surge in water levels.

The water level has also intensified river erosion, he said, adding that immediate relief support is needed in the affected areas.

Jorina Begum of Bagerhat said she stayed on a raft with her family as her home was submerged. They are currently facing a crisis of drinking water as their tube well has also been underwater.

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People in Rangpur's Gangachara upazila are having to use boats as transport due to the floods caused by the swelling of the Teesta. Around 4,500 families of different char areas in the upazila have been marooned as an embankment on the river washed away. Many families have even resorted to boats as shelters. The photo was taken recently at Paschim Ichli of Gangachara.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKAR

1.4k migrants to get Pfizer shots each day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A maximum of 1,400 migrant workers, who is waiting to go to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, will be administered Pfizer vaccine shots against Covid-19 each day at seven hospitals in the capital, the government said yesterday.

To get the vaccine, the migrant workers who have already registered with Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) have to register now through Surokha app, the authorities concerned said during an online press conference.

The seven hospitals where the migrant workers can get Pfizer vaccine are: Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Kurmitola General Hospital and Sheikh Russel National Gastroenterology Institute and Hospital.

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Neo JMB forms 'Islamic State of Bengal Province'

Sources in CTTC claim

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

With an aim to build a strong base in Bangladesh, IS-inspired militant outfit Neo JMB has recently formed a 20-member committee.

The committee members, all from the "military wing" of the outfit, have named the committee "Islamic State of Bengal Province".

It also planned to train the members in Pakistan on making firearms and set up a factory in Bangladesh after collecting a firearm from Kashmir as sample, according to sources in Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The Neo JMB's improvised explosive device (IED) expert, Sabir Hossain, 26, also the military wing commander of its Mymensingh region unit, has named the committee.

CTTC officials claimed to have collected the information about Sabir, also known as Bamchi Barak alias Major Bamchi alias Abu Hafs al Bengali, through tracking the Neo JMB strategy.

Rahmatullah Chowdhury, additional deputy commissioner of CTTC unit, said

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S Korea to make 1b mRNA Covid shots

REUTERS, Seoul

South Korea is in talks with mRNA vaccine makers including Pfizer and Moderna to produce Covid-19 shots in the country and is ready to offer the capacity to make up to 1 billion doses immediately, a senior government official said.

The plan, if agreed, would help ease tight global supply of Covid-19 vaccines, particularly in Asia which lags North America and Europe in vaccine rollouts, and put South Korea a step closer to its ambition to become a major vaccine manufacturing centre.

South Korea already has deals to locally produce three coronavirus vaccines developed by AstraZeneca/Oxford University, Novavax, and Russia. It also has a vaccine bottling and packaging deal with Moderna.

"We've been holding frequent talks with big pharmaceutical companies to produce mRNA vaccines," Lee Kang-ho, director general for the global vaccine hub committee under South Korea's health ministry, told Reuters in an interview.

"There are only a few mRNA vaccine developers - Pfizer, Moderna, CureVac and BioNTech. Thus there's a limit to how much they can produce to meet global demand... South Korea is keen to help by offering its facilities and skilled human resources," Lee said.

It's not immediately clear how advanced these talks are and whether and when a deal will be agreed.

BioNTech declined to comment, Moderna and CureVac did not reply to Reuters' requests for comments.

A Pfizer spokesperson said the company is making efforts to enhance its Covid-19 vaccine supply chain but added "we do not have anything specific to announce at this time."

Lee declined to name local vaccine makers which have the capacity to produce mRNA vaccines immediately, but a government source said they include Hanmi Pharmaceuticals Co Ltd and Quratis Co Ltd.

Hanmi confirmed that it has a big capacity reserved for Sanofi's diabetes

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

UNO made OSD after he fined a doctor

STAR REPORT

Chattogram's Satkania upazila nirbahi officer has been withdrawn and made officer on special duty two days after he fined a doctor for violating lockdown.

Besides, an executive magistrate, who fined another physician for violating lockdown in Habiganj on Saturday, returned him the money yesterday.

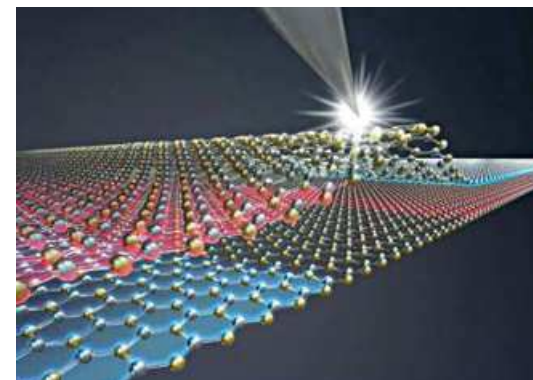
The public administration ministry issued the UNO's withdrawal order on Sunday, but did not mention any reason.

Contacted, Chattogram's Divisional Commissioner Kamrul Hasan on Sunday confirmed that he got the order, and said, "The AC land of the upazila will perform the additional charge of UNO until further order."

Asked, Kamrul said he

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Scientists create world's thinnest technology



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The world's smallest piece of technology - only two atoms thick - has been created by researchers to store electric information.

Current state-of-the-art devices consist of tiny crystals that contain approximately one million atoms, one hundred atoms square. In a computer, these devices switch between two binary states (one and zero, yes and no, up and down) to encode and process information.

This is done incredibly rapidly, approximately one million times per second - akin to pressing a

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Sixth grader dies by suicide after 2 men blackmail her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A sixth grader died by suicide Sunday night after two men allegedly made an "obscene video" of her and leaked it on social media recently.

Police said the victim's father filed yesterday a case with Sabujbagh Police Station against Shamim and Fahim, both aged around 20, under the Pornography Control Act 2012 and Penal Code.

The girl's uncle alleged that Shamim had been making indecent proposals

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 6

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-10 12-45 5-00 6-55 8-17
JAMAAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Malaysia to review recruitment fees, deals

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia will examine recruitment fees charged to workers and review its agreements with the home countries of migrant workers, the Human Resources Ministry said, after the Southeast Asian nation was downgraded in a US human trafficking report.

The US State Department last week ranked Malaysia in 'Tier 3' in this year's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report and said forced labour is the predominant human trafficking crime in the country.

Malaysia's Human Resources Ministry said it viewed the issues raised in the TIP report seriously.

"The government will continue to give attention to challenges in addressing forced labour issues, especially those involving foreign workers, and will continue to implement various improvements

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Sumi Akhtar, a resident of Lalbagh, is seen leaving the capital on a truck. After she heard of her mother's illness, she and her daughter left for Sirajganj, where her family lives. Due to the lack of transport during the countrywide lockdown, she contacted a relative, who brings fruits for sale into the capital, and traveled with him on his way back.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Over 1k Afghan troops flee to Tajikistan

Govt forces plan counteroffensive in northern provinces

AGENCIES

More than 1,000 Afghan troops fled into neighbouring Tajikistan in the early hours of yesterday after clashes with the Taliban, the Central Asian country's national security committee said.

Taliban militants have launched several major offensives in northern Afghanistan in recent weeks as US and international troops withdraw from the country, including seizing its main crossing into Tajikistan last month.

Yesterday, Tajikistan's national security committee said that 1,037 Afghan government troops had fled into the ex-Soviet country "in order to save their lives" after clashes with the Taliban during the night.

"Taking into account the principle of good neighbourliness and adhering to the position of non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, the military personnel of the Afghan government forces were allowed to enter Tajik territory," the committee said in a statement distributed by Tajikistan's state information agency Khovar.

It said the Taliban had taken "full control" of six districts of the Badkhashan province bordering Tajikistan in Afghanistan's northeast, reports AFP.

Several hundred Afghan troops had already crossed into Tajikistan after the Taliban unleashed its onslaught in early May.

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