

1,402 died by drowning in 18 months: report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A recent media monitoring report revealed that some 1,402 people died by drowning in Bangladesh in 875 incidents in the past 18 months, and of them, 83 percent are children.

SoMaSHTE, a media development and communication focused organisation, with support from Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA), conducted the report by analysing news reports published in different national and local media from January 2020 to June 2021, said a press release yesterday.

Of the 1,164 children, 514 were aged below four, 448 between five and nine years, 157 between nine and 14, and 45 between 15 and 18 years.

Amongst the incidents, 322 people died in Dhaka division, while 267 in Chattogram, 187 in Rangpur, 183 in Rajshahi, 143 in Mymensingh, 123 in Barishal, 109 in Khulna, and 68 in Sylhet.

According to the report, the highest number of deaths due to drowning (66) was recorded in Netrakona district. The death toll was 59 in Dhaka. It was 54 in Noakhali, 50 in Dinajpur, 42 in Gazipur and 39 in Kurigram.

Most of the incidents occurred from morning to afternoon, it said, adding, 588 people died in the morning, 545 died in the afternoon, 235 in the evening and 22 at night.

The rate of deaths from drowning was much higher in rural areas compared to urban areas.

Most of the deaths occurred in ponds and ditches near victims' homes. The report also revealed that 1,222 drowning victims were unattended.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), 43 percent of the total number of children's deaths in Bangladesh occurred due to drowning.

A study titled "Global Burden of Disease Study 2017" commissioned by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), Seattle, USA has found that Bangladesh had 14,029 estimated fatal drownings in 2017. The country ranked fifth among Commonwealth countries.

SoMaSHTE recommended that the government develop a nation-wide strategy to prevent child drowning.

It also suggested that a committed, long-term investment based on learning from proven intervention means such as community-based childcare centre is essential to prevent children from drowning.

In addition, the government should also promote best practices for childcare centres, with a special focus on creative incentives for maintaining quality and effective care.

Space shrunk

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This effectively works to silence those who represent a multiplicity of thoughts, and removes them from the cyber space, said journalist Golam Mortoza.

Sheikh Tasnim Afroze, a student leader, described her ordeal with the surveillance.

"I was very active with the quota movement, and during that time, I was detained the police's detective branch. They picked me up, detained me and took my passwords for all my social media accounts," said Afroze, adding that her social media has not been safe since then.

Hasnat Qaiyum, lawyer and activist of Rashtrachinta, said, "People have a right to privacy. This is a fundamental right. We have the right to exercise or freedom of expression and the technology to do it, but the state is clamping down on those rights."

"You will be able to think, but not be able to publish those thoughts. You will also not be able to keep your thoughts to yourself because of surveillance," he said.

Prof Anu Muhammad of the department of economics of Jahangirnagar University said if we try to look for a legal remedy for violations like invasion of privacy, this remedy will not be found because the ones in charge of protection are the ones who are perpetrating the offence.

The existing infrastructure is failing to protect citizens' rights to freedom of expression on the internet, said CR Abrar, professor of International Relations at the University of Dhaka.

"Not only are they failing, they are being built with the ill-intent of violating these freedoms."

Dr Humayun Akhter new VC of Open University

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Former professor of Dhaka University's geology department Dr Humayun Akhter has been appointed the vice-chancellor of Bangladesh Open University for the next four years.



The education ministry issued a notification last week in this regard. Dr Humayun, who previously served as provost of Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall of DU, received his BSc and MSc degrees from the same university.

He was awarded the Indian government scholarship in 1980 for post-graduate studies and earned his PhD in 1986 from Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur.

He joined the geology department at DU as lecturer in 1987.

Covid patient, 'abandoned by husband' at CMCH, dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Covid-19 patient died at Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) early yesterday, after her husband left her there and did not return.

The husband could not be found till filing of this report.

Sources at Chattogram Medical College Hospital said one Mozammel admitted Asma Akter (38) on Tuesday morning, introducing himself as the patient's husband.

According to the ward's registry, Mozammel lives at port city's Double Mooring area.

After getting Asma admitted, he left the hospital, said Jahurul Islam, in-charge of CMCH police outpost.

Asma died in the Covid-19 ward around 1:30am.

"After her death, we tried to find Mozammel but could not. The phone number mentioned in the registry was found switched off," he said.

The body was kept at CMCH morgue, according to Assistant Sub-inspector Shilabrata Barua of CMCH police outpost.

Double Mooring Police Station was informed about the matter, and they were verifying Mozammel's address, he further said.

Virtual courts to operate in limited scale till July 14

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain has extended his decision to run the court functions across the country in a limited scale through virtual system till July 14 in order to reinstate the Covid-19 pandemic.

The judges and officials of the subordinate courts have been ordered not to leave their workplaces during this period.

Supreme Court's Registrar General Md Ali Akbar issued three notifications on Wednesday.

According to the notifications, a full bench of the Appellate Division of the SC will hold hearing on criminal appeals and jail appeals of death-row convicts on July 12, 13 and 14 while its chamber court will deal with very important applications every working day.

Besides, three separate benches of the High Court Division will hold hearing on writ and civil petitions, criminal petitions and company and admiralty related petitions on every working day till 14.

SC judges, lawyers and officials will discharge their duties regarding conducting cases from their homes using information and technology.

Besides, one or multiple magistrates under each chief judicial magistrate and chief metropolitan magistrate will conduct judicial functions virtually in line with constitutional obligations.

Children involved in contradiction with law can physically be produced before the magistrate concerned during this period.

Widen telemedicine

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Survey-2019" showed that TFR remained stagnant at 2.3.

There has been no progress made in this area since 2011, he said, adding that progress in contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR), which is related to TFR, could not be brought to the expected level either.

Both the country's population policies of 2004 and 2012 set the target to reach CPR to 72 percent and reduce TFR to 2.1 by 2015, said Prof Mainul.

At present, CPR remains stagnant at about 62 percent, he added.

Marie Stopes Bangladesh Country Director Masrurul Islam said while on one hand many child marriages were taking place against the will of brides and grooms, there was a lack of access to service and information for them at the later stages, which caused unintended pregnancies.

He said the government and authorities concerned need to pay attention to the child marriage situation, since it increased amid the pandemic. He urged the government to launch financial packages for vulnerable and poor families to prevent child marriage.

Due to the information gap, unwanted pregnancies could increase and people could be deprived of expected services, said Abu Sayed Md Hasan, programme specialist at UNFPA Bangladesh.

He suggested that telemedicine services should be widened to make people aware about reproductive health and family planning issues.

It is also required to deploy professional midwives at union level to ensure health safety of new mothers, he added.

Quazi AKM Mohiul Islam, former

director general of Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), suggested for revising family planning programmes due to the pandemic situation.

While presenting a paper, Monjun Nahar, lead of advocacy and communication at Marie Stopes Bangladesh, said due to the pandemic, early child marriage and unsafe abortion have increased.

Besides, the pandemic caused disruption to the country's family planning programme, Nahar added.

Abdus Salam Khan, joint secretary to the Health and Family Welfare Ministry, said they have been working to effectively reach telemedicine services to the doorsteps of the countrymen. He said they have reorganised some of the family planning programmes due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

Nurun Nahar Begum, a line director at DGFP, said they have a designated hotline number "16767" to provide reproductive health and family planning-related counselling services round-the-clock.

Prof Ainoon Nahar of Jahangirnagar University said women's right to take decision regarding reproductive health and pregnancy should be ensured.

Halida Hanum Akhter, senior associate at international health department of John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health; Mohammed Sharif, line director at DGFP; Ifat Ara, gynecologist specialist at Popular Medical College Hospital; Sehereen F Siddiqua, head of Gynecology, Anwar Khan Modern Hospital; and SERAC Bangladesh Executive Director SM Shaikat addressed the discussion, among others.

Uncle spreading

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"Even though there was no question about Eric's birth during the lifetime of late president Ershad, they are being raised now with malicious intent," he said.

Asked why they didn't protest against the news published against Bidisha, Mamunur said they could not take legal action as the court is closed due to the ongoing lockdown.

"However, we will take legal action," he added. Asked about Eric's two birth dates, Mamunur said it was all a conspiracy. Ershad has formed a board of trustees, naming Eric as his own child, he added.

Contacted, GM Quader said the allegation against him was baseless. "I am not involved in publishing news in different newspapers against Bidisha Ershad. It's a matter of the respective newspaper and the reporter concerned."

About Ershad Trust, he said, "I don't have any scope to get involved with it, and I don't have any interest in it."

RMG workers

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promise remains unimplemented," said a worker, seeking anonymity. "So, we have no alternative but to take to the street," said another worker.

The workers kept the road blocked till around 4pm. On information, police rushed to the spot and convinced them to leave the highway, said Moniruzzaman, officer-in-charge of Kanchpur Highway Police Station.

Vehicles to and from Sylhet used an alternative route. But Chattogram-bound vehicles got stuck for hours, said police and transport operators.

Visiting the spot, Sonargaon UNO Atiqul Islam told journalists, "The factory authorities have promised to pay workers' dues by July 13 and Eid bonus by July 19. The workers have left the road following the promise."

Upon a visit, the factories were found closed. In Gazipur, workers of a garment factory Style Craft Ltd blocked a road at the city's Laxmipura area, demanding arrears and overtime pays. They demonstrated inside the factory around 9:45am. Later, more workers joined them and they took to the street around 10am and blocked the Dhaka-Joydevpur highway for around two hours.

"Overtime pays of several hundred workers are unpaid for three years, while wages of many are unpaid for three months. Authorities set deadlines multiple times to pay the dues but did not do so. They promised us to pay by July 7, which has passed," said a worker, seeking anonymity. "Now authorities have promised us to pay by July 15," he said.

Police convinced the workers to leave the road around noon, said Somiron Chandra Sutradhar, inspector of Gazipur industrial police.

Contacted, the garment factory's administrative officer Md Sujauddin Ahmed said overtime and wages of few workers remained unpaid due to the pandemic. The dues would be paid by July 15, he added.

Public movement

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According to law enforcers, detainees failed to give acceptable reasons as to why they defied the stay-at-home order.

Visiting courts and talking to the family members, The Daily Star found that most of the arrestees are poor and had gone out to earn their daily bread.

During a visit yesterday, this newspaper found crowds in the alleys in Pragati Sarani, Badda, Vatara, Tejgaon, Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Farmgate, Panthapath, and Green Road areas.

In the alleys, people were seen puffing cigarettes, drinking tea and chitchatting in groups.

A mobile court manned by police and executive magistrate was seen patrolling in the alleys in Panthapath and Green road areas. People hid when they saw the policemen and the same scenes returned when police left.

Dodging law enforcers, many were opening shops, some of those were half shuttered.

In Mohammadpur area, electronic and hardware shops were found open in Sher Shah Suri Road.

An electronic shop owner Abu Hanif said that if he does not open the shop, he would not be able to pay its rent and also feed his six-member family.

Harun Mia, who has a hardware shop in the area, said customers know that they would get the products if he comes to the shop.

"We kept the shutter half down so that we can only deliver the necessary products. Stopping the business for two weeks would lead us into great loss," Harun further said.

Addressing a food distribution programme in the city, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Benazir Ahmed yesterday said even in strict lockdown, many people do not like to stay at home, they feel annoyed. Many are going out to

see how the lockdown is going on.

"Traffic has increased on the roads. It seems everyone has emergency chores. If we move in this way, the police and the state will become helpless. If everyone is affected, 18 crore hospital beds cannot be managed."

"Please do not crowd the streets. Do not prolong this death procession. Stay at home for two weeks if you want to live the next 50 years," said the IGP.

Even amid lockdown, motorcyclists were seen carrying one or two pillows, which was prohibited in the lockdown guideline.

A lax scenario was also seen in various parts of the country outside Dhaka.

While visiting different alleys and lanes of the port city, public movement was found to be like regular time, with people loitering the streets.

Some of them were without masks, reports our correspondent.

People started to run when they heard police siren or saw police personnel. Shutters of shops were seen kept down to avoid mobile courts.

In Munshiganj, despite the district seeing a 14 percent rise in Covid-19 infections, people continued to flout restrictions as public and vehicular movement increased significantly.

Many were seen walking to reach their destinations.

In Gaibandha, mobile courts led by executive magistrates filed 78 cases against individuals and business establishments and realised Tk 54,900 as fine for breaching the safety rules of Covid-19 and opening the shops violating the restrictions of lockdown.

Similar scenes were seen in Khulna, Rajshahi, Gazipur, Tangail, Narayanganj, Satkhira and Pabna.

The government imposed a seven-day nationwide "strict lockdown" from July 1. Later, it was extended till July 14.

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- Application opens: Jul 11, 2021 (Sunday)
- Last date of application: Aug 23, 2021 (Monday)
- Online written test: Aug 27, 2021 (Friday), 3:00 PM-4:00 PM
- Viva-voice: Sep 11, 2021 (Saturday) & Sep 17, 2021 (Friday)
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Contact: IBA-JU Office, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka-1342 | Website: www.iba-ju.edu.bd
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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department
 Municipal Governance and Services Project (MGSP)
 Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
 Dhaka-1207
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.0000.794.07.030.20.752 Dated: 08/07/2021

Corrigendum

e-Tender vide Memo No. 46.02.0000.794.07.030.20.602 dated: 10/06/2021 for procurement of Rickshawvan, Package No. MGSP/PMU/G31 under Municipal Governance and Services Project (MGSP) of Local Government Engineering Department mentioning the document last selling date & time 11/07/2021: 17.00 and closing date & time 12/07/2021: 13.00. Now the time & dates of this e-Tender have been shifted, document last selling date & time 01/08/2021: 17.00 and closing date & time 02/08/2021: 15.00 due to unavoidable circumstances. Other terms and conditions of this e-Tender remain unchanged.

Shaikh Muzakka Zaher
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GD-1327

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TOYOTA ALLION	Model-2005, Colour-Silver, C. C.-1500	Dhaka Metro-GA-21-7216
TOYOTA AXIO "X"	Mode-2011, Colour-White, C. C.-1500	Dhaka Metro-GA-16-0296
TOYOTA PROBOX	Model-2005, Colour-White, C. C.-1500	Dhaka Metro-GA-31-1845

Tender schedule will be available from the Common Service department at Phoenix Bhaban (4th Floor), 12, Dilkusha C A, Dhaka-1000. The car will be transfer as per terms and condition of the Schedule. Tender should be accompanied by 3% of the quoted price as Earnest Money (Refundable) in the form of Pay order drawn in favour of **Phoenix Insurance Company Ltd.** Tender should be dropped in the Tender Box kept at Common Service Department of the Company by 11:00 A M on 28th July, 2021. The successful bidders will have to take delivery of the vehicle within 7 days after getting delivery order, otherwise earnest money will be forfeited. Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.

The Vehicles can be inspected at 1/A, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000 between 11.00 A M to 2.30 PM from 13th July, 2021 to 27th July except Holiday.

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সেতুর ইজারা কোটেশন আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি (৩য় আহবান)		
০১।	ইজারা কোটেশন নং	কোটেশন-০১/নিঃপ্রঃ/ফেনী/হোট ফেনী সেতু/২০২০-২০২১ (৩য় আহবান)।
০২।	ইজারার বিবরণ	১লা নভেম্বর ২০২১ইং হতে ৩০শে জুন ২০২৪ইং পর্যন্ত সময়ের জন্য ফেনী সড়ক বিভাগাধীন সোনাপাড়া-গুলাবাজার-চরদরবেশপুর-কোম্পানীগঞ্জ সড়কের (জেড-১৪৩৪) ৬ষ্ঠ কিলোমিটারে হোট নদীর উপর ৪৭৮.১৭১মিঃ দীর্ঘ নবনির্মিত পি.সি গার্ডার সেতু (হোট ফেনী সেতু) দিয়ে চলাচালকারী সকল প্রকার যানবাহন হতে ইজারার মাধ্যমে টোল আদায়ের কোটেশন।
০৩।	ইজারা চুক্তির মেয়াদ	২ বছর ৮ মাস (৯৭২ দিন)।
০৪।	ইজারা কোটেশনের সিডিউল মূল্য	টাঃ ৫০০০.০০ (পাঁচ হাজার টাকা মাত্র)।
০৫।	বায়নার টাকার পরিমাণ	উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে।
০৬।	ইজারা কোটেশন আহবানের তারিখ	০৯/০৭/২০২১ইং।
০৭।	ইজারা কোটেশন বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৯/০৭/২০২১ইং তারিখ বিকাল ৫.০০ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।
০৮।	মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় ইজারা কোটেশন গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	৩০/০৭/২০২১ইং তারিখ দুপুর ১২.৩০ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে।
০৯।	ইজারা ডাকে অংশগ্রহণের যোগ্যতা	ডাট ও আয়কর সনদধারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/নারিকর, সরকারি/বেসরকারি/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত সকল প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠিকাদার।
১০।	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন জয়ের জন্য পাওয়া যাবে	জেলা প্রশাসক ফেনী/ তঃ প্রঃ, সওজ, সড়ক সার্কেল, নোয়াখালী/নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, ফেনী/নোয়াখালী/লক্ষ্মীপুর/প্রানিং বিভাগ-১, সড়ক ভবন, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা/উপরিবিঃঃ, সড়ক উপ-বিভাগ-১, ফেনী/ব্রীজ ইন্সপেকশন এড প্রানিং বিভাগ, ঢাকা/সেতু ডিজাইন বিভাগ, পূর্ণাঙ্গল, ঢাকা।
১১।	যে সকল কার্যালয়ে ইজারা কোটেশন মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় গ্রহণ করা হবে	(ক) তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী সওজ, সড়ক সার্কেল, নোয়াখালী। (খ) জেলা প্রশাসক, ফেনী। (গ) নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, ফেনী।
১২।	ইজারা কোটেশন খোলার স্থান, তারিখ ও সময়	স্থানঃ নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ, সড়ক বিভাগ, ফেনী। তারিখঃ ৩১/০৭/২০২১ইং। সময়ঃ ৩.০০ ঘটিকা।
১৩।	ইজারা আহবানকারী যে কোন সময় যে কোন কোটেশন/সকল কোটেশন বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

ড. মোহাম্মদ আহাদ উল্লাহ
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 নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ
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জিডি-১৩২৮